



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



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Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 23 October 2015

Dear everyone

Much has been recently written and said about our impartial investigation over the past year looking into what works and what doesn't work in reducing sugar consumption in our daily diet. Yesterday we published our analysis of research across the world, [Sugar Reduction: the evidence for action](#). It is clear that no single action will be effective on its own so our advice to Government suggests implementing a broad range of measures which together would be likely to work, and particularly for our children. It cannot be right that one in three 11-year-olds is overweight or obese, and doing nothing, or not enough, will not reverse this. Our analysis of the evidence suggests measures including:

- Reducing the volume and number of price promotions in retail outlets such as supermarkets and restaurants
- Reducing the marketing and advertising of high sugar food and drink products to children
- Reducing the sugar content in and portion size of everyday food and drink products
- Introducing a price increase through a tax or levy on high sugar products
- Setting a clear definition of high sugar foods
- Adopting the government buying standards for food and catering services
- Delivering accredited training on diet and health to all who work in catering, fitness and leisure sectors
- Continuing to raise everyone's awareness of the practical steps they can take to reduce their sugar intake

The Government has committed to publishing a childhood obesity strategy in the New Year, responding to this evidence and, once adopted, will be the first country in the world to do so.

Poor housing, for example, damp, cold and overcrowded conditions can have a serious effect on physical and mental health and wellbeing, so making the link between health and housing is vital in improving the nation's health. New estimates show that poor housing is costing the NHS at least £1.4bn per year, with one in five homes affected, with a higher proportion in the private rented sector. A series of new health and housing [resources](#) were launched this week at a PHE and King's Fund event, 'Bringing together housing and public health to enable better health and wellbeing'. These aim to help professionals in environmental health, housing, public health and social care to work together locally to reduce the impact of poor housing and homelessness.

This week we also marked a year on from publication of our national physical activity framework, [Everybody Active Every Day](#), by bringing together more than 350 cross-sector leaders to review progress and agree how to increase the pace and scale of action at local and national levels. Palpable passion, energy and innovation was evident across 18 action-focused workshops spanning the life course and underpinning themes featured inclusion for disabled people and encouraging professions to take part. Speakers from local government, academia, and the leisure and fitness and voluntary and community sectors, were joined by the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Dame Sally Davies, who launched an [infographic](#) for health professionals outlining the benefits of physical activity. Other products shared included ['what works'](#) in schools and colleges to increase physical activity, and an expansion of PHE's peer-to-peer RCGP Clinical Champions Programme across six regions linked to PHE Centres.

With best wishes