

This 'Bottle' Can Save Lives

More than 90,000 vulnerable people all over Ireland, feel safer to-day thanks to an innovative programme promoted by Lions Clubs.

“Message in a Bottle” information scheme is a simple idea designed to encourage people to keep their personal and medical details on a standard form and in a common location – the household fridge.



Speaking at a ceremony at Kilbarrack Fire Station in Dublin to-day (Thursday 3rd April), to mark ‘Message in a Bottle Day’, Michael Cline, Lions Clubs project leader said that members of the 110 Lions Clubs in Ireland are planning to distribute an additional 40,000 bottles over the coming months with the assistance of Fire and Ambulance services and many voluntary organisations such as ‘Meals on Wheels’ and Senior Citizen Groups

‘The system provides Emergency Services with comprehensive information on medication prescribed for a patient, which can be invaluable during initial treatment and which can also be transmitted to a hospital before a patient arrives’, Michael Cline said. ‘In an emergency, every second counts and gaining access to critical medical data can save lives’.

Since the scheme was launched in Ireland four years ago Lions Club members have distributed more than 90,000 bottles. Janssen, a pharma company in Carrigaline Co Cork who sponsored the project in their area, won first prize in the "Chambers of Ireland Awards" for a Community based projects supported by a Multinational Company.

The 2014 Lions ‘Message in a Bottle’ campaign was formally launched by Richard Hedderman Assistant Fire Chief for Dublin, who said that Dublin Fire Brigade members fully supported the project and will distribute a further 6,000 bottles during the current phase.

Welcoming the positive response to ‘Message in a Bottle’ from public services, voluntary bodies and local communities, Liam Lyons, District Governor of Lions International, said that relatively simple actions can be invaluable in saving the lives of people faced with medical emergencies.

He said that the 2,500 Lions Club members in Ireland are engaged in a range of health-promotion projects including Diabetes Screening, Suicide Prevention, Alcohol Abuse Awareness and the recycling of spectacles.

‘These projects are possible because of the commitment of Lions to serving the community and the generous support of the public. Lions is a totally voluntary organisation and every cent we collect goes directly to the projects we undertake’, he said.

While it is focused on the more vulnerable people in our community, anyone can have an accident in the home, so ‘Message in a Bottle’ can benefit everyone. The information form is simple to complete but in some cases it may be desirable that elderly persons are assisted in completing the form, by a relative, friend or carer. The completed information form is placed inside the bottle. Each bottle contains the details of one person.

By completing the information on the form, it will save the Emergency Services valuable time in identifying the individual and whether they have any special needs. It is not only a potential lifesaver, but also it provides peace of mind to the users, their friends and families in knowing that prompt medical treatment is provided and the next of kin and emergency contacts are notified

The small distinctive plastic containers which are distributed by Lions Clubs, Fire Brigade, Community Gardai, Pharmacies and Senior Citizen groups contain a printed form and three labels. The recipient fills in the form with their medical details, allergies, next of kin contact details. Any pets in the family can also be included. They then put the completed form into the bottle. The bottle is then placed in the fridge and one of the labels placed on the outside of the fridge door. The other label is placed on the **inside** of the front entrance door of the home, by the lock. One can also be placed on the **inside** of their back door.

If a person is taken ill while alone in the house and is unable to communicate, the Emergency Services and First Responders, on seeing the labels, are alerted to go straight to the fridge, saving valuable minutes assessing the patient's details.

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*Further information on Message in a Bottle from
Michael Cline at*

086 8141214 michaelcactddub@eircom.net

or

Frank Corr, District PR Co-Ordinator Lions International at

0868274710 fcorr100@gmail.com

N.B.

MiaB bottles are **only** provided via
Lions Clubs who also provide club-
specific forms.

For free **Message in a Bottle** please
contact your nearest Lions Club.