A European Master’s Programme in Public Health Nutrition

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**Executive Summary**

*Public Health Nutrition is the promotion of good health through nutrition and physical activity, and the prevention of related illness in the population.*

The task of developing and undertaking effective population-based strategies over Europe demands people that are trained and competent with comparable skills. To achieve this, proper training across Europe is required. With the aid of funding from Directorate General SANCO of the European Commission, the Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, was asked in 1997 to act as their representative in the setting up of a pan-European Master's programme in Public Health Nutrition, a project involving a total of 17 European countries. It was introduced with the aim to increase the European dimension, improving the quality of existing training programmes in Public Health, and introducing a new and critically important area of specialisation within public health.

The development of the programme is now at the end of its fifth year. Much progress has been achieved in defining, setting up, facilitating and ensuring that the programme objectives and structure meet the training needs that graduates will require for working in Public Health Nutrition on a European level. Quality assurance remains the other critical cornerstone of our work and considerable time has been spent working on this issue, introducing an element of team teaching and distance learning to the programme, supported by Socrates teacher exchange and IP agreements.

The developments within the *EURODIET* project, the *French Initiative* and the *EU Health Monitoring Programme*, have been continuously integrated into the programme, which has been broadened, covering more courses and more universities in EU member states as well as those from the applicant countries. We have produced a general leaflet, a course catalogue, a newsletter, an email list for students and a discussion list at the website for the Master’s Programme, [www.prevnut.ki.se](http://www.prevnut.ki.se)

The work with the European Master Programme for Public Health Nutrition has reached a level where an increasing number of students are taking part in parts of the programme or have followed the whole programme. A network of knowledgeable students is building up over Europe, leading to cross-cultural and cross-language collaboration in a collegial manner. Teacher exchange is established and will be continuing, due to a mutual and genuine interest in European Public Health Nutrition.

The support from the Commission has led to so much more, above and beyond the European Master Programme. The teaching collaboration will keep the topic on our agendas and we hope that the programme can achieve a permanent status within the new Public Health Programme, thereby avoiding gaps in funding and providing a solid backing to an already rewarding collaboration.

On behalf of the Working Group, Agneta Yngve (Programme Co-ordinator) and Åsa Strindlund (International Liaison Officer),

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