



Emigrant Support Service



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

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Safe Home office

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From the Chairman's Desk

Greetings,

Exciting times are ahead. Mayo to meet Dublin to battle it out for the elusive Sam Maguire All –Ireland Football crown! It's a mighty long time since Mayo won the All Ireland Football title so a great hunger exists in Mayo since 1951(the 64th). Will this be Mayo's year? Le cuineamh Dé, it will!

A great pall of cynicism hangs over our country at this time thanks to the Console charity scandal. This has had a serious knock-on effect to every charity and trying to do some good and survive as public cynicism grows. Good people are questioning their continuing involvement with worthy causes as everybody is painted with the same brush. What was once a labour of love and kindness is fast becoming a tedious chore for many well meaning volunteers due to new hoops to be jumped through to distinguish the good from the bad. Many have already thrown in the towel as evidenced by difficulty in filling some board vacancies. Yet few will deny that a move towards full openness and transparency is a good thing for all charities and organisations if it means the Consoles of this country become past history. Some pain is well worth that most desirable gain.

Congratulations and well done to the Chicago Rose, Maggie McEldowney, in winning the 57th "Rose of Tralee" contest. The famous international event hit the headlines last week when the Sydney Rose called for the repeal of the Eight Amendment. This contest seems to be changing with the times and turning more into sensational reality TV. Other Roses didn't even get to be on live TV to be controversial as the 64 Roses who had travelled from the four corners of the globe were weeded down to 34 through interview. These interviews consisted of all contestants being grilled on their views on a wide range of topics. The reaction from the unsuccessful contestants to the decision of the judges not to let them forward for the live TV programme was filmed for a future documentary "the Road to the Dome."

Imagine the disappointment of the contestants who might have travelled from another continent to be denied their spot on live TV and the disappointment also of those loving relatives and friends waiting for their Rose's moment of glory on TV at home and abroad. The Roses we saw on TV were a credit to their parents and their communities. The ones we didn't see equally deserved to be heard and seen also. They made a great effort to enter the contest and visit us. I say well done. Their families can be proud.

So long for now, **Dr Jerry Cowley**

Don't forget, you can now sign up to receive the Safe Home Ireland Newsletter via email

Go to www.safehomeireland.com and enter your details there

TravelWise smartphone app

It is great news to hear that the free TravelWise smartphone app (launched by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) has been shortlisted as one of the best mobile phone applications.

The TravelWise app was designed to help Irish citizens to stay safe and informed while travelling, living or working overseas.

How does the app work?

The user can favourite any countries to which they are travelling or thinking of visiting, to get any significant security updates from the Department instantly via push notifications. All content, once downloaded, is available offline including key emergency contact details - without the need for a data connection abroad and without incurring roaming charges. TravelWise users have instant access to our global network of Embassies and Consulates.

Any citizen travelling to a higher risk destination can register with the nearest Embassy, using the App. Registering means that in the event of an unforeseen crisis such as a natural disaster or civil unrest, the Department can proactively contact the citizen, ensure they are safe, update them on developments and provide assistance as necessary.

TravelWise provides security ratings for over 200 countries – it is a clear way for the Dept. of Foreign Affairs to show you how safe or unsafe they believe a country may be to visit, and to help people travelling overseas to make informed decisions.

There are four colour-coded levels to our security ratings:

Normal Precautions (Green)

High Degree of Caution (Yellow)

Avoid Non-Essential Travel (Amber)

Do Not Travel (Red)

In addition to security ratings, it also provides detailed information about visas, health, safety, local laws and customs and other information. It certainly is a very useful and informative app, **please pass on the details to anyone you know who may be 'on the move'.**

How to vote for TravelWise as the best mobile app:

1. Log on to: <http://www.netvisionary.ie/shortlist-voting/>
2. Select option 4 (Pucá for TravelWise Ireland app) in Category No.4 to register your vote

Housing opportunities: Co. Clare and Co. Donegal

Cross Housing Association, Kilbaha, Co.Clare has a 3 bedroom bungalow available in the village. It is a rural location so this scheme would be most suitable for people who can drive. **Preference will be given to people originally from Co. Clare who are registered on the Clare County Council housing list.** However, they may also consider applicants from surrounding counties.



Habinteg Housing Association in **Lifford, Co. Donegal** has a one bedroom ground floor apartment available at present. Preference will be given to people originally from Donegal, but they will also consider applicants from other counties



For additional information on both schemes, please contact the Safe Home office

This may seem a little morbid, but this is one of our most **Frequently Asked Questions!**

Q. When my time comes, I want to be buried in Ireland. I would like to make arrangements in advance, to save my family the trouble. Can you tell me about how I go about buying a burial plot?

A. Burial grounds (cemeteries) are the responsibility of the local authorities. Many of them are operated by local authorities who appoint a registrar or caretaker for each of their burial grounds to manage the sale of plots in that site, and in some cases to maintain the burial ground. Parishes operate some burial grounds while local groups also operate burial grounds.

Many funeral directors offer to handle the purchase of burial plots as part of their package of funeral services. If you want to purchase a burial plot, you can contact your local authority to get contact details. **It is important** to point out that many burial grounds or graveyards are already full, and there may be restrictions on the pre-purchase or buying in advance of burial plots, such as limiting advance buying to those over 65 years of age.

All burials must be registered with the local authority and the location of the grave noted. This is done by the people who manage the graveyard.

The cost of buying a burial plot varies from area to area. As an example; we made enquiries recently on rates in Co. Sligo. The cost for single burial plot is €420 and €770 for a double. If you hire funeral directors to make all of the arrangements for you, they will indicate how much the burial plot costs as part of the overall expense of a funeral. For more information, please contact the Safe Home office

Reflections from clients:

On my own - "People started to move on and some passed away. I suppose I didn't really notice too much while I was going out to work but one day I turned around and the community that I once had here in London had vanished. I was on my own. It was then that I really started to think about going back home". **Jim – London (origins, Co. Kerry)**

It's not easy - "Don't let anyone tell you that moving is easy because they'd be telling you a lie. We found the first six months to be very very hard. If you could've handed us back the keys to our old flat in Birmingham, we would've been made up. Be realistic, that's what I say to people and give yourself time to settle in. For us, it all worked out for the best in the end, we have family close by and a slower pace of life but it certainly wasn't easy". **Michael & Ann – returned to Co. Clare.**

Q. I am over 60 and on a low income. I do not have to pay a prescription charge in the UK. Will I have to pay it in Ireland?

A. There is a prescription charge of €2.50 per item prescribed, that applies to most people (even Medical Card holders). The prescription charge is up to a maximum of €25 per month per household

The only exemption from the prescription charge applies to those who are in receipt of the Long Term Illness Scheme. The maximum any household will pay each month is €25.

Under the Long Term Illness Scheme, people suffering from certain conditions (see list below) can get free drugs, medicines and medical and surgical appliances for the treatment of that condition. These are provided under the Long Term Illness Scheme. The Long Term Illness Scheme **does not depend on your income or other circumstances.**

If you qualify, you will get a long-term illness book. This book lists the drugs and medicines for the treatment of your condition, which will be provided to you free of charge through your pharmacist.

You do not have to pay a prescription charge for drugs covered by your long-term illness book. **Note!** Other drugs and medicines not related to the specified condition must be paid for in the normal way.

How to apply: You can get an application form from your Local Health Office or download an application form from www.hse.ie and return it to your Local Health Office.

Long Term Illness Scheme – Qualifying Medical Conditions:

Intellectual disability	Mental illness (for people under 16 only)
Diabetes insipidus	Diabetes mellitus
Haemophilia	Cerebral palsy
Phenylketonuria	Epilepsy
Cystic fibrosis	Multiple sclerosis
Spina bifida	Muscular dystrophies
Hydrocephalus	Parkinsonism
Acute leukaemia	Conditions arising from use of Thalidomide

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DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OF IRELAND