



**Paper for Information: DH Update on Activities
related to Maternal and Child
Nutrition**

Agenda Item: 5

Please see attached paper for information.

DH update on Activities related to Maternal and Child Nutrition

Resource Pack

- The resource pack produced by DH for health professionals to support delivery of the PPF target to increase breastfeeding initiation by 2 percentage points will be disseminated by end of October 2004. This will include a good practice guide titled "*Good Practice and Innovation in Breastfeeding*".

Healthy Start

- A Government response to the consultation was published on 16 February 2004 and draft regulations are expected to be issued for consultation in Autumn 2004 (around end of September).
- Regulations are expected to provide for Healthy Start to be phased in from early 2005, beginning with the introduction of the voucher scheme in one area only. The voucher scheme, and new arrangements for nursery milk/fruit provision are then expected to be rolled out across GB by the end of 2005.

Food in Schools

- The Department of Health is working closely with Department for Education and Skills (who has the responsibility for school meals), other Government Departments and stakeholders to promote and facilitate healthy eating in schools. The cross Government Healthy Living Blueprint was published on 6 September 2004. Aimed at Head teachers and governors, it supports the Government vision of all schools becoming healthy schools. It brings together all the elements that contribute to a whole school approach to food and nutrition and gives guidance to schools on improvements that can be made. It comprises existing and ongoing work across Departments, such as the Food in Schools Programme and School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme and work to improve school meals.
- Eight pilot projects to promote healthy eating and drinking in schools have been run in over 300 schools throughout England as part of the Food in Schools Programme. This has included work on healthier breakfast clubs, tuck shops, vending machines, lunch boxes, cookery clubs, as well as water provision, growing clubs and the dining room environment. The output from the pilots will be available from early 2005 to assist schools in implementing the "whole school approach" to healthy eating and drinking.

School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

- The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme is a NHS commitment, which currently entitles over a million 4-6 year olds across five government LEA maintained infant, primary and special schools and any other children in the same class to a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day. The Department of Health is funding the national roll-out of the scheme with £77

million over 2004/05 and 2005/06, which means that the remaining regions (Yorkshire & Humber, and the East, South West and South East of England) will join the scheme during the autumn term in 2004. Once complete over two million children in over 16,500 schools should be receiving SFVS fruit and vegetables.

- The range of produce was recently extended to include carrots, cherry tomatoes and strawberries (existing fruit are apples, pears, easy peel citrus and bananas). Expanding the range of products is something we will continue to look at and may be introduced depending on the pilot findings.
- The DH is keeping most aspects of the SFVS under review as it rolls out across the country, including the precise boundaries of eligibility. We shall specifically consider whether to extend eligibility once the results of large-scale evaluations are available in 2005.