



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

Agenda Item: 6

Please see attached paper for information.

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

1. The Fit Futures taskforce was established by the Ministerial Group on Public Health (MGPH) in response to increasing concerns about the health implications of rising levels of overweight and obesity in children and young people in Northern Ireland. The role of the taskforce was to examine options for preventing overweight and obesity in children and young people and to make recommendations to MGPH on Priorities for Action.
2. An Obesity Prevention Steering Group is now being established to oversee and drive forward fit futures. Since March 2007, we have continued to make progress on the Fit Futures Implementation Plan, the following areas are examples of work that have been taken forward to date:
 - Food in Schools Dietitian / Nutritionist - Job description has been agreed and post has been re-advertised. Appointment is expected to take place in December 2007. This post will support the implementation of the joint Department of Education (DE) / DHSSPS Food in Schools policy, and contribute to DE's Nutritional Standards for School Meals policy and other food in schools.
 - In addition, work is continuing in conjunction with DE, Health Promotion Agency (HPA) and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland (FSANI) to develop the policy document on Food in Schools and food-based nutritional standards (for School Meals and Catering for Healthier Lifestyles). DE has now received final comments from all interested parties and is preparing a paper for consideration by their DE Board. It is anticipated that a public consultation will commence in January 2008.
 - National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) - Data from the NDNS on food consumption and nutritional information is critical to underpinning a wide range of FSANI's work to protect consumer safety and promote healthy diets. The information will also be used by the DHSSPS Information and Analysis Branch to address recommendations in Fit Futures. A further meeting of the group is expected to take place in January 2008.
 - 'Decent Food for All' - Progress is being made on the development of Armagh and Dungannon Health Action Zone's 'Decent Food for All' Toolkit. This toolkit supports the development of basic nutrition and cooking skills among people on low incomes.
 - School nurse to be appointed to support healthy schools and needs assessment – Nursing and midwifery are developing a business case for a secondment.
 - Funding has been provided for nurses to collect and measure the BMI of year 8/9 pupils, and allow for some follow-up for those identified as being outside the normal BMI range.

- Development of Health Breaks initiative - Meeting held to discuss options to further support work in this area and plan wider consultation to consider roll out on a regional basis.
- The Cookit! Programme has been mainstreamed in Eastern and Western Board areas, and we remain optimistic that this can also occur in the Southern and Northern Board areas.
- Nutrition and Dental Health Guidelines for Professionals are being developed with a partnership group which will ensure that the recommendations contained in the Fit Futures Implementation Plan are adhered to and followed.
- The FSANI are working towards the establishment of a public sector food procurement initiative in partnership with DFP, DARD and DHSSPS.
- The FSANI are also developing a project to review and test options for integrating quality nutrition education into training programmes for those working in the food and hospitality sectors.
- The FSANI have already facilitated an annual business and nutrition forum to engage local business and consumer interests in the delivery of an agreed approach to improving nutrition and to support local business to take competitive advantage from having a health focus.
- The FSANI have also supported the development of good practice guidance on tackling food poverty and the development of food poverty networks.
- The FSANI will continue to ensure that national programmes on issues such as product reformulation and signpost labelling are progressed effectively in N. Ireland and involve the food industry and supporting agencies and organisations in N. Ireland.
- DE were key to supporting an international research and development project being developed by Northern Ireland Preschool Play Association (NIPPA) to develop and test best practice in supporting learning, development and health and well-being through early years interventions. At present the NIPPA research project is currently being developed. In addition, Sure Start Projects are to be included in the research which is likely to be ongoing over next 2-3 years.
- DE/DHSSPS are continuing to develop a joint healthy schools policy to deliver the objective of all schools becoming healthy schools within 10 years. Having robust food in schools and active schools plans should be a core criteria for a healthy school. Further discussion is to take place to establish a healthy schools partnership to direct the implementation of the healthy schools policy and to put in place mainstream arrangements to replace the healthy schools pilot project, which are connected effectively with the arrangements for supporting extended schools.

- DE will create an active schools partnership to develop plans for delivering an increase in levels of physical education, improve provision of after school sport and physical activity, and mainstream fundamental programmes within the primary school sector. The plans should particularly target those who currently participate least in physical activity, including children with a disability. To this end the Minister for Education is working with the GAA and IFA to put in place a sports programme in primary schools, focusing initially on Gaelic games and soccer. The aim is to increase participation in sport and develop physical literacy skills and an enjoyment of physical activity. A further meeting with representatives from DHSSPS, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and DE is planned in December 2007.
- DE will also establish a food in schools forum to support the delivery of a whole school approach to food and nutrition issues in schools and this Forum will be established to coincide with publication of the policy.
- DE are also working to ensure that effective links are made between schools and their local community when developing sport and physical activity initiatives as part of the extended schools programme. The Education and Library Boards will submit a summary report to DE shortly which will provide details of extended school activities including information on community engagement.

Update on Nutrition Work in Wales

Welsh Food Debate

3. Between 25th September and 31st December 2007 the Welsh Food Debate engaged people and organisations across Wales in discussing issues around the Quality of Food consumed in Wales.
4. The consultation aimed to explore how to make it possible for everybody in Wales to be able to eat food that is healthy, affordable and produced in a sustainable way, whilst supporting a strong and diverse Welsh food industry.
5. The feedback is currently being analysed externally and will be used to:
 - Develop a Quality of Food Action Plan, which will focus on health, sustainable development, social justice and education.
 - Contribute to the development of a revised Agri-Food Strategy, which will have similar strategic goals to the previous one, but will have clear links to individual sectoral strategies.

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/health/improvement/food/food-health/quality-food/?lang=en>

Appetite for Life

6. Stakeholder conferences were held on 22 November and 6 December 2007 to launch the Appetite for Life Action Plan. The conferences focussed on sharing experiences to help support schools and caterers in improving the nutritional standards of food and drink provided in schools in Wales.
7. The Appetite for Life Action Plan sets out the way forward. A two-year action research project involving four local authorities will run from September 2008 to develop, and test the guidelines for implementing the food and nutritional standards proposed in the action plan and learn lessons from this project to inform wider application across all maintained schools in Wales. Alongside this work, funding will also be made available via a specific grant scheme to support, across all authorities, those schools not involved in the action research project who wish to progress to the new standards.

http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/education_and_skills_consult/education_and_skills_consul/appetite?lang=en

Workforce Development Plan

8. Funding has been awarded to Skills Active and Skills for Health to develop a coherent approach to workforce development in order to deliver the three strategies *Food and Fitness- Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Children and Young People 5 Year Implementation Plan*, *The Quality of Food Strategy*, *Climbing Higher* and associated public health strategies. This piece of work will enable the identification of the training needs of both the food and

physical activity workforce, ensuring the workforce is suitably skilled for the delivery of key Welsh Assembly Government Strategies.

Food in Hospitals

9. Two groups have been established to take forward recommendations from the Food in Hospitals Task and Finish Group.
10. The Nutrition Campaign Group is tasked with developing and implementing a National Nutrition Campaign that promotes the message that “The provision of food and water has the same importance as medication”. It will also provide recommendations to the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales of ways in which catering can be recognised as a clinical support service and managed appropriately.
11. The Nutrition Care Pathways Group will develop a plan to address issues relating to procurement, catering, staff involved in all aspects of food preparation, presentation of food, appropriate to patient case mix, environment positioning, oral health requirements, staffing requirements. It will develop a “management for meals plan/chart” and formalise food and fluid charts to ensure consistency. The group will also explore the establishment of formal links into under graduate curricula programmes for medics and AHP to raise profile of importance of nutrition from not only the nutritional requirements but also the patient experience.

Update from the Scottish Executive Health Department

Hospital Food

12. The targeted consultation on the draft NHS Catering and Nutritional Specifications closed for comment on the 16 November. Further discussions on the consultation were held with stakeholders at 3 Workshops organised in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Perth. The draft specifications provide minimum standards for nutrient and food provision for patients in hospitals; and provides guidance on how these standards can be met, through assessment of the population's dietary needs, menu planning, guidance and practical suggestions on food choices suitable for different dietary needs, including special and therapeutic diets. The specifications will support the QIS Clinical Standards for Food, Fluid and Nutritional Care.
13. All responses from the consultation and the comments from the workshop are being collated, and shall be discussed at the next meeting of the Nutrition & Catering Specification Working Group at the end of January.
14. A research exercise to determine the potential financial implications that might arise from implementing the NHS Catering and Nutritional Specifications is also underway.

SGF Healthyliving Programme

15. The Scottish Grocers Federation Healthyliving Programme completed the first year of Phase 3 in July. The year has seen sustained growth in fruit and vegetable sales alongside an increase in participation to 430 convenience stores (an estimated 250,000 customers visit these stores every week). The Programme is now working with Community Food and Health (Scotland) to engage with Black Minority Ethnic communities and is developing links with cash and carry operators to target independent stores in the most deprived areas.
16. Phase 3 is set to run until July 2009.

Scottish Nutrition and Diet Resources Initiative (SNDRi)

17. SNDRi develop diet leaflets for the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention areas. Objectives include resource development, developing educational resources for continuing professional development and education of pre-registration students and developing a marketing strategy.
18. SNDRi's Annual Report for 2006/07 confirms that 190,000 leaflets were sold, 105,000 to primary care. A majority of sales are outwith Scotland, including a small percentage to mainland Europe. There are approximately 168 leaflets in its portfolio representing an increase of 89% in the number of diet and nutrition produced for dietitians, other healthcare professionals and the public since the initiative was funded (by the then Scottish Executive) in 2001. This portfolio covers 12 different areas, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and

obesity. Some of these have been produced for BME groups and people with learning disabilities.

19. SNDRi have announced the commencement of merger talks with the British Dietetic Association (BDA). The two organisations will share expertise and resources building to a full merger in 2009. It is expected that the merger will further expose markets outwith Scotland to SNDRi and make it easier for health professionals to access their resources.

Scottish Food and Health Alliance

20. On the 5 February 2008 the Alliance are holding their annual conference 'Moving forward on Food and Health' at Murrayfield stadium, Edinburgh, Shona Robison, the Minister for Public Health is opening the event. The event will focus on the priorities for the delivery of food and health objectives and discussion on how best to move these forward in the context of the Scottish Government's overall National Food Policy.
21. The Alliance has also completed a revamp of its website providing members with an interactive message board to promote food and health events. Aimed at anyone with a professional interest in food and health issues, the website also provides the latest news at national (Scottish) and local level.

Better Health, Better Care

22. In June 2007, Nicola Sturgeon, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing announced the Scottish Government's intention to publish an Action Plan for Health and Wellbeing by the turn of the year.
23. After an extensive consultation, the final document *Better Health, Better Care* was published on the 12 December following a statement by Nicola Sturgeon in the Scottish Parliament.
24. The final document can be found at
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/12/11103453/BHBCActionPlan>

National Food Debate

25. A parliamentary debate in November signalled the start of a discussion to have a national policy on food that will provide better linkages across the supply chain and across Scottish Government Directorates. There is cross party support for this proposal and a national discussion will commence early in the New Year to allow a wide input of ideas on the national priorities on food. The Food and Health Delivery Plan will form an important strand of this work and will allow many of the actions outlined in the SDAP review to be actioned in partnership with others.

Healthyliving Award

26. The Healthyliving Award is a national award scheme for the food service sector that rewards achievements for making it easier for customers to eat healthily when eating out.
27. The award has two main goals:
- To make the food served generally healthier by making broad changes to how food is prepared
 - To help customers make informed choices about food by including healthier items on the menu which are clearly identified using the well-established healthyliving green apple brand.
28. 667 outlets have registered for the award with around 200 establishments having successfully achieved it. These range from hospitals and day care centres to hotels and oil rigs.

Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act

29. Health Promotion guidance to support the implementation of the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 is being developed. The Minister for Children and Early Years, Adam Ingram, has considered proposals from an Expert Working Group and has now decided on new nutritional regulations for Scottish schools. These regulations will be written into legislation and apply from August 2008, subject to parliamentary approval. Detail of the proposed regulations is available on the Scottish Government website: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/foodnutrition
30. With regards to commencement, the power to provide pupils with snacks commenced as of 10 August 2007, the duties in relation to health promotion will commence on 3 January 2008 and the duties in relation to food and drink in schools and sustainable development guidance will commence in August 2008.

Free School Meals Pilot

31. As part of the Scottish Executive's drive to improve the nation's health and encourage good eating habits from a young age, we are conducting a free school lunches trial for P1-P3 pupils in 5 local authorities. The trial began in October 2007 and will run until March 2008. The 5 participating authorities are East Ayrshire Council, Fife Council, Glasgow City Council, Scottish Borders Council and West Dunbartonshire Council. The specific objectives of the trial are to:
- Assess process and practical issues for councils and schools;
 - Measure changes in uptake of school lunches by P1-P3 pupils;
 - Investigate the potential health and other benefits of the trial, including attitudes and behaviours in relation to school lunches and healthy eating; and
 - Identify any unexpected impacts and barriers to roll out across the country.

32. If the evaluation of the trial is positive, we intend to roll out free school meals for all P1-P3 pupils in Scotland from August 2010, subject to the necessary legislation being passed by the Scottish Parliament.

Free school meals

33. We intend to extend entitlement to free school meals to all primary school and secondary school pupils whose parents or carers are in receipt of both maximum child tax credit and maximum working tax credit from August 2009, subject to the necessary legislation being passed by Parliament.

Healthy Start

34. Healthy Start children's vitamin drops and women's vitamin tablets are now available. NHS Boards are currently putting procedures in place to distribute them.
35. Fiona Bisset is chairing a short-life group on Vit D policy in Scotland and the first meeting was held on 10 January 2008.