

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

**Paper for information: Government Update on Nutrition
Related Activities – The Department
of Health, Social Services and Public
Safety (Northern Ireland)**

Agenda item: 6

Please see attached paper for information.

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

Government Update on Nutrition related activities The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland)

Guidelines for under fives in child care

1. The nutritional guidelines prepared to support the work of the Early Years Teams with under fives in child care have been distributed to day nurseries and play groups through a series of local training workshops. Revised guidance is being prepared for use with child minders.

Infant Feeding Initiative

2. Results from the Infant Feeding Survey in 2000 show that 54% of mothers were breastfeeding initially (45% in 1995). 6 weeks after the birth, 26% of mothers were still breastfeeding their babies (25% in 1995). By the time the babies were six months old, 21% of mothers who initially breastfed were still breastfeeding (equates to 10%). An Implementation Group oversees the implementation of the DHSSPS Breastfeeding Strategy. A Breastfeeding Co-ordinator took up post on 4 February to promote the strategy and assist with its implementation.

“Cook It!”

3. “*Cook It!*” is a community based nutrition education programme, which was first developed in 1995 within the context of inequalities and health and social wellbeing. The programme provides an opportunity to discuss key nutritional issues, it gives practical experience of food preparation, and the opportunity to sample the completed dishes, therefore removing the financial risk of experimenting with new dishes within restricted resources. Work is scheduled to begin later this year to develop a new pack for people with low levels of literacy.

Fresh Fruit in Schools

4. As part of the implementation of *Investing for Health*, a Fresh Fruit in Schools pilot scheme is due to be launched on 21st October 2002. Approximately 80 primary schools across the 4 Health Action Zone areas will be participating in the pilot, which aims to give one piece of fresh fruit every day to children in classes P1 and P2. The scheme, which will run to June 2004, aims to form healthy eating patterns early in life and contribute to a reduction in health inequalities by specifically focusing on children living in disadvantaged areas.