



**Paper for Information: Update on Activities
related to Maternal and Child
Nutrition - Devolved Health
Departments**

Agenda Item: 5

Please see attached paper for information.

Update on Activities related to Maternal and Child Nutrition

Update from the Welsh Assembly

Infants

National Programme to Support Breastfeeding in Wales

A National Programme has been drawn up to support and promote breastfeeding to the youngest mothers and those who left school earliest. This Programme comprises a range of funded activities that incorporate working with the NHS and with the community, schools and voluntary sectors. The Programme also includes provision to increase the work to raise public awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding to mothers, babies and their families.

Examples of activities proposed within the National Programme include the establishment of part-time posts to support the adoption of the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative within all maternity and health visiting services in Wales, the enhancement of the Breastfeeding Support Grant Scheme and the development of internet/CD based resources. The proposals also include maximising the impact of awareness raising activities during Breastfeeding Awareness Week in Wales.

Breastfeeding Peer Support Grant Scheme 2006-07

This Scheme has now been evaluated using a case study approach using 8 cases. Findings suggest that the grant scheme was effective in improving the quality of professional practice and in targeting socially disadvantaged groups. Areas for improvement centred around the need for more trained health professionals to provide peer support training; for more skills in undertaking grant administration; for longer term funding and for development of more understanding between volunteers and professionals.

Data Collection Pilot Scheme

Pilot scheme in Caerphilly Borough has been funded by the Welsh Assembly Government to test feasibility of collecting data on breastfeeding (exclusive/predominant/partial/none) at 10 days, 6 weeks and 6 months. The pilot involves Health Visiting and Child health team staff. Babies born in Caerphilly LHB during one month will have the new data recorded for them in a new breastfeeding screen set up by Health Solutions Wales. Initial findings indicate a positive response from health professionals. Final report will be provided to the Welsh Assembly Government. Maternity data at birth and 10 days is likely to be added to this collection.

Breastfeeding Awareness Week

Launch event with Children's Minister in Cardiff. Promotional materials and new leaflets produced.

Best Beginnings DVD

Wales has contributed to the production of the UK DVD by providing 3 of the case studies, all of whom gave interviews in English and Welsh.

Progress report on the implementation of the Healthy Eating Aspects of Food and Fitness - Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Children and Young People: 5 Year Implementation Plan

MEND Programme

Following a review of weight management programmes being delivered across the UK the MEND programme has been identified as the model of best practice. MEND is a community, family based programme for children between 7-13 and their families which uses a train the trainer approach. The multi-disciplinary programme places equal emphasis on healthy eating, physical activity and behavioural change, empowering the child, building self confidence and personal development. Funding will provide a grant to MEND to pilot the programme in seven LHB areas in 2008-09, and if successful begin a phased roll out across Wales 2009-11.

Height weight data collection feasibility study

The National Public Health Service (NPHS) has been commissioned to undertake a feasibility study for the creation of a national surveillance programme of children's height and weight. The details of any future programme of weighing and measuring in Wales will be considered following the recommendations from the NPHS feasibility study. The aim of any such data collection is to provide a mechanism for assessing proportions of children of healthy body weight in Wales, for which we do not currently have reliable data at local authority level. Following completion of desk-based research the work will be piloted in 4 areas of Wales.

Nutritional Analysis Software for School Meals

A nutritional analysis software package has been procured by the WLGA on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government to analyse menus. It is being utilised on an all-Wales basis will be used by a number of organisations, including Local Authority Caterers, Schools, Estyn (the office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Welsh Assembly Government. The software is being used by Local Authority Caterers and dietitians to assist in planning menus for up to four weeks at a time that meet the nutrient standards in Appetite for Life. A web based national database of local authority's recipes and appropriate menus and the product specifications of manufactured foods used in school meals is being made available to all users. It utilises the national database from the Royal Society of Chemistry 'McCance & Widdowson's Composition of Foods' which holds the composition of all basic foods.

The software will be utilised to produce monitoring reports on provision of meals in relation to the nutrient standards. A functionality for monitoring consumption data will also be required for use in the future.

Training for School Caterers

Grant funding of £1.8 million has been made available to Local Educational Authorities in Wales to provide training to school catering staff in healthy eating and practical cookery skills. This forms part of the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to improve the quality and nutritional standards of school food consumed throughout the school day. This commitment is outlined in the 5-year implementation plan, Food and Fitness - Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Children and Young People in Wales, and in Appetite for Life and the subsequent action plan which will follow during the summer of 2007.

The total budget of £1.8 million is available over two calendar years, from January 2007 to December 2008 and has been allocated to LEAs using a formula based on pupil population and sparsity.

Cymru Cooks

A grant has been awarded to ContinYou to provide training and support for the development of out of school cooking clubs for children and young people to enable schools and other organisations to develop a strategic and co-ordinated approach to delivering and promoting cooking skills. The key aims of the programme are:

- to empower children and young people to develop the practical food skills and knowledge to enable them to live healthier lifestyles
- to enable schools and other organizations to develop a strategic and co-ordinated approach to delivering and promoting cooking skills
- to provide 'fun' and exciting approaches to cooking
- to provide opportunities for young people to practice and apply basic skills such as communication, literacy and numeracy
- to encourage and enable young people to become 'leaders' in the delivery of cooking skills

Training has been delivered in 6 local authority areas to date and future funding will enable the roll out to all local authority areas.

COOKIT

The COOKIT resource provides quality, child appropriate cooking materials. The COOKIT contains everything that teachers / group leaders require to teach basic cooking skills to groups of 6 pupils cooking individually, or more, if equipment is shared. It also includes a range of teacher / leader-only items used for demonstrations or for preparation. These resources are offered to schools following Cooking Bus visits so that schools can continue delivering cooking skills in the curriculum. In addition, a maximum of ten sets of cooking utensils are offered to each local authority area to support out of schools and community cookery clubs following attendance at the ContinYou training. Future funding will provide the same equipment to clubs supported with training by the dietitians employed through the "Increasing Dietetic Capacity Grant Scheme" (details of this scheme are under Action on Training, Recommendation 6).

An evaluation by the FSA of COOKIT provision in England following a Cooking Bus visit, has shown that their provision has helped move schools from ‘theory’ to real practical learning, with more pupils having more opportunities to ‘have a go’. The equipment motivated teachers so that they were more likely to introduce ‘food learning’ across the curriculum, and helped to maximise other initiatives around food. The evaluation has also shown that the provision of COOKITs encourages extra-curricular work, motivates and raises enthusiasm, engages different levels of pupils and enables activities to be more readily implemented at home. It reports that the provision of support/information opportunities will help maximise their use.

Update from the Scottish Executive Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate

Obesity Action Plan

In view of the recent review of the Scottish Diet Action Plan, wider evidence and discussion by the Food and Health Council, Health Ministers have agreed that the Scottish Government Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate will develop an Action Plan to signal where the Scottish Government, NHS and key partners will focus efforts over the next 3 to 4 years. This will take account of the new administration in Scotland and their priorities on food and health, physical activity and programmes to support healthy weight management.

Although proposals have yet to be approved by the Health Minister, it is likely that the plan will include an emphasis on improving maternal and infant nutrition, integrating the current work to develop an Infant Feeding Strategy. The plan is due for release in Spring 2008.

A report of the consultation exercise in response to 'Infant Feeding Strategy for Scotland' was published on the Scottish Government website in May 2007.

The Scottish Government is providing a total of £56m over 3 years (£40m new) to support joint action on improving diet, physical activity and tackling obesity.

Treatment programme for childhood obesity

Health boards will be expected to deliver childhood healthy weight intervention programmes in line with guidance provided by the Scottish Government from April 2008. These include educational and practical sessions on healthy eating, physical activity and behavioural change. A new HEAT target¹ has been developed to monitor health boards' success in seeing a specified proportion of eligible children complete this programme and the Scottish Government has provided £6m over 3 years to support delivery across Scotland.

The aim is to see around 20,000 children and young people complete these interventions by 2011.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is considered as the optimal way of embedding good health in infants and fostering positive eating behaviours for the future. However, this needs to be viewed in the wider context of eating behaviours throughout life.

Activity around breastfeeding and wider infant-feeding issues is not new but there has been a real and sustained campaign of activity over the past decade in particular. A wide range of innovative projects and activities have taken place largely supported by NHS Board Breastfeeding Strategy Groups and reflecting increasing co-operation

¹ HEAT targets are agreed between the Scottish Government and Health Boards to progress Health improvement, Efficiency, Access and Treatment.

between clinicians, health promotion experts, local authorities and voluntary organisations. For example:

- In 1996 only one NHS Board had a breastfeeding strategy, in 2007 most boards have or are working towards a breastfeeding strategy
- In 1993 there were 4 breastfeeding support groups - there are over 100 in 2007.
- In 1994 there was only one peer support programme, increasing to over 14 by 2007.
- Over 58% of Scottish babies are now born in a UNICEFUK Baby Friendly Initiative accredited hospital.
- The University of Paisley Midwifery Directorate has become the first teaching department to receive a UNICEF Baby Friendly award.

Infant Nutrition Co-ordinator for Scotland

To progress the Scottish Government's work on infant nutrition, an Infant Nutrition Co-ordinator for Scotland has now been appointed and will take up post in May. The infant Nutrition Co-ordinator will lead the development of the infant nutrition strategy in Scotland, providing advice to all those involved in infant nutrition. Part of their remit will be to emphasise the importance of breastfeeding in improving and maintaining health and in establishing healthy eating patterns in infancy.

Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007

The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 that was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament in March 2007 now has guidance to develop the food and drinks standards to ensure that all food and drink provided in schools complies with nutritional requirements (to be specified in the regulations by the Scottish Ministers).

With regards to commencement, the power to provide pupils with snacks commenced as of 10 August 2007, the duties in relation to health promotion commenced on 3 January 2008 and the duties in relation to food and drink in schools and sustainable development guidance will commence in August 2008.

The Scottish Government will shortly be issuing guidance to support local authorities and schools to meet the duty to ensure that all schools are health promoting. This will include guidance on improving the nutritional quality of children and young people's diets and promoting consistent messages about healthy eating.

Free School Meals Pilot

As part of the Scottish Executive's drive to improve the nation's health and encourage good eating habits from a young age, we will be conducting a free school lunches trial for P1-P3 pupils in 5 local authorities, between October 2007 and March 2008. The 5 participating authorities are East Ayrshire Council, Fife Council, Glasgow City

Council, Scottish Borders Council and West Dunbartonshire Council. The specific objectives of the trial are to:

- Assess process and practical issues for councils and schools;
- Measure changes in uptake of school lunches by P1-P3 pupils;
- Investigate the potential health and other benefits of the trial, including attitudes and behaviours in relation to school lunches and healthy eating;
and
- Identify any unexpected impacts and barriers to roll out across the country.

Update from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland) Maternal and Child Nutrition

Fit Futures – Focus on Food, Activity and Young People

Significant progress has been made to date in implementation of the recommendations and examples include:

- Food in Schools Dietitian / Nutritionist - Job description has been agreed and post has been re-advertised. This post will support the implementation of the joint Department of Education (DE) / DHSSPS Food in Schools policy, and contribute to DE's Nutritional Standards for School Meals policy and other food in schools.
- In addition, work is continuing with DE, Health Promotion Agency (HPA) and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland (FSANI) to develop the policy document on Food in Schools and food-based nutritional standards (for School Meals and Catering for Healthier Lifestyles).
- School nurse to be appointed to support healthy schools and needs assessment
- Nutrition and Dental Health Guidelines for Professionals are being developed with a partnership group which will ensure that the recommendations contained in the Fit Futures Implementation Plan are adhered to and followed.
- FSANI are working towards the establishment of a public sector food procurement initiative in partnership with DFP, DARD and DHSSPS.
- FSANI are also developing a project to review and test options for integrating quality nutrition education into training programmes for those working in the food and hospitality sectors.
- FSANI have already facilitated an annual business and nutrition forum to engage local business and consumer interests in the delivery of an agreed approach to improving nutrition and to support local business to take competitive advantage from having a health focus.
- DE will also establish a food in schools forum to support the delivery of a whole school approach to food and nutrition issues in schools and this Forum will be established to coincide with publication of the policy.
- A 4 year roll out of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) begins in 2008. 1000 people (500 adults and 500 children) per year will be sampled – all ages from 1½ years upwards, living in private households. There will be a sample boost in NI to a total of 200 people per year for the first two fieldwork years (2008/09 AND 2009/10). A contract between DHSSPS, FSANI and Safefood has been discussed and is currently being drawn up.
- Soon to publish the 'Working Towards Healthy Schools' Toolkit. The Toolkit brings together the outcomes of the pilot Health Promoting Schools initiative (2002–2006). It has been designed to assist schools in their development and planning of health and wellbeing. It also aims to fulfil the various outcomes and targets set within the Investing for Health Strategy and Fit Futures and other related strategies.

Obesity Prevention Steering Group (OPSG)

This group will advise on how to effectively deliver on the outcomes contained in the proposed Fit Futures Implementation Plan, and will lead the development of an policy

to tackle overweight and obesity in the adult population. The group held its inaugural meeting on 18 Feb 2008 and was attended by various statutory organisations as well as a range of community and voluntary groups from across Northern Ireland. The next meeting of the OPSG is planned for early June.

The **Terms of Reference** for this group include:

Primary Functions

- To provide advice and strategic direction on all relevant issues relating to obesity, including the development of an approach to tackle obesity in the adult population.
- To consider the need for additional resources to assist effective implementation and monitoring of Fit Futures.
- To monitor progress against targets and produce a report on progress on implementation for the Ministerial Group on Public Health (MGPH) at the end of year one.

It was also proposed that a number of Advisory Groups would be established to underpin the work of the OPSG. These groups would oversee and advise on specific elements, including Food & Nutrition, Physical Activity, Education & Public Information, and Data and Research. It was also proposed that the Chairs of these Advisory Groups, and other relevant stakeholders would form a liaison group that will aimed at enhancing joint working between these sectors and to share relevant information.