

**UL seeks people for physical activity study in Limerick**

**UL seeks people for physical activity study in Clare**



A research study, aimed at improving the health of people aged over 50 in the county, was today launched by the Minister of State with responsibility for Health Promotion, Catherine Byrne TD.

University of Limerick's Move For Life research study is encouraging people in Counties Clare and Limerick who are aged over 50 and who would like to be more active to join the programme.

Launching Move For Life, Minister of State for Health Promotion Catherine Byrne TD said, "I'm delighted to launch this research study and very much look forward to seeing its results. This programme not only encourages people to become more active, it also empowers them to become influencers within their own communities, something which could lead to considerable positive public health implications.

"Being active has so many benefits both for physical and mental health and we in Healthy Ireland are very happy to support University of Limerick in this project which, as our population ages, targets a very important demographic. As a hub of research and expertise in the areas of health and physical activity in the region, UL is well placed to lead this programme. I would now encourage the people of Clare and Limerick to take this opportunity and engage fully with this study, become more active and reap the rewards in their overall wellbeing."

As part of the research project, the participants will be given opportunities to take part in walking, cycling or general exercise programmes for periods of up to 12 weeks.

The research team, being led by UL's Professor Catherine Woods, brings together expertise from sport and exercise science, medicine, physiotherapy, psychology, implementation science and the community.

“According to national guidelines, all adults should be engaged in at least 150 minutes of moderate activity each week with a focus on aerobic activity, muscle-strengthening and balance. Yet few meet these physical activity guidelines, including at least 63% of people in Limerick and 57% of people in Clare,” explained Professor Woods.

The activity programmes will be operated out of eight hubs, four in Clare and four in Limerick and each will run for between eight and 12 weeks.

“We would encourage people in the target age group to sign up on our website, [www.MoveForLife.ie](http://www.MoveForLife.ie), attend one of our induction evenings and take part in this project. We will provide the groups in each area with fun physical activity programmes such as Women on Wheels, Get Ireland Walking, Men on the Move and Go for Life Games. Activities are suitable for men and women, for those who do little or no activity and we are aiming to recruit over 500 people over the duration of the study” explained Professor Woods.

Ballyvaughan General Practitioner, Professor Liam Glynn is Move For Life Co-lead and Chair of General Practice in UL.

“There is a large body of evidence indicating that meeting the physical activity guidelines promotes wellbeing, physical and mental health, prevents disease, improves quality of life and has economic, social and cultural benefits. As well as being good for your health and lifestyle, taking part in the programme is also a great opportunity to meet others,” he said.

According to UL President, Dr Des Fitzgerald, “Move for Life is a project that focuses on those of us who are over 50, who would like to be more active. The project aims to find the best way to mobilise communities to achieve this and if successful, the measures tested in the Move for Life project will improve the overall health and wellbeing of people now and as they grow older, and it will do so in a social, fun and practical way”.

“This kind of research is all about improving people's lives and enhancing the systems that support them. As we as a population grow older, projects such as Move For Life are increasingly important and the fact that UL occupies a position of leadership in this field is a source of great pride for everyone in the university,” Dr Fitzgerald concluded.

Members of the public who would like to take part can register at [www.MoveForLife.ie](http://www.MoveForLife.ie) or attend an induction evening.

Induction evenings will take place at Caherdavin Community Centre on Mondays, May 14 and 21, at Cloughaun GAA Club on Tuesdays, May 22 and 29, at Croom Civic Centre on Wednesdays, May 23 and 30 and Newcastle West Community Centre on Thursdays, May 24 and 31. All induction evenings take place from 6pm to 10pm. In Clare, the programmes will begin in late August in Ennis, Killaloe, Lahinch and Shannon.

Move for Life is a partnership between UL and its local communities as well as the National University of Ireland Galway, Limerick and Clare Local Sports Partnerships, Age and Opportunity, Limerick City and County Council, Healthy Limerick and the Health Services Executive.

The Move for Life research project is funded under the Health and Positive Aging Initiative (HaPAI), led by the Department of Health and is a joint national programme with the Health Service Executive and Atlantic Philanthropies.