



Waterford Institute of Technology  
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE



IRISH  
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An Chomhairle um  
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Sheds for Life  
An initiative by Irish Men's Sheds Association



# Sheds for Life: Insights into the impact of COVID-19 on wellbeing outcomes of Men's Shed members

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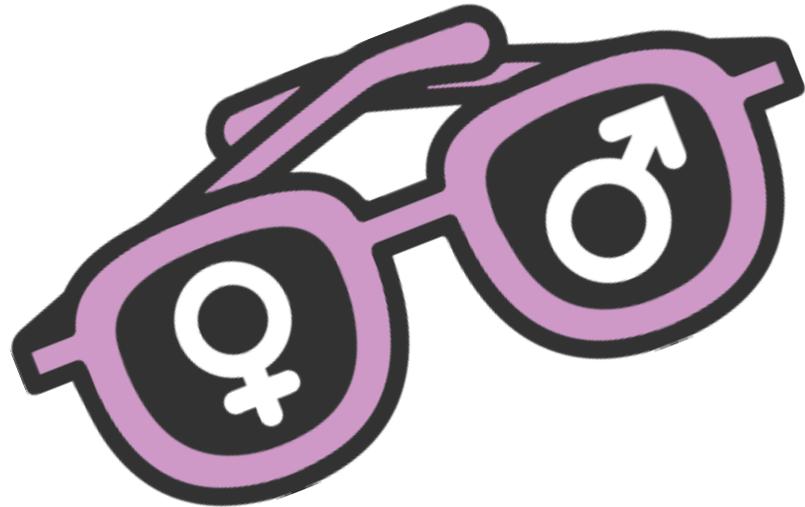


# Sheds for Life

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Applying a gendered  
lens to health  
promotion



Complex  
Biopsychosocial factors  
means women and men  
are differentially  
affected by COVID-19

**McGrath, A., Murphy, N. & Richardson, N. (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the wellbeing of Irish Men's Shed members. *Health Promotion International: In Press: daaa113 doi: 10.1093/heapro/daaa113***

## Methods

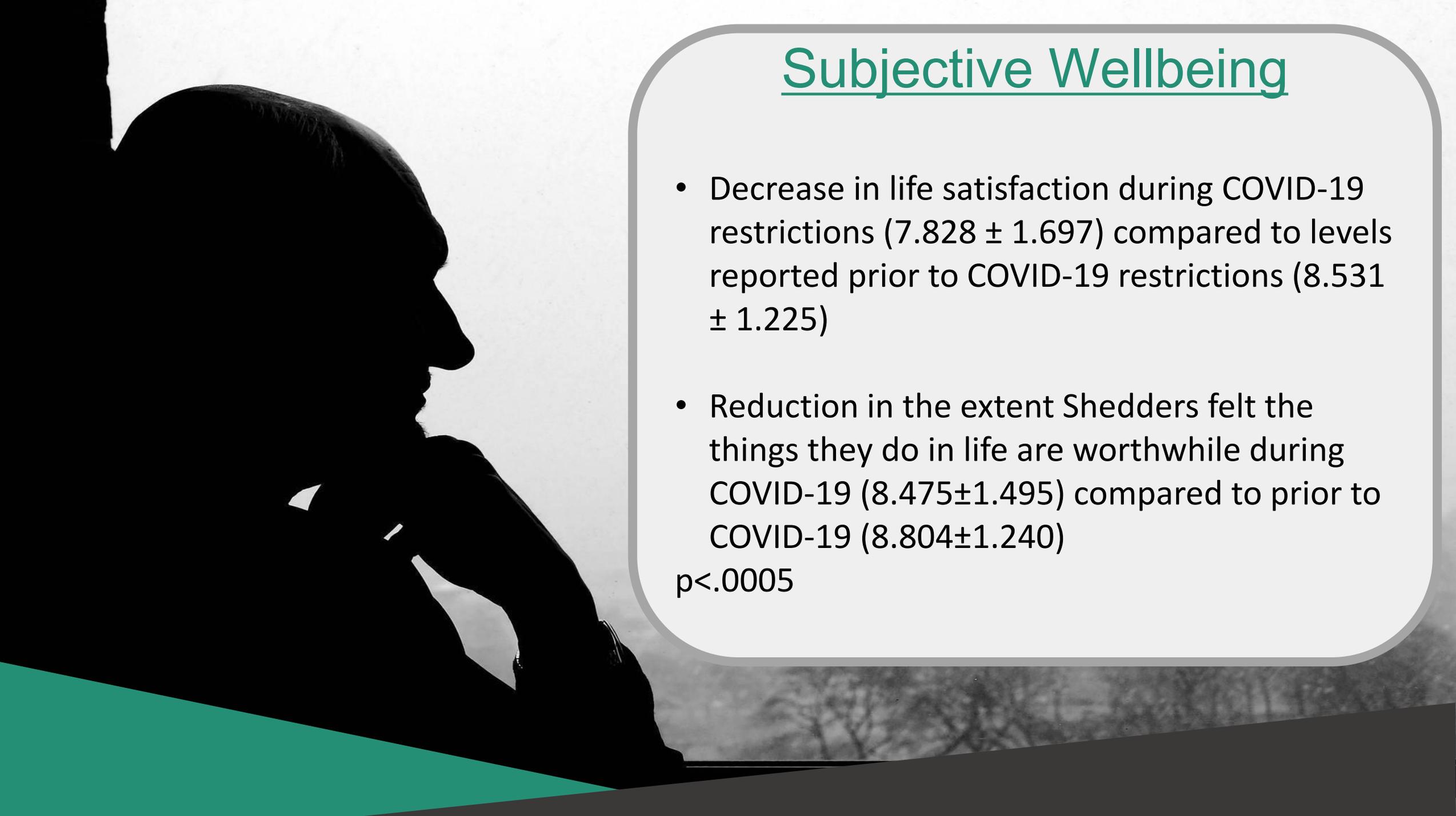
- Sheds for Life (SFL) was delivered across two cohorts on a phased basis in March and September 2019
- Questionnaires administered at baseline, 3, 6 months and 12 months assessed wellbeing outcomes ( such as; life satisfaction, mental health, loneliness, physical activity, self rated health)
- Compared the findings at 6 months from one cohort (n=185) during COVID with findings at 6 months from another cohort (n=195) prior to COVID
- Adjusted questionnaires at 6 & 12 months for the group experiencing COVID



*"I miss the cups of tea and the few biscuits. All of the men are very approachable and easy to talk to and it is great company. My world has become "very small" with COVID and health issues"\**

### Self-Rated Health

- Both groups experienced an increase in self-rated health after the SFL intervention
- There was a significant reduction in self-rated health afterwards for those experiencing COVID ( $p < .0005$ .)



## Subjective Wellbeing

- Decrease in life satisfaction during COVID-19 restrictions ( $7.828 \pm 1.697$ ) compared to levels reported prior to COVID-19 restrictions ( $8.531 \pm 1.225$ )
- Reduction in the extent Sheddars felt the things they do in life are worthwhile during COVID-19 ( $8.475 \pm 1.495$ ) compared to prior to COVID-19 ( $8.804 \pm 1.240$ )

$p < .0005$

<b>Mental Wellbeing</b> Scores COVID group			
Baseline	3 Months	6 Months	12 Mnths
26.949 ± 4.670 (n=91)	31.735 ± 4.018 (n=91)	30.657 ± 3.865 (n=86)	28.239 ± 5.001 (n=124)
<p>*** T1 &amp; T2            *** T1 &amp; T2, T3            *** T2 to T4            ***Significant difference at p&lt;0.001</p>			

*“I am feeling anxious. I am reluctant to go out and to return to the shed. My physical activity has gone down as I haven’t been going out. I am nervous to be too active on my own after an injury. I don’t want to go through it again. I am feeling confused about all the guidelines. Any weight I have lost I gained again through comfort eating.”\**

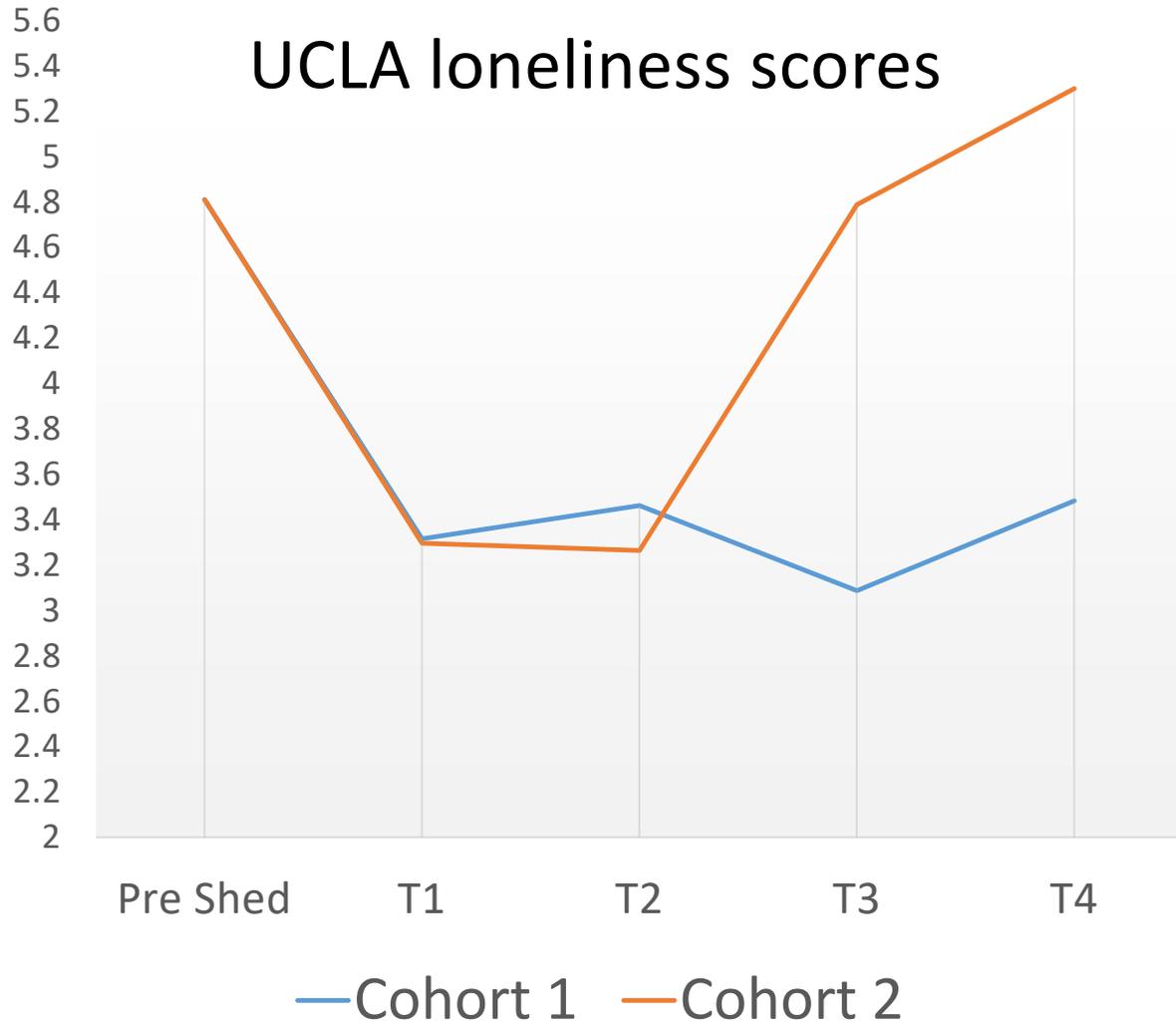
\* John- Sheds for Life Participant

A black silhouette of a man in a suit, shown in profile from the chest up, resting his chin on his hand in a thoughtful pose. The background is a light, textured grey. A teal and dark grey geometric shape is at the bottom left.

## Physical Activity

- Men living in rural areas reported a higher rate of physical activity during social restrictions compared to urban areas ( $p=0.13$ ).
- *Decrease in days active between 3 ( $4.049 \pm 2.313$ ) & 6 months ( $3.451 \pm 2.780$ ) in the COVID group but not in the Pre-COVID cohort*
- Those meeting PA guidelines had significantly lower loneliness scores compared to those not meeting PA guidelines
- Those in the COVID group meeting the PA guidelines before COVID were more likely to increase or maintain activity during COVID with those not meeting the guidelines more likely to decrease activity  $p<0.0005$ .

## UCLA Loneliness scores



### Loneliness

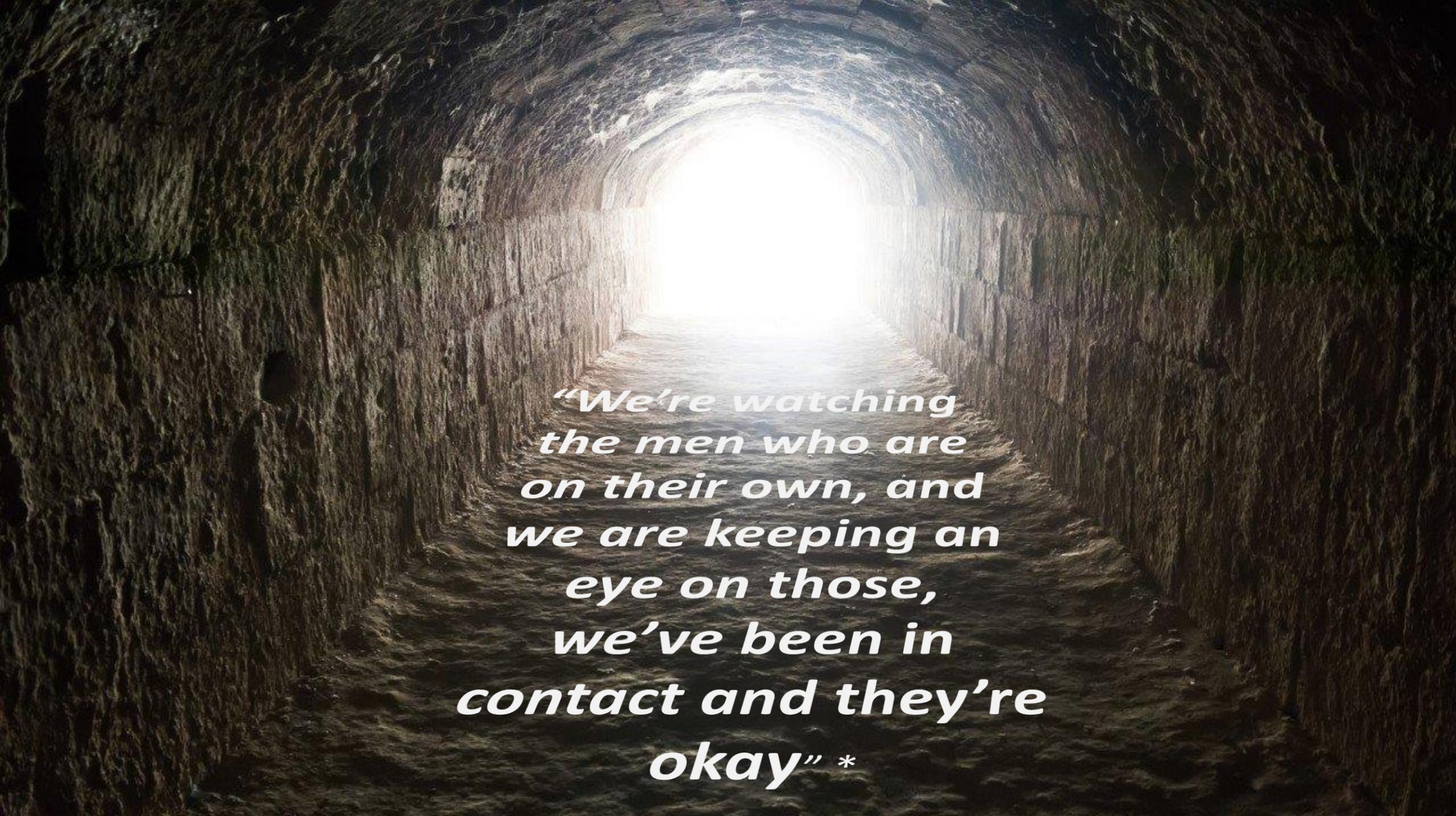
- Shed members who fell into the “lonely” category rose from 1.4% prior to shed closures to 29.7% at 6 months and 39.2% at 12 months
- Those in the lonely category had significantly lower health ratings, days active and life satisfaction scores
- Those living alone had significantly higher loneliness scores during COVID

*“It’s a breakdown in local communication, local knowledge, and local meetings. It breaks up, the kind of the community you’ve built up, just broken”\**

A silhouette of a man in a suit is shown in profile, looking out a window. The background is a bright, overcast sky with some trees visible in the distance. A large, dark grey speech bubble with a green outline is positioned to the right of the man, containing text. The bottom of the image features a teal and dark grey gradient bar.

*"I miss just being there. The company. It's a laugh a minute. I have found the lockdown very hard. I was being active but I need the company for the motivation so I have stopped. I have no internet access and I struggle with technology. I am looking forward to getting back to the shed. The earlier the better."*

*-Pat Sheds for Life Participant*



***“We’re watching  
the men who are  
on their own, and  
we are keeping an  
eye on those,  
we’ve been in  
contact and they’re  
okay” \****



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## Sheds for Life and COVID

- Adapting SFL to be implemented under COVID
- Collaborative approach
- Engaging stakeholders
- Identifying and overcoming barriers
- Responding to needs- inclusion through digital literacy

“Sheds for Life worked because it came to us. We wouldn’t be as forthcoming as to go to it. That’s men for you.”

- Martin Sheds for Life participant



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Thank you for your attention

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