

DML Excellence Awards 2016 Report

Project No: 41 – Arklow Annual Youth Mental Health Week

Address: Arklow Primary Care Health Centre, Castlepark, Arklow, Co. Wicklow.

Location: CHO 6

Brief Description (up to 200 words)

Arklow Youth Mental Health Week is a local initiative now in its seventh year. The lead and chairperson for this project is a HSE Primary Care Senior Clinical Psychologist. She works in association with representatives from all statutory and voluntary agencies working with the youth population in Arklow, in partnership with Principals of the four Post Primary Schools and Youthreach. A Youth Sub Committee works alongside the team. This programme provides a week long event each October since 2010, targeting over 1200 students annually in the town. The week provides a broad and varied range of workshops and presentations to each year group addressing many issues relating to Mental Health. A number of additional events, workshops and training modules are also delivered by this committee throughout the year.

Main goal(s) and aims of the Project

The aims of Arklow Youth Mental Health Week are to promote positive mental health, reduce stigma, increase emotional literacy and promote and improve help seeking behaviours.

Outline of Approach – main steps taken to implement the Project

In October of each year, Arklow Youth Mental Health Week is planned and coordinated by Arklow Youth Mental Health Week Committee in association with school principals. A range of workshops, presentations, lectures and experiential sessions are arranged. Each year group receives input on an area of mental health. Additionally students will have an opportunity to attend the Opening Ceremony and the now very popular Closing Ceremony, The Big Sing event has become a much anticipated performance for all schools whereby each school has an opportunity to showcase musical talent and come together to sing and perform and to give the message that music and singing are good for your mental health. Eight primary schools also attend and perform in the Big Sing Event, thus introducing the concept of positive mental health to a younger audience.