



Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

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

Agenda Item: 8

Please see attached paper for information.

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

Fit Futures: Focus on Food, Activity and Young People

- 1) The Ministerial Group on Public Health (MGPH) established the Fit Futures taskforce to examine options for tackling childhood obesity. Following the establishment of the taskforce and developments nationally, a PSA target was set to stop the rise in obesity in children by 2010. Responsibility for the target is shared with DHSSPS by the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure.
- 2) The taskforce report was published in March 2006 and includes over seventy cross-departmental recommendations designed to deliver the PSA target. A response to the Fit Futures report, including a cross-departmental implementation plan is currently under development and was presented to the last meeting of the Ministerial Group on Public Health at the end of October 2006, and the final plan is due to be published early in 2007.
- 3) Progress has already been made in relation to the delivery of some of the Fit Futures recommendations. For example, regulations on school development planning now require schools to consider arrangements for promoting the health and well-being of staff and pupils as part of the school development planning process. There has also been a major investment by the Department of Education in improving the nutritional status of school meals. All of the Health and Social Services Boards have submitted integrated obesity prevention plans covering the planned activity of Boards, Trusts and Investing for Health Partnerships and meetings have been held with lead officials to discuss priorities for action in light of the Fit Futures recommendations.
- 4) Liaison is also continuing with officials in the Department of Health in relation to dimensions of the Fit Futures report that are being progressed at a UK-wide level, such as advertising of food to children.
- 5) It is anticipated that the Fit Futures implementation plan will also include a commitment to publish new strategic frameworks on nutrition and physical activity.
- 6) Research papers and consultation reports developed during the Fit Futures process are available at <http://www.investingforhealthni.gov.uk/fitfutures.asp>

Nutrition Matters

- 7) In October 2005, the Health Promotion Agency, with the support of local community dietitians, published updated guidance on feeding children under 5 in childcare settings. The new guidance aims to assist child minders and childcare staff to support the children in their care to eat a healthy balanced diet and to encourage children to develop healthy eating habits. "Nutrition Matters" includes nutrition advice, meal ideas and suggestions to encourage "fussy eaters" to try healthy options. A training programme, based on the guidance in Nutrition

Matters, will be delivered during 2007 to child minders and staff working in childcare and early years settings.

Food in Schools

- 8) The implementation of nutritional guidelines for school meals, developed following a pilot scheme conducted in Northern Ireland during 2004/2005, is being rolled out across Northern Ireland. The implementation of the guidelines has been supported by the provision of additional funding to increase the minimum expenditure on the food content of meals. In addition, nutritional standards co-ordinators are being appointed in each of the Education Boards to support the implementation of the guidelines by the provision of training, guidance and support for the development of a whole school approach to food provision. Associate inspectors have also been appointed to carry out inspections of food in schools as part of the school inspection process.
- 9) In addition, in line with developments in other parts of the UK, the Department of Education is now consulting on the development of nutrient based standards for school meals and on standards to be applied to other forms of food provision within schools, such as tuck-shops and vending machines.

Cook It!

- 10) The Health Promotion Agency is overseeing a lottery funded, community based nutrition education programme targeted at lower income groups, called Cook It!. It aims to provide practical experience of food preparation using healthy low-cost ingredients, with an opportunity to sample the completed dishes, thereby removing the financial risk involved in experimenting with new dishes within restricted resources. Dietitians have been appointed as Cook it! co-ordinators in each of the four local Health and Social Services Boards. The co-ordinators facilitate a two-day training course for the Cook it! tutors and support them in delivering the six-week Cook it! programme to local community groups in their areas.

Diet and Nutrition Information

- 11) The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety will shortly be commencing discussions with other government departments and agencies, including, in particular, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, about options for satisfying the Department's information needs in relation to diet and nutrition from 2007 onwards.

Healthy Start

- 12) In November 2006, in line with developments elsewhere in the UK, the new Healthy Start Scheme was introduced in Northern Ireland.

Update on Nutrition Work in Wales

Quality of Food Strategy

13) As a result of the minority party debate held on the 17 October 2006, the proposal to produce a Quality of Food strategy to improve the quality of food consumed in Wales was approved. The remit for the strategy is broad and cross cutting and it will look to integrate policies from key areas across the Assembly Government such as agriculture, education, social justice, health etc.

14) To date the following has been completed:

- A review of existing Assembly Government policies that influence the quality of food consumed in Wales;
- The engagement of internal and external stakeholders to identify areas for action;
- The review of national and international evidence base and best practice, including mid term external review of Food and Well Being, the nutrition strategy for Wales.

15) A task and finish group has been established which includes representatives from a number of Assembly departments such as agriculture, education, social justice etc as well as external partners such as the Food Standards Agency Wales.

Food in Hospitals

16) A Food in Hospital Task and Finish Group, chaired by the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales, has been established to produce a report on the provision of food in hospitals for patients, staff and visitors by 30 April 2007. Its objectives are to scope current promising practice across Wales; to link in with wider UK practice; to map existing practice with current guidance and to provide advice on the way forward.

Food and Fitness – Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Children and Young People Implementation Plan 2006

17) To ensure this plan can be delivered the Assembly Government has allocated funding of some £20m to support new and existing actions. A number of programmes are underway to implement the actions outlined in the Five Year Plan. These include:

- Additional funding has been released to fund additional co-ordinators to support the expansion of the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes to all LEA maintained schools (WNHSS);
- Grants have been made available for food and fitness projects in WNHSS schools e.g. playground games, bike racks, fruit tuck shops, school gardens, water coolers, healthy vending, out of school cookery classes;
- Case studies of action in schools in support of food and fitness has been published;
- Guidance on whole school food and fitness policies has been developed;
- Guidance on packed lunches has been developed;

- A 5 x 60 programme has been introduced to help increase the percentage of secondary school pupils that do 5x60 minutes of sport and physical activity per week, currently at 24%, by targeting children and young people who drop out of or do not take part in sport or physical activity;
- A Cooking Bus has been sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government, through Design Dimension Educational Trust. The Bus visits schools and provides practical cooking lessons for pupils and one teacher training session at each school. One session at every venue will also be used to help parents of young children to develop their cooking skills;
- A pilot scheme to look at ways of introducing or increasing healthy food options within leisure centres;
- The Healthy Families Initiative, a new Big Lottery Fund £20 million funding programme, which aims to promote healthy and active lifestyles amongst children and families by creating a joined up approach. The Healthy Families Initiative is made up of two programmes, Child's Play and Way of Life. Child's Play will provide grants for the strategic development of play opportunities across Wales. Way of Life aims to promote a joined up approach to healthy eating and physical activity.

Appetite for Life

- 18) Last year, the Welsh Assembly Government set up a Food in Schools Working Group, to examine how to improve the quality and nutritional standards of school meals, and how to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to driving forward improvements in food and nutrition in our schools.
- 19) Their report Appetite for Life sets out the Group's review of food and drink provided to children during the course of the school day and their proposals on how to continue to drive forward our whole school approach to improving all food and drink available during the school day. The results of the consultation, which took place between June and October 2006, are currently being considered and an action plan will be launched summer 2007.
- 20) To support the implementation of the proposals for Appetite for Life a number of initiatives have been launched. A £4.3m funding package for the three-year period 2006/07 to 2008/09 will:
- enable local authorities to provide training to school catering staff which deliver recognised qualifications in healthy eating and practical cookery skills;
 - enable local authorities to purchase equipment to improve existing school kitchen/dining room facilities so that they are fit for purpose;
 - enable the WLGA to appoint a co-ordinator to provide practical support to local authorities, caterers and schools on improving the provision of food and drink in our schools;
 - enable the WLGA to procure software to enable caterers to generate with support and training for all catering organisations providing meals to maintained schools in Wales.

Infant Feeding

- 21) A Breastfeeding Peer Support Grant Scheme has been launched and 23 local Schemes have been awarded funding to provide training and other support to mothers across Wales.
- 22) All Wales Infant Feeding Guidelines are being developed which will provide a reference resource for primary care practitioners such as health visitors and midwives across Wales.

Community Food Co-operative Programme

- 23) The Community Food Co-operative programme in Wales has won a World Health Organisation award for counteracting obesity for activities in promoting fruit and vegetables, with a focus on vulnerable consumers. The programme was up against 202 applications from 35 countries. 109 Community Food Co-operatives have been opened to date under this programme.

Update from the Scottish Executive Health Department

Hospital Food

- 24) The Audit Scotland Report *Catering for Health* was published in November 2006 and indicated that over the last 3 years NHS Boards have improved the level of choice in the food given to patients, have reduced the amount of food wasted and have better information to help them control their costs. However the Report also acknowledged that more needs to be done to ensure that meals provided in hospitals are nutritionally balanced.
- 25) Work is currently underway with the Food Standards Agency Scotland and other partners to develop catering standards for the wider NHS Catering Service covering all aspects of menus, food provision and procurement for hospital meals and staff and visitor catering services. The Scottish Executive has also appointed a Food and Nutrition Advisor from within the NHS to develop these nutrient standards and nutrient specifications and also to develop guidelines on their implementation. These standards will be published during 2007 and will support the QIS Clinical Standards for Food, Fluid and Nutrition that are already in place in all Scottish hospitals.

SGF Healthy living Programme

- 26) Phase 3 of the SGF Healthy living Programme, an initiative aimed at improving the quality and availability of healthy choices in neighbourhood shops, was launched by the Minister for Health and Community Care on 18 December 2006.
- 27) A Report on the first two phases of the Programme will be available at the end of January.

Scottish Food and Health Council

- 28) The Scottish Food and Health Council met on 13 December 2006. The meeting focussed on the findings of the Scottish Diet Action Plan Review and also the future direction of the Council.

- 29) Papers for the latest meeting can be found at:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/health/19133/17905>

Scottish Food and Health Alliance

- 30) The Scottish Food and Health Alliance have launched a new website:
<http://www.fhascot.org.uk> and an event is planned at the end of February.

Future Work

- 31) Following the publication of the Scottish Diet Action Plan Review, the Scottish Executive will continue to work with its key partners to develop a new delivery plan to improve Scotland's nutritional health. It is proposed that work will focus

around key themes such as infant and maternal nutrition, creating healthy places and environments, food in the public sector, and working with industry.