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## EU GREEN PAPER ON NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CONSULTATION

### Consultation questions:

#### Page 1

***What are the concrete contributions which Community policies, if any, should make to the promotion of healthy diets and physical activity and toward creating environments which make healthy choices easy choices?***

Promoting behaviour changes to attitudes regarding diets and activity through social marketing principles and not just relying on behaviour change through patriarchal legislation. Involving communities in service planning and targeting delivery will encourage engagement and sustainability. Local produce and local activity should be encouraged and ensuring that there is good and equal access to these provisions is vital.

#### Page 2

***What community or national measures could contribute towards improving the attractiveness, availability, accessibility and affordability of fruit and vegetables?***

Adopt social marketing principles to identify the best way to attract and motivate people to buy and use fruit and vegetables. Campaigning and ensuring there is appropriate infrastructure for people to access affordable, local produce. The importance and versatility of fruit and vegetables should be promoted in local cooking and meal preparation classes (such as part of the SureStart and Healthy Living programmes).

***On which areas of nutrition and physical activity is more research needed with respect to the analysis of related disorders and consumer behaviour?***

More research needed in understanding what would change behaviours to increase the intake of nutritious foods and engage with physical activity. It is simply not enough for Public services to inform of the benefits without fully understanding the social and environmental factors that determine behaviours. Social Marketing principles and concepts should be adopted to identify **reasons** why people decide not to change behaviours, despite understanding the health benefits of nutritious foods and physical activity. Further research is required to understand motivational factors which may range from the way foods are presented in shops, to assign or recruit an 'icon' or 'mentor' to set healthy examples for people to follow (eg. Jamie Oliver type of approach)

***How can the availability and comparability of data on obesity be improved, in particular with a view to determining the precise geographical and socio-economic distribution of this condition?***

It is important to obtain **accurate** data on obesity, which may be difficult to collate, especially at a local level. GP data alone cannot be depended upon as not all obese people regularly visit their GP. Obtaining common data sets for comparison have proven difficult, especially across European countries where the collation and responsibility of data (as well as the categorization and labeling of data). Data, therefore, needs to be accurate, consistent and comparable.

***How can the programme contribute to raising the awareness of decision-makers, health professionals, the media and the public of the potential of healthy diets and physical activity to reduce the risk of chronic disease?***

Awareness is currently being promoted through a range of television programmes that focus on healthy eating and good health. There is also an array of media journals and magazines that also provides the public with information on the benefits of healthy lifestyles and the potential to reduce the risk of chronic disease. Policy-makers and health professional should ensure that they are working collaboratively with other organisations to maximise the target audience and also to ensure that healthy diets and physical activity

forms part of wider benefits of people's lives and not just serving the organisation's agenda. Further research required in social marketing principles to move beyond public awareness and assist in encouraging people to make informed choices and behavioural change.

***What are the most appropriate dissemination channels for existing evidence.***

Television and media sources and websites. However, organisations and professionals should incorporate the benefits of healthy lifestyles as much as possible where appropriate to ensure that healthy eating and physical activity is seen part of everyday life.

***In the provision of nutrition information to consumers, what are the major nutrients & categories of products to be considered and why?***

"Bad" and processed/refined foods, especially present in cheaper food products should be considered and consumers should be aware of **how** foods are produced. "Part of 5-a-day" labels are a good source of encouraging (and prompting) people to eat more fruit and vegetables. Hidden and mis-leading information (such as sugar-free) should be clarified so that people are not mis-informed about the choices they make. Traffic light labeling according to food's nutritional value could be contentious amongst food manufacturers, but people should expect to be able to see, at a glance, the nutritional value of food without being over-whelmed with food-label information.

Page 4

***What forms of education are required to enable consumers to fully understand the information given on food labels, and who should provide it?***

See answer above.

Information on food labels should be overseen and monitored by the FSA or independent organisation, as much of the current information is mis-leading despite being used as part of advertising campaigns.

***Are voluntary codes ("self-regulation") an adequate tool for limiting the advertising & marketing of energy-dense and micronutrient-poor foods? What alternatives should be considered if self-regulation fails?***

No. It may not be in a manufacturer's self-interest to self-regulate the nutrient content of food and self-regulation may have a detrimental affect to the success of the advertising campaigns invested in the product. The answer to the question above provides alternative regulatory methods.

***How can effectiveness in self-regulation be defined, implemented and monitored? What measures should be taken to ensure that the credulity and lack of media literacy of vulnerable consumers are not exploited by advertising marketing and promotion activities?***

Self-regulation should conform to government legislation to ensure compliance. However, self-regulation should be monitored by an independent agency.

***How can consumers best be enabled to make informed choices and take effective action?***

Cost

Convenience

Fit in with Lifestyle

***What contribution can public-private partnerships make in this area?***

Promotion

Lead by example

Work collaboratively

Adopt Social marketing principles collaboratively.

***What should be the key message given to consumers? How should we deliver them and how?***

Social marketing addresses the way in which key messages are effectively delivered, when and how? Avoid patriarchal and judgemental approaches.

***Can you provide good practice on improving the nutritional value of school meals? How can parents be informed of how to improve the nutritional value of home meals?***

Healthy Schools initiatives

Jamie Oliver menus

It is important that these schemes and others are disseminated to parents through recipe ideas, copying menus, inviting parents to school etc.

***Do you have good practice on the provision of physical activity in schools?***

Targets

Need to co-ordinate local Health Promotion schemes (skip to be fit/ time to move it etc.)

***What is good practice for fostering healthy dietary choices at schools?***

Mentors (such as Jamie Oliver)

Abolish fizzy drinks, chocolate & crisps

Ensuring children understand the benefits and versatility and wide range of healthy foods.

***How can the media, health services, civil society and industry support health education? What role can the public/private partnerships play?***

Social marketing (and not patriarchal / information approach)

Celebrity mentors to set good examples and aspirations.

Celebrate healthy lifestyles. (Local days)

Build healthy lifestyles into policy and planning processes.

Address health inequalities and social exclusion to ensure that all communities are supported.

***How can employers succeed in offering healthy choices in the workplace, and in improving the nutritional value of canteen meals.***

Food should be affordable.

Only provide healthy choices.

Provide information on food content and nutrition

***What measures would encourage and facilitate the practice of physical activity during breaks, and on the way to and from work?***

Consider time and other commitments workers have

Child-care facilities

Locker/shower facilities

Promote walking & cycling to work  
Company gyms or concessions for gym memberships

***What measures and at what level are needed to ensure the promotion of healthy diets & physical activity is better integrated into health services.***

Lead by example – workforce

Health professionals should all have knowledge of healthy diets and physical activity and promote this in their daily work with patients wherever possible and appropriate.

Health departments to link and network with other relevant departments in a co-ordinated way to ensure that up to date advice and information is always available.

***In what ways can public policies contribute to ensuring that physical activity is built into daily routines?***

Activity should be fashionable to be attractive

Childcare

Cost

Accessibility

Motivational

Social marketing concepts should assist in discovering the most effective way of promoting physical activity as part of public policies.

***What measures are needed to foster the development of environments that are conducive to physical activity?***

Flexible

Affordable

Available

Fashionable

Social marketing to be explored

***What measures and at what level would promote healthy diets and physical activity to population groups and households belonging to certain socio-economic categories, and enable these groups to adopt healthier lifestyles?***

Social Marketing and Health Impact Assessments

***How can the clustering of unhealthy habits that has frequently been demonstrated for certain socio-economic groups be addressed?***

Social Marketing and Health Impact Assessments

***What are the most important elements of an integrated and comprehensive approach towards the promotion of healthy diets and physical activity?***

Sustainability or people will give up.

***What scope is there for national and EU measures in this area?***

Choice Agenda

Local Area Agreement

***In what way could social/cultural variations and regional/national dietary habits be taken into account in European food-based dietary guidelines?***

Share good practice across Europe

Celebrate local foods – local food markets

Celebrate European foods – European food markets

***How can the gaps between proposed nutrient targets and actual consumption patterns be overcome?***

Explore Social Marketing

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