

Media release

June 18th, 2025

Waterford Achieves Prestigious WHO Healthy City and County Designation

Waterford has officially been accredited as a World Health Organisation's (WHO's) European Healthy City and County, joining a prestigious network of cities across Europe recognised for their commitment to placing health, equity and sustainability at the centre of local governance and development.

This prestigious recognition acknowledges Waterford's unwavering commitment to improving the health and well-being of its citizens through comprehensive and sustainable initiatives.

Minister for Public Health, Wellbeing and National Drug Strategy, Jennifer Murnane O'Connor TD, welcomed the announcement that the National Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland Network, and the cities of Galway, Limerick and Waterford have officially been accredited as a World Health Organisation's (WHO's) European Healthy City in Phase VII (2019-2025).

The WHO Healthy Cities and Counties programme is a global movement that recognises cities and towns committed to health and sustainable development. It is not a health status award, but rather an acknowledgement of a political, institutional, and technical commitment to continuously improve the health and wellbeing of its people. The designation reflects collaborative effort across local government, health services, community groups, businesses, and residents to create an environment that supports optimal health and wellbeing for all.

Speaking about the designation, Mayor of Waterford City and County, Cllr. Jason Murphy stated, "We are absolutely thrilled and immensely proud to receive the WHO Healthy City and County designation. This is a monumental achievement for Waterford, reflecting the dedication and hard work of countless individuals and organisations across our city and county.

"It underscores our commitment to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and healthy environment where everyone has the opportunity to thrive."

The journey to becoming a WHO Healthy City and County was made possible through the collaborative efforts of many key partners. This includes those involved with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and a wide range of other dedicated agencies such as HSE, SETU, WWETB, Waterford PPN, Waterford Area Partnership, Waterford Leader, and Waterford CYPSC.

Their collective expertise has been instrumental in developing and implementing initiatives across various crucial areas.

Waterford City and County Council Chief Executive Sean McKeown underscored this collaborative success, stating, "This designation is a testament to the ongoing commitment of both the LCDC, through its dedicated stakeholders, and Waterford City and County Council. It clearly demonstrates that health and wellbeing remain a key priority for us under our Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)."

Waterford's WHO Healthy City and County designation serves as a foundation for continuous development and improvement. Waterford will keep collaborating with the WHO and other international Healthy Cities and Counties to exchange best practices and gain insights from global experiences. This application received support from the Department of Health and Healthy Ireland Local Government.

This recognition marks a significant milestone for Waterford, solidifying its position as a forward-thinking region prioritising the holistic wellbeing of its population.

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