

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

Paper for information: Agenda Item 9

Update from The Scottish Executive

Please see attached paper for information and comment.

SCOTLAND NUTRITION UPDATE

The following points update the paper provided at the first SACN meeting.

1. Ministers for Education, Social Justice and Health and Community Care have recently announced that an expert panel is to be established to devise national nutritional standards, improve the appeal of school meals, minimise stigmatisation for schools meals and maximise the uptake of free school meals.
2. Gillian Kynoch has been appointed as the Scottish Food and Health Co-ordinator (previously titled the National Diet Action Co-ordinator), Gillian has direct responsibility for taking forward specific aspects of the implementation of the Scottish Diet Action Plan recommendations in order to improve Scotland's health and is working closely with FSA Scotland and HEBS. The initial focus of the post will be on; developing a high profile national campaign to create a positive climate for change; improving the provision of food in schools; working with the food industry to ensure that all Scots have access to healthier choices; and reviewing dietary surveillance needs in Scotland.
3. Provision of almost £200,000 to Focus on Food for a 2-year pilot project to improve cooking skills in pupils in study schools in Clackmannan and North Lanarkshire in Scotland. This programme of professional development for teachers aims to improve cooking skills and encourage healthy eating in primary school children.
4. Vitamin D Working Group convened to examine Vitamin D supplements for elderly people in long term care. The Group will make recommendations on how this matter should be taken forward by SEHD and NHSScotland and will submit a report to the Scottish Executive in due course.
5. Scottish Community Diet Project to receive extension and increase in funding for the next three years. Part of the work of this Project involves the administration of a small grant scheme, for which funding has also been increased in line with the commitment given in Our National Health to increase the grant scheme by 50%. A total of 36 grants, worth £75,000, have recently been awarded for 2001/2.
6. Scottish Healthy Choices Award Scheme to receive extension and increase in funding for the next three years. SHCAS has presented over 230 Awards, including all primary schools in Midlothian.
7. Recently published figures from the Infant Feeding Survey 2000 shows that early breastfeeding in Scotland has risen from 55% in 1995 to 63% last year. This suggests that Scotland is moving closer to achieving the national target of half of all women breastfeeding their babies for the first six weeks by 2005. The figures for breastfeeding rates at six weeks are expected to be available in the New Year.