



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

Agenda Item: 6

Please see attached paper for information.

DH Update on Nutrition Initiatives

NB: Initiatives apply to England only unless otherwise stated

Obesity

1. The Government is developing a comprehensive cross Government strategy on obesity, building on the evidence in the Foresight report.

National Child Measurement Programme

2. The coverage and prevalence results of the 2006-07 NCMP will be published in mid-February. 100% PCTs supplied data for the year.
3. New guidance for PCTs and schools for the 2007-08 NCMP was published at the end of September 2007. A revised leaflet for parents, *Why your child's weight matters*, was also published, and is available in multiple languages at www.dh.gov.uk/healthyliving. We have also developed a web-based clip to illustrate the measurement process for those undertaking the measurement. We are currently finalising a children's information flyer to help children understand the purpose of the programme. We are also planning NCMP workshops for early April 2008.
4. From September 2008, parents will routinely receive their child's results from the NCMP. A clause in the Health and Social Care Bill amends Schedule 1 of the National Health Service Act 2006, and will enable results to be feedback to parents on an opt-out basis. Over the next few months, we will be consulting with parents, professional groups and relevant organisations, to develop the best system and format for providing children's results to their parents. This will include determining what level of detail parents would find most helpful. We are already currently undertaking a consultation with parents and other key stakeholders to seek their views about the online child height-weight calculator to ensure that it is a useful aid for parents.

Nutrition

Healthy Start

5. Healthy Start has now been in place for just over a year, having been introduced fully in November 2006. Over 30,000 individual retail outlets now accept Healthy Start vouchers.
6. Healthy Start branded vitamin supplements have been available for PCTs to order and distribute since early 2007. Quarterly invoicing by Trusts for vitamins given out means it is still difficult to assess their take up by scheme beneficiaries accurately. However, it is clear that some PCTs are more proactive than others in promoting vitamins locally, NHS involvement in promoting the supplements is important to raise awareness and complement central initiatives such as a vitamin

promotional flyer sent with vouchers in July 2007. Though still too early to tell, it appears the flyer may have boosted take up in some PCTs.

7. We have recently awarded the Healthy Start Issuing Unit contract to a new contractor from April 2008. Moving the contract opens up new opportunities to improve scheme delivery and to obtain management information about the impact of the Scheme at SHA and possibly PCT level. Our aim is to use this information to provide feedback to NHS organisations to help them consider ways to best support eligible women and families.

Infant Feeding

8. The Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency announced the new Regulations on 21 November 2007. The new regulations introduce stricter controls on labelling and advertising of all types of formulae to ensure that breastfeeding is not undermined by the marketing and promotion of such products. The English, Northern Ireland, Scotland (?) have awarded a temporary stay pending a Judicial Review by the end of February 2008.
9. We have updated our leaflets about Weaning and Bottle feeding and are developing new leaflets about Folic acid aimed at women who are or may become pregnant and Vitamin D aimed at health professionals. The new leaflets will be available soon. We are developing supporting PR activity to be conducted later in the year.

Food Promotion to Children

10. As of 1st January 2008 Ofcom restrictions on advertising HFSS food and drink were extended to cover programmes of particular appeal to children aged 15 and under.
11. The Department of Health continue to monitor the impact of the new Ofcom and CAP rules on the nature and balance of food and drink advertising to children in broadcast and non-broadcast media.

Healthy Schools (Joint DH/DFES)

12. As of 8th January 95% of schools are now registered and participating on the National healthy schools programme, 56% of schools now have National Healthy Schools Status.
13. The healthy eating guidance "My Food" has been sent out to schools. This has been written in consultation with children and young people. It is a guide for schools that explains and provides advice on how each healthy eating criteria can be achieved.

Cabinet Office Strategy Unit - Review of Food Policy

14. The Prime Minister asked the Strategy Unit together with DH, FSA and DEFRA, to take a long-term look at food policy in September 2007. On Thursday 3rd January the Cabinet Office published a report: 'Food: an analysis of the issues', a discussion paper presenting an analysis of a number of key issues pertaining to food and food policy in the UK. DH are leading on the public health aspects of the report. The analysis found that improving our diet could save 70,000 lives a year – one in every 10 deaths.
15. Drawing on existing data, the Strategy Unit's report concluded that the urgent challenges to public health go beyond obesity. The critical issue is that though the majority of us do not need to eat more, we do need to eat better.
16. The analysis also shows that large-scale improvement in eating habits could not only save thousands of lives every year but potentially save the economy billions of pounds currently spent on treating the consequences of poor diet.
17. As well as implications for public health, the report looks more broadly at current and emerging trends in the production and consumption of food, and the key drivers of those trends. It covers the environmental impact of the food chain and how those impacts might be tackled, as well as issues around food safety.
18. A second part, now in progress, involves consulting on the trends, the challenges the UK faces in responding to the many issues in a coherent way, and how Government can help. These consultations involve (i) NGOs covering a wide range of consumer, environmental and health issues; (ii) industry representative bodies and companies from all along the food chain; and (iii) others with an interest.
19. A third and final part will draw out policy implications.
20. The Strategy Unit will deliver a report to the Prime Minister in Spring 2008.

Physical Activity

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CARE PATHWAY

21. The DH, supported by Natural England and Sport England, is piloting the PACP in two waves over a 12-month period from October 2007. The first wave involves eight GP practices across five London PCTs (Wandsworth, Islington, Southwark, Haringey and Tower Hamlets).

22. We recently invited all London PCTs to participate in wave 2 of the Physical Activity Care Pathway cost and feasibility pilot. Successful PCTs have now been notified and will begin training for the second wave which is scheduled to start in March 2008.
23. Based on the General Practitioners Physical Activity Questionnaire, evidence from the NICE guidance on brief interventions in physical activity and motivational interviewing techniques, this model will be evaluated in terms of cost and feasibility with a view to adopting and mainstreaming the care pathway in GP practices throughout England. We are working with the BHF National Centre for Physical Activity and Health based at Loughborough University.

REVIEW OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

24. Ministers have announced a review of the delivery and funding of sport and physical activity. The review will be taken forward by an officials group, comprising initially DH, DCMS, DCSF and led by HMT, which will report to Ministers at the end of March.
25. Sport England is likely to focus in the future upon the development of a world-class community sport system, with an emphasis upon talent pathways and excellence. While Sport England will contribute to increasing mass participation in physical activity, this will now be a subsidiary aim delivered through its work across organised sport.

HEALTH & 2012

26. Officials are working closely to develop a 2012 health legacy aimed at increasing access to healthy, active lifestyles with a particular focus on children and young people between the ages of 5 and 16.
27. We are determined to make the UK the first host country to take the opportunity to improve health and wellbeing through the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

EUROPEAN GUIDELINES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

28. The EC White Paper on Sport included a proposal to develop European physical activity guidelines. This is being taken forward by an Expert Group convened for this purpose from Member State representatives, which met for the first time on 7th December and will report to the EU Working Group on Sport and Health. Angie Page and Chris Riddoch were nominated for the UK. Readout from the 7th December meeting suggests that the work will co-ordinated with existing WHO recommendations for physical activity and will focus on defining priorities for policies that would encourage people to move more.

PLATFORM FOR ACTION MEETING

29. A Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health workshop was held in Brussels on 14/15 November. This was the first time that the Platform has

devoted a meeting to physical activity and a useful discussion was held. The EU Commission White Paper on Sport featured on the agenda

East Midlands Cycling Projects

30. The Department of Health has agreed to fund Cycling for Health pilots hosted by Nottingham City and Northamptonshire PCTs.
31. The Cycling for Health pilots are both PCT-led and will take place over two years. The pilots will demonstrate different, but complementary, approaches to increasing cycling. These draw upon existing provision for cycling training and build upon local approaches to health and fitness promotion.