



**Paper for information: Government Updates on Nutrition
Related Activities
Devolved Health Departments**

Agenda Item: 09

Please see attached paper for information.

Update on Nutrition Work in Wales

Health Challenge Wales is providing a new and inclusive national focus to secure greater ownership, commitment and action for better health, as part of a co-ordinated and sustained effort to improve levels of health in Wales.

In particular, it is a challenge to:

- government at all levels to help to create the conditions necessary for people to lead healthy lives and to improve their health;
- organisations and groups in the public, private and voluntary sectors to do as much as they can to help their customers and people who use their services, and their own employees, to improve their health;
- the media – to help communicate the ‘better health’ message more effectively; and
- individuals, to do what they can to improve their own health and that of their families.

Its key themes are:

- smoking
- obesity
- accidents and injuries
- alcohol and other substance misuse
- infections (sexually transmitted; healthcare acquired; vaccine preventable; dental decay)
- mental health and well-being.

The incremental introduction of **The Primary School Free Breakfast Initiative** started on a pilot basis starting in Communities First areas of 9 local authorities in September. Primary schools in Communities First areas in all remaining local authority areas will be given the opportunity to participate in the second phase of this initiative from September 2005. New schools will be added each term until by January 2007, the policy will be rolled out to all maintained primary schools that want to participate. This initiative is intended to help improve the health and concentration of pupils, to assist in the raising of standards of learning and attainment. It will involve parents but is not intended to replace breakfast already provided. It will allow all those, that, for whatever reason, have not had breakfast, to have one in school. An evaluation has been commissioned. A draft guidance has been produced for the pilot: <http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk/breakfast/guidance-e.htm>

Food & Fitness for Children and Young People Nutrition and physical activity for children & young people has been identified as one of three overarching themes for delivering priority policies by National Assembly for Wales. In order to progress improved nutrition and levels of physical activity for children and young people, initial scoping has suggested that further, or different, action is required at policy, population and local programme levels in order to present a stronger and more co-ordinated approach. A programme of work has been established. Three conferences were held in March with Ministerial involvement, to discuss priorities for Wales in terms of food and fitness for children and young people, and to allow participants to share promising practice.

A Food & Fitness for Children and Young People task group, chaired by the Minister for Health and Social Services had been established and will establish priorities for a manifesto which will be produced early next year.

Training

- As part of the Community Food Network an OCN nutrition course is being developed for community food workers and volunteers. The course will be available nationally across Wales and is being developed in partnership with Community Dietitians in Wales.
- A joint FSA Wales / Welsh Assembly Government project to design inter professional accredited public health nutrition modules for delivery at certificate and diploma level, or for degree purposes and CPD credit will commence shortly.
- Two training seminars on evaluation for Food & Fitness Health Promotion Scheme Grantees were held. The evaluation resource produced to support the training is available at <http://www.ifanc.bangor.ac.uk/about/examples.php>

Food Co-operatives In April a two year pilot scheme to develop food co-operatives in Wales and to expand and direct a food network system throughout North Wales and South Wales commenced. A grant from the Inequalities in Health Fund will fund two Community Food Development Officers to develop a minimum of 26 sustainable food co-operatives, with associated links to schools and the communities.

12 food co-operatives have been set up to date with a further 4 launching over the next two weeks.

Big Fat Problem, a joint BBC Wales and Welsh Assembly Government social action campaign to tackle overweight and obesity, took place over an eight week period earlier this year. Focusing on healthy lifestyle advice, it challenged people across Wales to eat more healthily and get active. The campaign featured innovative programming, roadshows and advertising. The roadshows provided an opportunity for individuals to sign up to a diet and exercise plan and to obtain advice and support from local dietitians and physical activity specialists. Access to the diet and physical activity plan was also available via NHS Direct Wales and was supported by an advice booklet and a dedicated website. Different BBC TV and radio programmes followed the progress of a number of members of the public who signed up for the plan over an 8-week period. A final 30 minute TV programme was broadcast to highlight the progress of these individuals. The campaign was the biggest and most ambitious social action campaign ever attempted by BBC Wales.

- TV promotions seen by 75% of the population in Wales – 2.2million
- Audience reach for TV programmes covering The Big Fat Problem was 1.3million people
- The poster campaign was placed in 214 bus stops and 36 telephone kiosks across Wales reaching 39% of the population
- 58,481 page impressions over 6 weeks on the website. The first week broke all records for previous social action campaigns
- 3368 callers to the helpline run by NHS Direct Wales
- 573 had in depth personal consultations at the 5 roadshows

- 5991 people signed up to the campaign
- 100,000 support booklets produced
- Press coverage resulted in 24 newspaper articles
- A sample of 272 people participating in the programme were monitored and over an eight week period they lost a total of 745lbs (just over 53 stone)

Leisure Centre Catering

A review of leisure centre catering including vending has been carried out, identifying current examples of good practice.

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

Food & Nutrition Strategy

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is continuing to work with other departments and key personnel in the area of food and nutrition to develop a revised strategy and action plan to tackle poor diet. It is anticipated that a draft will be issued for consultation to a wide range of interests early in the New Year. Following publication of the definitive strategy, structures will be put in place to take forward the agreed actions.

The specific actions in the revised strategy and action plan are likely to be grouped under the following headings to support the overall aim and objectives: -

- **policy development to create a supportive environment;**
- **raising awareness and increasing knowledge;**
- **improving skills and facilitating change; and**
- **research and evaluation.**

Taskforce on Obesity in Children and Young People

On the 17th August 2004, Angela Smith, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, officially launched the taskforce on obesity in children and young people, which is known as Fit Futures: Focus on Food Activity and Young People. Fit Futures will focus on the identification and assessment of options that will assist efforts to prevent the development of obesity in children and young people and will report back to Ministerial Group on Public Health before the end of the year.

The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety has written to organisations and groups, from all sectors, seeking views in relation to existing efforts to tackle the causal factors of obesity in children and young people and asking for suggestions in relation to what should be done to tackle the issue more effectively.

The taskforce steering group is also working to develop a research base for its recommendations. To this end, it has commissioned further analysis of surveys and data sets relating to children and young people in Northern Ireland and written to the research and academic community seeking details of relevant work, both completed and planned.

Further information on the Fit Futures initiative is available at <http://www.investingforhealthni.gov.uk/fitfutures.asp>.

Other Initiatives

Physical Activity Strategy

The physical activity strategy, which was published in 1996 has been reviewed and a new strategy was published for public consultation in July 2004. The new strategy builds on the work of the previous strategy and highlights the link between diet and exercise. In this financial year initiatives have included a public information campaign aimed at encouraging people to go walking and a community cash grant scheme.

Fresh Fruit in Schools

As part of the implementation of *Investing for Health*, a Fresh Fruit in Schools pilot scheme was launched in October 2002. The scheme has been extended for the 04/05 academic year and now covers 101 primary schools across the 4 Health Action Zone (HAZ) areas. The scheme aims to give one piece of fresh fruit every day to 7,200 children in P1, P2 and some P3 classes. The scheme, which has just entered its third year, continues to be evaluated:

- A final report covering all the evaluation findings from of first two years of the scheme years is due to be finalised in November 2004.
- Analysis of the Day in the Life Questionnaires suggested that there is a particular need for further work with parents. This is being taken forward to ascertain parents own eating habits; their attitudes towards healthy eating; their knowledge of healthy eating recommendations; their children's eating habits and their awareness of the scheme. The analysis of this work will be included in the final report due in November.
- Analysis will also be carried out on the schools and P3 classes that the scheme has been extended to this year. New analysis will also look at the children who have now left the fresh fruit scheme.

Further information on the Fresh Fruit scheme is available at www.investingforhealthni.gov.uk/fruit.asp

Pilot Nutritional Guidelines for School

A pilot scheme to introduce nutritional guidelines for school meals was launched in March 2004. The scheme will last for three school terms and involves 100 schools representing nursery, primary and post primary sectors. All school meals staff involved in the pilot scheme have been awarded the Foundation Certificate in Nutrition through the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health and have also received training in menu planning, food presentation etc.

Evaluation is ongoing throughout the period of the pilot and is examining any changes in attitudes to the standards among school meals' staff, details of practical issues, such as cost of school meals, preparation time required, changes in food wastage, etc. The wider school environment is also being examined, to identify existing nutrition policies and initiatives as well as those which develop as a result of the pilot scheme.

Update from the Scottish Executive Health Department

Healthy living Campaign

The latest phase of the Healthy Living campaign launched on 4 May features new style TV adverts incorporating a greater emphasis on physical activity. The advertising looks to build a predisposition to change by influencing attitudes and encouraging positive changes in behaviour. Additional advertising on outdoor sites and in cinemas support the campaign.

A briefing paper on the campaign has been produced for health professionals (copy attached). The paper summarises the research behind the national advertising, adviceline and website, and highlights some of the key findings.

Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge

Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge was published in early July. This is a comprehensive strategy document which provides a background to current and future implementation of the Scottish Diet Action Plan. It includes the *Food & Health Action Plan 2004/05* which sets out 10 key action points for the year ahead. These action points in summary are to:

- Develop a stronger interface with the Food Industry with an aim to influence particularly food composition and labelling.
- Use Public Sector providers to demonstrate and exemplar role in the provision of healthier choices and to support the production of healthier foods.
- Launch new Scottish Catering Awards making it easier for people eating out to know where to go for healthier food and to drive up standards throughout the catering industry.
- Build upon the work underway to implement *Hungry for Success: A Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland (2003)* by further supporting schools to teach children how to eat a healthier diet.
- Ensure that all food and drink marketing and advertising aimed directly at children works with us to promote healthier lifestyles rather than against us.
- Ensure continued co-ordinated action and commitment towards food and health policy through the establishment of new communication and leadership structures.
- Deliver a clear and sustained message on healthy eating to the public through the HealthyLiving campaign.
- Focus national and local food and nutrition strategies to contribute to tackling health inequality and particularly upon improving access to a healthier diet.
- Monitor, evaluate and report upon the impact of food and health policies.
- Combat the rise of obesity and overweight within the population through an integrated approach with diet and physical activity.

Copies of the publication are enclosed with this briefing.

Food & Health Website

The Scottish Executive has launched a new Food & Health website within the Topics section of main SE website. It provides policy background to the Scottish Diet Action Plan and the new *Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge* publication. (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/about/HD/HIS/00019133/Introdraft.aspx>)

Hungry for Success

New software entitled H4S and support training materials are being distributed to local authority caterers to help them meet new product specifications and nutrient standards (laid down by the Food Standards Agency Scotland) for school meals. Initial “train the trainer” training programmes have been completed.

Scottish Executive Education Department issued guidance to local authorities last year to help them implement the free fruit in schools initiative. The guidance suggests the need to seek local procurement, wherever possible maximising advantages of short food miles, seasonality and freshness. A copy of the guidance is available from the secretariat.

Food Industry Meetings

In accordance with the Food & Health Action Plan 2004/05, the Deputy Minister for Health & Community Care is leading on a series of talks with representatives from the food industry. Meetings have already taken place with McDonald’s Restaurants Ltd., Masterfoods and ASDA. Further meetings are scheduled with Coca Cola, Pepsico, British Retail Consortium, Scottish Food & Drink, Scottish Food & Drink Federation, Tesco & Morrisons.

The Minister is using these meetings to engage the food industry on a variety of food related issues including: salt, fat (& saturated fat) and sugar reduction; portion sizes; using the industry to stimulate demand for healthier foods; product placement; using the industry to promote the healthy living campaign and signposting healthier options.

Scottish Food & Health Council

In accordance with the Food & Health Action Plan 2004/05, work is underway to create a Scottish Food & Health Council. The Council will be led by the Deputy Minister for Health & Community Care and will be a publicly-appointed body of key stakeholders and experts together with Heads of relevant SE departments and FSA Scotland.

The Council’s role will be to initially advise the Scottish Executive and its partners on strategic issues to implement successfully the action plan contained in *Eating for Health – Meeting the Challenge* and thereafter to be responsible for the planning and implementation of an annual Scottish Executive Food and Health Action Plan to meet targets. and focuses on formulating and delivering an annual plan of action.

The Council will comprise:

- Senior policy advisors from a range of Scottish Executive departments whose policies are integral to meeting the Scottish Dietary targets.
- Academic specialists, industry stakeholders and experts. They will offer critique of existing approaches as well as directions for new policy and programmes.
- Strategic delivery partners whose support is critical for implementation. Their key role will be to identify opportunities for strategic integration of policies and intervention into joined up approaches and local policies and practice (community planning, joint health plans etc)

The formal remit of the Council is:-

to provide leadership and expert advice to the Scottish Executive, and to further integrate cross-cutting elements of Scottish Executive food policy and the strategies of the Food Standards Agency Scotland;

to have a focus on delivery and to be responsible for the planning and implementation of an annual Scottish Food and Health Action Plan; and

to offer leadership to Food and Health policies and strategies in Scotland.

Under this broad remit it is envisaged that the Council will:-

- Focus on specific Scottish themes;
- Be responsible for the planning and implementation of an annual Scottish Executive Food and Health Action Plan;
- Have a Scotland-wide remit to gather, analyse and provide advice;
- Undertake or commission (via the Secretariat) work on topics of particular concern or specific relevance to Scotland;
- Advise on information and research needs;
- Provide policy advice, taking technical and scientific advice;
- Build consensus on the actions needed;
- Be a forum for policy learning;
- Encourage and stimulate good practice;
- Monitor implementation;
- Identify any relevant processes or policies which undermine progress;
- Advocate improvements;
- Liaise with international bodies, particularly at the EU level;
- Oversee and ensure delivery of food and health action plans;
- Provide leadership and 'voice' for rational, evidence-informed policy; and
- Offer clear, simple messages and a policy framework for industry, consumers and government.

The Council is due to have its first formal meeting by end 2004.

Healthyliving Food and Health Alliance

In accordance with the Food and Health Action Plan, in partnership with the Food Standards Agency (Scotland) we are setting up Healthy Living Food and Health Alliance. The Alliance will be open to all and developed to fully represent the breadth of interests involved in implementing a multi-sectoral, food chain based, food and health strategy. There will be an emphasis on inclusion and wide engagement, seeking to involve people broadly, across all sectors, stakeholder groups and networks as well as individuals.

The Alliance will have clearly defined functions and processes which will be taken forward within the extent of the individual remits of the organisations involved. The objectives are to:

- provide a multi-sectoral forum for communication, dialogue and consultation;
- contribute to the definition and focus of national policy;
- support delivery of policy objectives within a national and inclusive structure across Scotland;
- facilitate a strategic programme of consultation, information sharing, evidence gathering and partnership development to effectively capture and disseminate the extent of implementation of the Scottish Diet Action Plan.
- to provide an opportunity to network and develop partnerships.
- The Alliance will be supported and administered jointly by the Scottish Executive Health Department and the Food Standards Agency Scotland.