



**Paper for Information: Update on Activities
related to Maternal and Child
Nutrition - DH**

Agenda Item: 5

Please see attached paper for information.

Update on Activities related to Maternal and Child Nutrition

Department of Health

Healthy Start

- The scheme is bedding down well across the UK. Based on the figures we have available, we believe around 87% of those eligible for support from Healthy Start are actually on the scheme. Almost 90% of vouchers issued to beneficiaries are later redeemed by retailers, which means that at least this many are used by the women and families taking part.
- Where progress is less good is on the supply of Healthy Start vitamin supplements. Uptake has gradually increased, particularly in the wake of a promotional flyer sent to all Healthy Start families with their vouchers in July 2007. However, the rate of increase is much still slower than we would like. This is in spite of work we have done to promote the availability and importance of both supplements to our network of PCT Healthy Start contacts, to heads of midwifery and health visiting, and directly to Healthy Start women and families. We will be focusing on seeking ways to improve uptake during 2008/9.
- Another priority for us in 2008/9 is to give back to SHAs and, if possible, individual PCTs, information about the effectiveness of Healthy Start in their areas. Our main delivery contract for Healthy Start has now been successfully moved to a new company and this company is now working with us to develop a suite of management information that can be shared with NHS colleagues. We expect it will be available within the next few months and if practical, retrospective data will be included so that NHS organisations will be able to look at early trends.

Nursery Milk Scheme (Welfare Food Scheme)

- We are in the final stages of updating and improving communications materials for the scheme, including the applications and claim forms and guidance materials. A website is also in development, which will enable individual providers to claim online, making the process even simpler.
- We have made some progress with putting in place a mechanism to cross check claims with data held by OFSTED. This is already helping us to improve the way in which claims are verified. However, it has not proved to be a simple process and we are continuing to work with OFSTED to improve it.

Infant Feeding

- National Breastfeeding Awareness Week (NBAW) was held from 11th – 17th May 2008. The theme for this year is ‘Breastfeeding – Every day makes a difference to your baby’ to encourage continuation of breastfeeding and support the introduction of the new metric for PCTs of breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks. The campaign is targeting young women from lower socio-economic groups and encourages them to access support, whether it be from their health professional,

breastfeeding support worker, a telephone helpline or simply emotional support from family and friends. DH has provided a range of materials including leaflet, pens, keyrings, lanyards, diary covers, fridge magnets and post-it notes to help health professionals and voluntary organisations support the week by running local activities.

- The Department has updated its information leaflets for parents on Weaning and safe Bottle Feeding. Both leaflets have been published in collaboration with UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative. A new leaflet about Folic Acid has also been published and is being distributed through GP surgeries, clinics and pharmacies.
- DH has provided funding to a charity, Best Beginnings, to produce a breastfeeding DVD which will be distributed antenatally from July 2008. It will feature a number of new mums talking about their experiences of breastfeeding, and will cover the basics of positioning and attachment as well as a number of specific issues such as expressing, common problems, support from family and friends and breastfeeding twins, which will be covered in 'extras' on the DVD. The content is being developed in consultation with a panel of stakeholders and will fully meet UNICEF Baby Friendly criteria. The other UK health departments are also participating and the DVD will be distributed UK-wide. An evaluation programme is in development.
- The Department has now appointed two secondees as Infant Feeding Best Practice Advisers, from the Breastfeeding Network. Both candidates work on job share basis to help deliver on the key breastfeeding initiatives.

WHO Growth Standards

- In August 2007, a Working Group comprised of representatives from the SACN and RCPCH recommended that the new WHO Growth Standards should be used for the purpose of population surveillance and individual clinical monitoring of children in the UK.
- RCPCH have received funding from the Department to undertake piloting that will test the practical aspects of implementing the change. This piloting has begun and will be completed in the next year.

Children's Centres (DH/DfES lead)

- Children's centres are a key mechanism for improving outcomes for young children, reducing inequalities in outcomes between the most disadvantaged and the rest, and helping to bring an end to child poverty. The target to develop 2500 centres by March 2008 has been reached - there are now over 2800 children's centres as of March 2008.

Child Health Promotion Programme

- The Child Health Promotion Programme (CHPP) is the core universal service that promotes the health and well-being of children and aims to help reduce health

inequalities. It offers every family a programme of immunisations, screening tests, development reviews, information and advice to support parenting and healthy choices.

- The updated Child Health Promotion Programme (CHPP) '*Pregnancy and the first five years of life*' was launched on 17th March. It builds on the National Service Framework that was published in 2004 and is intended to provide services tailored to the individual needs of children and families, acting at a best practice guide for health and social services.
- The programme aims to:
 - provide services tailored to individual needs, risks and choices with a focus on reducing inequalities
 - provide greater emphasis on promoting the health and well being of children in the early stages - pregnancy and the beginning of life
 - encourage partnership working between different agencies on local service development (e.g. general practice and children's centres)
 - focus services on changing public health priorities - obesity, breast feeding, social and emotional development
- The CHPP is a valuable tool for supporting Commissioners to meet obligations on breastfeeding, obesity prevention, infant mortality and the 12-week antenatal assessment. This high quality programme will help meet these vital requirements, but also help to improve general health and well-being among children and families in our communities.
- A national conference on the CHPP is planned for 18th June at Central Hall, Westminster and 400 delegates are expected to attend – places are free of charge and workshops will include topics such as preventing child obesity and the Family Nurse Partnership.

Obesity

- The Government launched its £372 million cross-Government strategy, *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives* in January 2008 setting out our ambition to reverse the rising tide of obesity and overweight in the population, enabling everyone *to achieve and maintain a healthy weight*. The Child Health PSA Delivery Agreement, that resulted from the latest CSR forms part of this *so that by 2020, we aim to reduce the proportion of overweight and obese children to 2000 levels*.
- There is a new Cabinet Committee on Health and Well-being to cover obesity and a Cabinet Committee on Families, Children and Young People, which is monitoring progress with respect to child weight problems. Tackling child obesity is now a national priority for PCTs, as set out in the NHS Operating Framework in December 2007.

- Healthy Weight Healthy Lives sets out our vision through the following five policy areas: children, healthy growth and healthy weight; promotion of healthier food choices; building physical activity into our lives; creating incentives for better health, and; personalised advice and support. An investment of £75 million is planned in a social marketing campaign (2008-11) to support, inform and empower to make changes to children's diets and levels of physical activity, and in particular providing tailored messages for at-risk families. Furthermore, we are working with food industry stakeholders to finalise a Healthy Food Code of Best Practice with a particular focus on enhancing child health.

Regional /Local Delivery

- From April 2007, additional funding was provided to each Region to increase their capacity and capability to deliver the PSA target and work on obesity, physical activity and nutrition within their respective populations (have recently received funding for 2008-09).
- In March 2008, the Department produced guidance for local areas (PCTs and LAs) on the actions they might take to tackle obesity. The Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives guidance for local areas is available on the Department of Health's website.

National Child Measurement Programme

- Established in 2005, the NCMP has produced the largest collection of data on children's height and weight in the world. The purpose of the programme is to collect data to inform local planning and delivery of services for children, and allow for the analysis of trends in growth patterns and obesity.
- As part of the NCMP, children in Reception (aged 4–5 years) and Year 6 (aged 10–11 years) are weighed and measured during the school year.
- In 2006/07, 876,416 children were successfully measured, approximately 80% of those eligible. In Reception, almost one-in-four of the children measured was either overweight or obese (22.9%). In Year 6, this rate was nearly one-in-three (31.6%). The results can be viewed at: www.dh.gov.uk/healthyliving. Further analysis is being carried out at a national, regional, and local level using the data.
- A web-based healthy weight calculator is being developed that will allow parents to interpret the results of the Child Measurement Programme. This online tool will be available on Direct Gov.
- A clause has been included in the Health and Social Care Bill, which will give us powers to routinely feed back to parents. We hope this will be implemented for the start of the 2008/09 academic year. We will work with parents and professional organisations to determine the format and length of information provided.

Obesity Social Marketing Programme (formerly Healthy Living Social Marketing Programme)

- The use of social marketing is a major delivery vehicle for the Obesity Programme and cuts across all strands. Rather than a separate, stand-alone programme, the work on social marketing has been fully integrated into every area of work.
- We invited bids to the £75m integrated marketing programme to support healthy eating and physical activity on 29 February. We plan to have completed the tendering process, with an advertising agency appointed, during early July. The marketing campaigns will launch in early autumn.

Food Promotion to children

- The Department of Health continue to monitor the impact of the new Ofcom and CAP rules on the nature and balance of food and drink advertising to children in broadcast and non-broadcast media.

Food Standards Agency

Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Regulations

- In January the Infant and Dietetic Foods Association (IDFA) brought a legal challenge against the Secretary of State and the Welsh Ministers in England. The case related to the transitional arrangements for labelling in the Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula (England) Regulations 2007 in England, and similar Regulations in Wales. The Judge has ruled that the labelling aspects of the legislation should come into force, on 1 January 2010, along with the new compositional rules. The provisions which are enforceable now are those relating to advertising (including the provision that adverts for follow-on formula must not indirectly promote infant formula), presentation, promotion and provision of informational and educational material dealing with infant feeding and the requirement to notify the Government of new infant formula product being placed on the market. The provisions relating to composition and labelling of infant formula and follow-on formula will be enforceable from 1st January 2010.
- This transitional provision is provided to allow companies to adjust the composition and labelling of their products to the new requirements. However, manufacturers can choose to produce products compliant with the new requirements from now. In the meantime, the composition and labelling rules set out in the old Regulations (the 1995 Regulations) will continue to apply.
- The Agency has consulted all stakeholders, including SACN, on the draft Guidance Notes that will help stakeholders interpret the legislation. The finalised Guidance will be published on the Agency website in mid-May.
- When Public Health Minister Dawn Primorolo announced the new Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula (England) Regulations 2007 and associated guidance notes, she also made a commitment to review the effect of these new controls on how follow-on formula is advertised and presented. The review will establish whether parents/parents to be and carers are clear that the presentation and advertising of follow-on formula relates to formula for older babies (6 months +) and not infant formula.
- The review will be carried out over a year period commencing in May/June and will assess whether the controls are working as expected or whether further action is needed. SACN have been identified as a stakeholder in the review and, as well as being informed of progress, will have the opportunity to input any relevant information. Although not on the panel to represent the views of SACN, Professor Peter Aggett has agreed to be a member of the independent panel and provide expertise on infant nutrition.