



Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

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

**Agenda Item: 8**

Please see attached paper for information.

## **DH Update on Nutrition Initiatives**

NB: Initiatives apply to England only unless otherwise stated

### **Obesity**

- 1) A strategic statement, which outlines the strategy for combatting the Obesity PSA is being prepared. It is expected that this statement will be shared more widely with interested stakeholders.
- 2) The NICE Guidance on the prevention, identification, assessment and management of overweight and obesity in adults and children was published on Wednesday 13 December (<http://nice.org.uk/guidance/CG43/guidance>). The guidance makes a series of recommendations aimed at PCTs, NHS organisations, health professionals, local authorities, schools, early years settings, individuals in the public and workplaces. In general, these recommendations are practical and very much in line with our cross-Government programme on obesity.
- 3) The second edition of Obesity bulletin will be published in February 2007.
- 4) The report on the weighing and measuring of all primary school children in Reception Year and Year 6 was published on 18 December 2006. Although it revealed that coverage was not good enough to perform detailed analysis at a PCT level, it did show the following positive points:
  - It is the largest database of its kind in the world.
  - More than half a million children in Reception Year and year 6 were measured
  - 80 per cent of PCTs returned some data.
  - In areas where there has been a good response rate, the exercise has galvanised local services into action.
- 5) We intend to continue with the weighing and measuring programme. Lessons learned from the last academic year will improve and strengthen the system for 2006-07 and we are producing revised guidance, to be published in the next few weeks.

### **Obesity Prevention Social Marketing Programme ( formerly Healthy Living Social Marketing Programme)**

- 6) The social marketing work has been fully integrated into the obesity programme. The use of social marketing is a major delivery vehicle for the Programme, which underpins all the themes. It will develop a deep understanding of the drivers of families' food and physical activity habits, their motivations and the barriers to change that exist for them. This will help in communicating messages, informing intervention strategies and building the evidence base. The quantitative consumer insight research, commissioned by the Obesity Prevention Social Marketing Programme has been completed, and six cluster audience groups have been identified. The obesity programme team is in the process of prioritising these

groups for action. Qualitative research will be commissioned shortly to create audience profiles, to enable effective targeting of messages. The successful Strategy into Action event on 15 December 2006 aimed to begin tactical planning around the behavioural goals, and was attended by 150 stakeholders, including NGOs and industry. We expect to publicly launch the Programme in early 2007.

### **Food promotion to children**

- 7) Ofcom announced consultation on new restrictions for TV advertising of food and drink to children on 17 November that ended on 28 December. Ofcom will make a statement on a final proposal later this month. In brief, Ofcom have proposed a “modified option 1”, which means:
  - No HFSS advertising in children’s programmes (including pre-school children);
  - No HFSS advertising on dedicated children’s channels;
  - No HFSS advertising in programmes of particular appeal to children under 16;
  - No celebrities or licensed characters to be used in ads for HFSS products aimed at primary aged children;
  - No nutritional or health claims in HFSS ads aimed at primary aged children; and
  - No promotional offers in HFSS ads aimed at primary aged children.
- 8) Ofcom’s assessment is that this package of rules will reduce children’s exposure to advertising impacts by 41% for 4-15 year olds and 51% for 4-9 year olds.
- 9) The Committee on Advertising Practice (CAP) and the Advertising Standards Authority are responsible for drafting and enforcement respectively of the content code for non-broadcast media. CAP has said that it would transpose Ofcom’s content rules, if acceptable, to the non-broadcast Code.
- 10) The Food and Drink Advertising and Promotion Forum established in mid 2005 will be holding its next meeting in February 2007.

### **Healthy Start**

- 11) Healthy Start was implemented across Great Britain in November 2006 replacing the Welfare Food Scheme.
- 12) A multifaceted approach for dissemination of information to health professionals for phase 2 was taken, which included information packs for health care professionals, articles in professional journals, CPD training packages as well as a national launch conference in London.
- 13) Colleagues in Northern Ireland have introduced provisions to mirror those of Healthy Start in Great Britain which means that the Healthy Start vouchers will be able to be used at participating retailers across the UK.
- 14) The number of retail outlets already signed up to Healthy Start is in excess of 25,000.

- 15) There is a statutory responsibility to provide vitamin supplements to recipients of milk tokens and healthy start vouchers. Until recently, Abidec vitamin drops were being provided. A new bespoke Healthy Start vitamin product for children has now been produced, and it is available for order by PCT clinics through NHS Supply Chain. All PCTs have been advised of their responsibility to ensure that this product is available to recipients of Healthy Start. PCTs may also sell this product to the general public.
- 16) A tender for a bespoke unlicensed Healthy Start vitamin tablet for women has been undertaken and a contract has been awarded to a manufacturer. The product is expected to be available in March 2007.

### **Infant Feeding**

- 17) National Breastfeeding Awareness Week 2007 will be held from 13-19 May 2007. It is an annual public health campaign aimed to increase awareness of the health benefits of breastfeeding. Discussions are underway with key stakeholders to consider how best to support the week through promotional activities and materials.
- 18) Other breastfeeding promotional activities, including TV and radio fillers are being considered.
- 19) DH is reviewing its breastfeeding and infant feeding literature with stakeholders to ensure accuracy and consistency.
- 20) Further information can be accessed on [www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk](http://www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk)

### **Healthy Schools (Joint DH/DFES)**

#### ***Food in Schools Toolkit and Healthy Schools Toolkit***

- 21) The Healthy Schools team has now drafted an update on school food. This will be printed and made available for inserting in the Food in Schools Toolkit.
- 22) The Healthy Schools Team is currently developing a Toolkit for all Healthy Schools Coordinators and their schools. More than 85% of all schools have now joined the Programme so this Toolkit will be circulated widely. The HS Toolkit will cover all four core healthy schools themes, including Healthy Eating.

#### ***Obesity Guidance for Healthy Schools Coordinators and their partners***

- 23) Using the recently published NICE guidance, the Faculty of Public Health and National Heart Forum Obesity Toolkit, and other sources of good practice information, the DH Healthy Schools and Obesity teams have established some areas where efforts should be concentrated in schools. This has been brought together in a paper '*Obesity Guidance for Healthy Schools Coordinators and their partners*'. The *Guidance* sets out information relating to five action points to consider:

- Ensure the language and core messages relating to obesity, healthy eating and physical activity are appropriate.
- Achieve Healthy Schools Status using a whole school approach. The National Healthy Schools programme is widely recognised as an important mechanism for delivering the Obesity PSA. The four healthy schools themes (healthy eating, physical activity, emotional health and well-being and personal, social and health education) and the respective 34 out of 41 of the Healthy Schools criteria all play an important part in obesity prevention.
- Ensuring universal prevention – creating opportunities for *all* children to be actively involved in a healthy lifestyle.
- Engaging parents/carers – offering a range of healthy activities that involve children/young people and their parents/carers, and highlight the range of ways that they can adopt healthier behaviours outside of schools hours.
- Exploring additional activities for obesity/overweight - ensuring that any initiatives offered by external providers concerning obesity, nutrition and/or physical activity are safe and appropriate.

24) The guidance has been distributed to Local Healthy Schools Programme Coordinators, PCT Obesity, Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Leads, Partnership Development Managers, School Sport co-ordinators, Primary Link Teachers, School Nurses, School Travel Advisors and Extended Schools.

### ***Super- Regional Obesity Conferences for School Health Professionals***

25) A series of four super-regional Obesity conferences are being held in January/February 2007:

- London- January 16th
  - Leeds- January 26th
  - Birmingham- January 30th
  - Bristol- February 1st
- Discussions around the use of the obesity guidance will form a key part of these conferences. The Conferences also will provide an update on national strategy, guidance, good practice examples and workshop discussions on working with schools to take this work forward.

### **5 A DAY Programme**

26) Nearly 600 organisations are now licensed to use the 5 A DAY logo and/or the portion indicator on promotional materials and/or food products.

27) We hope to launch composite criteria & guidance on handfals in 2007.

28) The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme continues to provide all children aged 4-6 in state funded primary schools with a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day. Future developments around the scheme include work with the Healthy

Schools Team, DfES and School Food Trust to identify ways to integrate the scheme more closely with other school based food initiatives.

### **Physical Activity**

- 29) A report "Learning from LEAP" was launched on 5 December 2006.
- 30) We have commissioned a Schools Physical Activity Toolkit to bring together all the different strands of physical activity in schools. Its aim is to help school physical activity providers such as Healthy Schools co-coordinators and School Sport co-coordinators deliver their targets. The toolkit will be delivered through a series of training workshops in April.
- 31) The Youth Sport Trust has been commissioned to further develop the work they started with the Schools on the Move pedometer pilot programme. This will involve expanding the programme to 250 schools to be targeted on the basis of deprivation, and the development of an open resource that can be used by any health or education professional. This will be rolled out in September 2007.
- 32) DH has developed a short questionnaire (the general practice physical activity questionnaire, or GPPAQ) for use by practice nurses to establish the physical activity levels of newly registering patients, and of other patients as the opportunity arises. The questionnaire was launched on 5 December 2006 and is available on the DH website.