



**Paper for information: Government Updates on Nutrition
Related Activities
HDA**

Agenda Item: 7

Please see attached paper for information.

Update on the work of the Health Development Agency (HDA)
www.hda.nhs.uk

Transfer to NICE

- 1) As previously highlighted, the function of the HDA will transfer to the National Institute of Clinical Excellence from 1st April 2005. The new organisation will be called the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence and will build an international reputation for promoting excellence in clinical and public health as charged in the White Paper.
- 2) The White Paper stated that: "For the first time, the National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence will integrate upstream (prevention) and downstream (treatment) knowledge and guidance on effective practice and intervention as NICE and the HDA are already doing together on obesity, identifying which actions will have the greatest impact on health. It will become possible to compare evidence for the cost effectiveness of early ill health prevention programmes with the evidence of the cost effectiveness of treatment later. The NHS and its partner organisations, including local government, will benefit from this stronger evidence base both as to what works within the field of public health, inequalities and ill-health prevention and on the case for investment upstream." Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier. Appendix B, paragraph 19.
- 3) Following the departure of Paul Streets in December 2004, Andrew Dillon has been appointed as the new Acting Chief Executive of the HDA. Andrew is also currently Chief Executive of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), and will remain so until the end of March 2005, when Andrew will then become the new Chief Executive.

Obesity Guidance

- 4) The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the Health Development Agency (HDA) are working jointly to develop guidance on the prevention and management of obesity. As previously highlighted, the Scope of the guidance has been established following consultation with stakeholders and is available on the NICE website: www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=63364.
- 5) The Guideline Development Group has now met on 4 occasions to consider evidence reviews relating to different aspects of the Scope.
- 6) The draft guidance will undergo two, four week, consultations during the first half of 2006. It is likely that the first consultation will start in February 2006. The views of SACN on the draft guidance will be valuable.
- 7) As previously highlighted, HDA are also working jointly with the Wales Collaborating Group (led by Dr Alison Weightman) to develop methodology for

the grading of public health evidence and recommendations. SACN members can be provided with further details of this work if they so wish.

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Cascade Training

- 8) HDA co-ordinated the distribution of DH funded small grants to cascade training to NOF and non-NOF funded PCTs, based on local needs assessment. Evaluation of the training is currently being undertaken.

Evaluation resources

- 9) HDA commissioned Dr Pauline McGlone and Dr Julie Dallison to undertake a scoping and collation exercise on evaluation resources for community food projects. The final report, along with many of the tools identified by the researchers, will shortly be available on the HDA website.

Maternal and Child Nutrition

- 10) The work programme for the two Maternal and Child Nutrition collaborating centres is progressing well. The centres are based at the Mother and Infant Research Unit, University of York and led by Professor Mary Renfrew.

Evidence and Guidance collaborating centre

- 11) The effectiveness of interventions to promote the duration of breastfeeding systematic review is in press and will be published in March 2004. Copies can be made available to SACN members at their next meeting.
- 12) Guidance on breastfeeding (both initiation and duration) is in development and will be available in the autumn of 2005
- 13) An evidence review of food support programmes during pregnancy is also in progress. This will investigate the effectiveness and, where possible, the cost effectiveness of food support programmes in improving low birth weight and other physical and psycho-social health outcomes for low-income women and their babies, to identify which components of current programmes to improve nutrition in pregnancy show signs of success and to explore the potential of food programmes in reducing inequalities in the health of women and their babies. This work will also be available in the autumn of 2005.

Practice development collaborating centre

- 14) A learning needs assessment programme of work is underway. This aims to support practice to increase breastfeeding initiation rates and recommendations for continuation of exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and includes:
- Review of existing formal learning opportunities
 - Review of existing literature
 - Telephone/email survey of relevant organisations
 - National survey of practitioners
 - Review of learning opportunities in sentinel sites (a network of at least 15 sentinel sites in areas of significant deprivation have been established to inform, support and develop the work of the Collaborating Centre).

National Healthy Schools

- 15) The National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP) is increasing its work on the healthy eating theme, and helping more schools to introduce healthier eating regimes. 3417 schools had achieved the theme by January 2005 and many more are working towards it. In the meantime, the HDA is in discussion with the FSA, Department of Health, and caterers about the possibility of introducing a catering award addressing school lunches, which would become one of the pre-requisites for achieving the healthy school theme.
- 16) The Public Health White Paper of November 2004 also stated that the Food in Schools action-research programme will be integrated into the NHSP and training is taking place between March and May 2005 for all local healthy schools programmes.

Physical Activity

- 17) The HDA Collaborating Centre for Physical Activity has updated the Evidence Briefing on physical activity in adults and this is currently (Jan 2005) in press. Using the evidence from this, a series of fieldwork meetings have been run to produce an Effective Action Briefing (EAB), incorporating evidence and expertise from practitioners. This EAB is due to be published early in 2005/6.

New Publications (available from www.hda.nhs.uk)

Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities: A self-assessment tool for local authorities

- 18) This self-assessment tool aims to help councils consider whether there are gaps in their capacity to tackle the health problems in their area. It focuses on councils' capacity to tackle health inequalities, but assumes that they will be drawing on the capacity of partners in the local strategic partnerships (LSP), particularly the resources of PCTs.

National standards, local action: Implementing the public health elements of the NHS Planning Framework 2005/06 to 2007/08

19) This briefing summarises key features of the framework; highlights aspects of particular interest to public health planners and practitioners; signposts HDA evidence and guidance that may help PCTs draw up plans for reaching national and local health inequalities targets and for implementing public health interventions; lists relevant documents and information sources and provides weblinks.

NHSP: A briefing for LEA school improvement

20) This briefing aims to provide local education authority (LEA) school improvement and children's services officers, specialist agencies, elected members and school communities with:

- An overview of what the National Healthy Schools Programme is and how it works
- Information about how national healthy school status is being used as a key performance indicator
- An overview of evidence for the effectiveness of the National Healthy Schools Programme
- An analysis of the implications of research findings for LEA school improvement officers, children services officers, elected members, partner agencies and school communities
- An indication of future priorities for the National Healthy Schools Programme.

NHSP: A briefing for directors of public health

21) This briefing aims to provide primary care trusts (PCTs) with a summary of the National Healthy Schools Programme, and to:

- Highlight current trends relating to the health behaviour of English school-aged children
- Provide an overview of what the National Healthy Schools Programme is and how it works
- Outline a rationale for investment in local healthy schools programmes
- Present evidence of the effectiveness of the National Healthy Schools Programme
- Highlight why the programme is of relevance to PCTs and how it can help deliver on key priorities in public health
- Suggest the role PCTs can play in relation to their local healthy schools programme.

Social capital, place and health: Creating, validating and applying small-area indicators in the modelling of health outcomes

22) The aim of this project was to assess whether social capital, measured at the community level, had identifiable effects on health outcomes.

Taking measures: A situational analysis of alcohol in the North West

23) This report has been prepared to assist regional and local agencies in addressing alcohol issues effectively. It provides local level data on alcohol consumption and related harms, outlines the evidence base for implementing effective alcohol interventions, and identifies how alcohol fits into existing regional and local policy.

Good corporate citizenship and the NHS – a regional mapping

24) The NHS has a powerful economic, social and environmental impact. By acting as a 'good corporate citizen' it can make a major contribution to local regeneration and sustainable development, thereby helping with efforts to tackle health inequalities. Regional agencies have played an important part in promoting both the idea of good corporate citizenship and practical action by the NHS. This report reviews developments in the regions, looking in particular at good corporate citizenship in the areas of NHS procurement, employment, capital build, travel, and waste management. The report also provides an overview of the national policy context for good corporate citizenship and the link between NHS and regional policies.

NHSS Regional Conference North East: Raising standards by addressing health inequalities

25) Health improvement and educational development amongst children and young people are inter-related and complementary activities that not only benefit the individual, but also their families, communities and the region as a whole. Given the chronic levels of poor health experienced by much of the population of the North East, and the ongoing need to address the underlying determinants of health, economic, environmental and social, the National Healthy School Standard's focus on addressing health inequalities and targeting of schools in areas of social deprivation is particularly relevant and important to this part of the country.

Relative contributions of changes in risk factors and treatment to the reduction in coronary heart disease mortality

26) This briefing paper considers what has made the greater contribution to the reduction in CHD mortality - changes in risk factors or improved medical intervention. Key findings are listed. The paper's conclusion is that both cardiological treatments and primary prevention both play an important part in preventing CHD mortality. However, only risk factor strategies have the potential to halve CHD deaths in the UK.

Breastfeeding for longer – what works?

27) This summary paper gives an overview of key findings from a series of systematic reviews of studies of interventions relevant to the continuation of breastfeeding, together with recommendations for practice and policy.

National Healthy School Standard and local strategic partnerships: working together

28) This briefing aims to highlight how the National Healthy School Standard (NHSS) provides a vehicle through which LSPs can address a range of priorities. It outlines opportunities for joint working within the current policy context for children's services, and gives practical suggestions for partnership work and outputs at a local level.

Evaluation of community-level interventions for health improvement: A review of experience in the UK

29) While community-level approaches to health improvement have gained much attention and importance in recent years, the evidence base for this area of work is still believed to be problematic and underdeveloped. This report brings together current knowledge about different approaches to the evaluation of community-based programmes, highlights recent innovations and promising examples of good evaluation practice, and identifies a set of principles that aim to improve the robustness and quality of evaluations in this area.