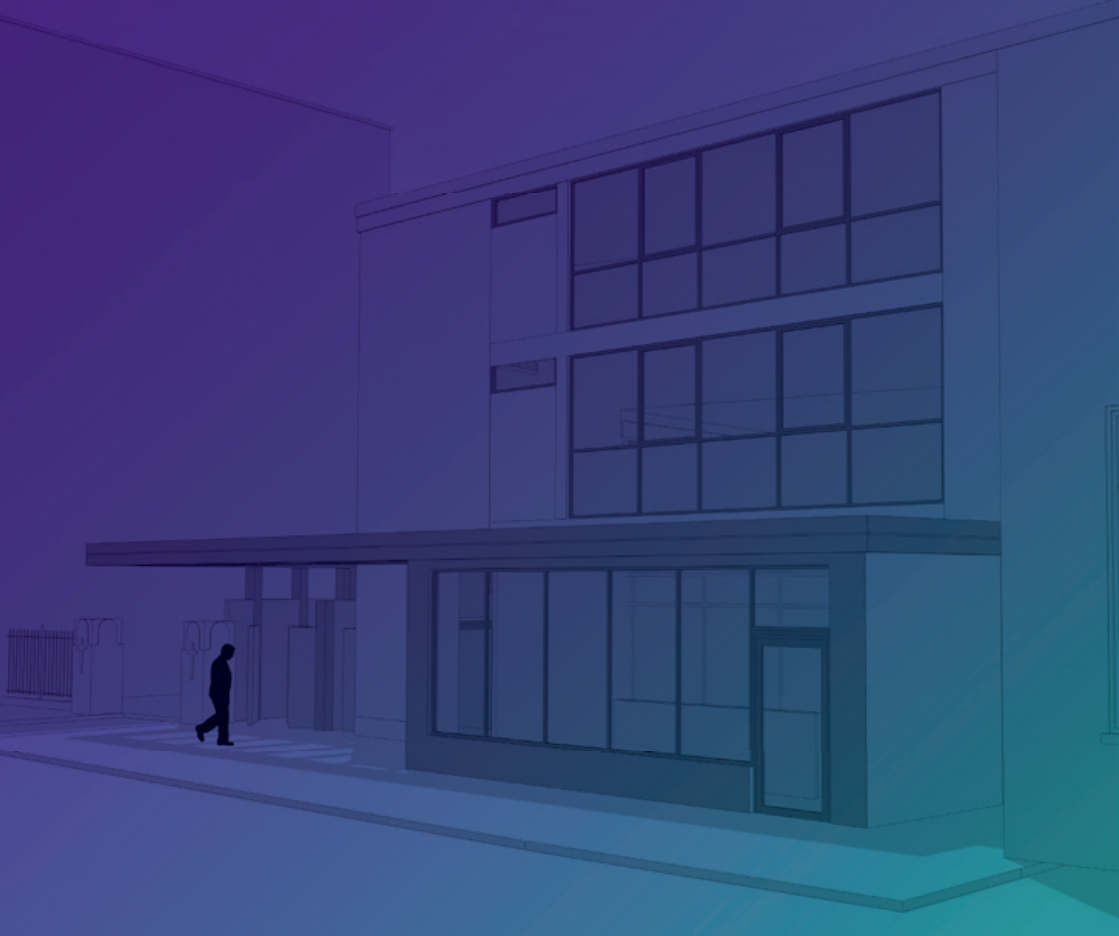


# Medically Supervised Injecting Facility

Information booklet



**Merchants Quay Ireland**  
Homeless & Drugs Services

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# What is a Medically Supervised Injecting Facility (MSIF)

A Medically Supervised Injecting Facility (MSIF) is a healthcare facility where people can inject drugs, obtained elsewhere, under the supervision of trained health professionals. They offer a compassionate, person-centred service which reduces the harm associated with injecting drug use and can help people access appropriate services.

MSIFs provide medical care, sterile injecting equipment, and emergency care in the event of overdose. They also provide referral to appropriate social healthcare and addiction treatment services.

## The MSIF aims to:



Connecting high-risk adults who use drugs with addiction treatment and other health and social services.



Reduce drug-related overdose deaths



Reduce the risks of disease transmission



Reduce public drug use and drug-related litter

A MSIF aims to provide a clean, safe, healthcare-led environment for people who are currently injecting drugs in public places, many of whom identify as homeless. This service is for a group of people who have long history of drug use and do not engage easily with healthcare.

The new pilot service will promote opportunities for treatment and recovery from drug use to improve people's health and social circumstances. Although not everyone who attends the MSIF will be ready to start a recovery programme or treatment, it will help to reduce harms associated with drug use and support people to access services appropriate to their stage of the recovery journey.

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## Background

**In 2015, the Government began legislating to allow for the creation of MSIFs and, as part of that, for a pilot MSIF to be established. In May 2017, the Misuse of Drugs (Medically Supervised Injecting Facility) Act 2017 was signed into law by the President.**

Following a tendering process, Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI) has been selected by the HSE as the preferred provider to operate Ireland's first MSIF as an 18-month pilot, subject to independent evaluations at 6 months and 18 months.

The planned location for the MSIF is in our Riverbank building on Merchant's Quay, where we currently provide other healthcare and harm reduction services. Having these services in a single location is key to the success of a MSIF. It is proposed that the MSIF will be located in the basement of the existing building and renovation of the basement will be accompanied by a refresh of the exterior of the building.

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# What the MSIF will look like



Aftercare Area, Sydney



Clinical Room, Sydney



Waiting Room, Sydney



Injection Booths, Sydney

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# Frequently Asked Questions



## **Why is the MSIF being located in Dublin 8, and why in MQI?**

The tender for the provision of this service specified that the facility must be within the area designated as Dublin Inner City by the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022. Given the location and services already delivered within MQI, the HSE Tender Committee viewed the Riverbank Building as a suitable location for the MSIF.

MQI offers a number of services which caters for those experiencing homelessness and/or addiction including day services, primary and mental healthcare, emergency shelter and access to residential detoxification and rehabilitation services.

Our best hope of moving someone out of addiction and into recovery is by having these services in one place, alongside the Medically Supervised Injecting Facility.



## **What happens inside a MSIF?**

The queuing will be off-street with security personnel who will manage this area.

The queue area will be monitored by CCTV, which can be viewed by staff inside the MSIF. All personnel working in this area will be in continual communication with staff inside the MSIF via 2-way radio. MSIF staff will maintain the cleanliness of the area. It is envisaged that this area can accommodate approximately 30 people awaiting entry to the service.

Clients will enter through a door on the right-hand side of the building. Inside, we will have a waiting/assessment area, a clinical area with seven individual booths, and an aftercare area.

Clients will be required to register with the service and MSIF staff will undertake an assessment. Newly presenting clients will be taken into a one-to-one room and be given an induction which will include an explanation of the services provided within the facility, procedures for use of MSIF and a basic health needs assessment will be carried out.

In this area, details of the service user will be obtained and data captured and recorded on the client record management system. Clients will also receive harm reduction and health promotion information & advice. They can then proceed to the injecting room, where staff will provide clean injecting equipment. This area will be staffed by nurses who will respond to overdoses or adverse events.

Following this, clients will move to the aftercare area, where they can stay under the supervision of staff. This will be an opportunity for clients to access primary healthcare and receive advice and information on other supports, including drug treatment.



### **Will this facility attract drug users or drug dealers to the area?**

There are currently 90 MSIFs in operation around the world. The evidence from these shows that MSIFs do not increase drug use, drug dealing, or crime in the areas in which they are located.

MQI have always worked, and will continue to work, closely with the Gardaí, who were involved with the evaluation group which awarded the tender to MQI, and will sit on the Monitoring Committee when the MSIF opens. Gardaí will develop a detailed local area policing plan ahead of the opening of the facility.

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# Frequently Asked Questions



## **Why is it being built now, and why is the HSE investing money in this?**

Ireland has a significant and growing drugs problem alongside a severe homeless crisis. As a result of this, Ireland - and particularly Dublin - has high levels of public injecting and one of the highest rates of drug related deaths in Europe.

Evidence from other countries where there are MSIFs shows that these services are cost-effective in the long term. By reducing the harms of injecting drug use and improving the local environment, these services are likely to have a range of economic benefits.



## **Where will people go when they leave the MSIF?**

People who use the MSIF can use the other MQI services including our drop in and support services. Our Community Engagement team will work proactively with clients to mitigate against loitering and anti-social behaviour in the local area.



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# Community Engagement

**MQI recognises that the provision of homeless and drugs services can be intrusive for people living, and businesses operating, in the local area.**

MQI is committed to ensuring that the local community have their voice heard in relation to the pilot MSIF. There are a number of ways that MQI is committing to this:

## **Community Engagement Team**

We have a Community Engagement Team who maintain a visible presence in the local area. The team proactively engage with local residents and businesses, and are available for call outs and phone queries. They also undertake regular clean-ups of drug-related litter in the area surrounding the Riverbank building. Their contact details are available on our website and are included in any leaflets distributed in the local area.

The team operates between 7am and 7pm Monday to Friday, and can be identified as staff by the MQI jackets they wear. In addition to this service, every morning at 6am, the Night Café team conduct a sweep of the front of the building, and on Sundays, two workers do a patrol of the immediate area picking up any discarded paraphernalia. Where drug litter is evident in areas outside our remit, we recommend contacting the Environmental Health Section of Dublin City Council on 01 2222 222.

## **Community Liaison Officer**

Alan Dooley, our Community Liaison Officer, is available to meet with local residents and businesses in order to discuss any questions or concerns they may have around our services including the development of the MSIF. You can reach Alan on 086 1832 358 or email [a.dooley@mqi.ie](mailto:a.dooley@mqi.ie). At weekends, the Community Liaison Officer phone number is forwarded to a member of staff on call.

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# Community Engagement

## Assertive Outreach Team

Our Assertive Outreach Team aim to provide early intervention where possible to the most vulnerable and marginalised clients within the homeless population; linking in with clients who are rough sleeping and/or not accessing services and to encourage them to engage with appropriate services

## Local community groups

We believe that regular attendance and participation in formal community meetings are vital to build trust and develop a shared vision for the area. MQI is an active member of local groups, including the Community Policing Forum, Local Area Task Force, and the South Inner City Drugs and Alcohol Task Force.

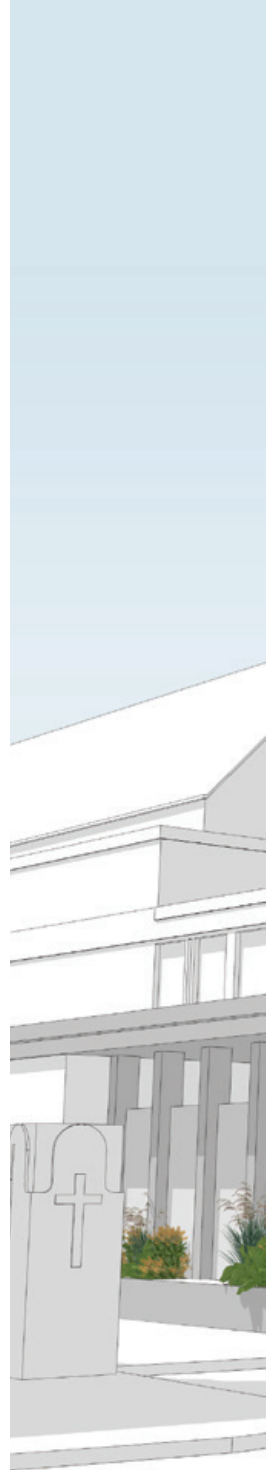
## Website

We have created a dedicated MSIF page on our website ([www.mqi.ie](http://www.mqi.ie)), which includes an extensive Q&A on the MSIF, information on the international research behind MSIFs, and details of the governance structure. Alongside this, we have created a dedicated MSIF email update, which will provide updates in relation to this service.

## Feedback and Complaints Procedure

In order to facilitate feedback from external stakeholders, we have a clear complaints and feedback procedure. This is outlined on our website, including names and contact details. We also have a complaints and feedback policy.

**Right:** Proposed Exterior East





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# Merchants Quay Ireland

Merchants Quay Ireland is a national voluntary organisation that helps people who are homeless and those caught in addiction. We provide frontline services, practical supports, pathways towards recovery and innovative responses to the issues of drug use and homelessness in Ireland.



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