



## All-island Obesity News

E-bulletin of the All-island Obesity Action Forum

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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to this edition of All-island Obesity News. Since the last edition, the All-island Obesity Action Forum has hosted its seventh workshop entitled 'From Shift Work to Shifting the Pounds – The Value of a Healthy Workforce', focusing on workplace health. This year the event was supported by **safefood**, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Northern Ireland and the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists and it saw presentations from speakers such as Professor Tom Cox, Institute of Work, Health and Organisations, University of Nottingham and Dr Phil Tucker, Department of Psychology, University of Swansea. We were greatly encouraged by the success of the workshop, in terms of the attendance, interaction and feedback. Speaker presentations and roundtable reports are available online via the following link. [From Shift Work to Shifting the Pounds](#).

As usual the first section of this bulletin contains information directly submitted by Forum members. We would ask you to circulate this among your colleagues and to share your work via this publication by submitting all relevant news items to Emily Kelleher at [obesityforum@safefood.eu](mailto:obesityforum@safefood.eu).

*Martin Higgins,*  
*Chief Executive, **safefood** and Chair, All-island Obesity Action Forum*

Minutes of Forum meetings, events and further details about the Forum can be accessed on the [Forum page of the safefood website](#).

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## [Update from Forum Members](#)

### **safefood**

#### **- Nutrition Take Out series**

This July saw the publication of the latest in a series of reviews of takeaway foods and continues **safefood**'s work in helping consumers make more informed choices when eating food that is prepared outside the home. 'What's in that bun?' – was a research report on burgers. The aim of this survey was to provide a snapshot of the nutritional content of a sample of cooked burgers purchased from a selection of takeaway outlets and takeaway vans on the island of Ireland. The report found that a quarter pounder, without the trimmings, provides on average 622 calories, greater than 50% of an adult's guideline amount for protein and almost 40% of the guideline amount for fat. In theory, 'kid's' size burgers should be proportionately smaller in size when compared with an average 'regular' sized burger. However the research found that both burger types were similar in size, weighing on average 4oz (113 grams). Read the [full report](#) on [www.safefood.eu](http://www.safefood.eu). The next edition to the takeaway series based on Chinese is due to be published towards the end of September 2012.

### **Nutrition and Health Foundation (NHF)**

#### **- NHF annual seminar: *Obesity: where do we stand and where do we go from here?***

[On-line](#) registration is now available however it is advised to book now as places are filling up fast. The seminar is on Wednesday the 19th of September from 9am to 13.30pm in the Gibson Hotel, Dublin. Confirmed speakers to date are:

1. Professor Richard Tiffin, Director, Centre for Food Security; Professor of Applied Economics, University of Reading - presenting on food taxes
2. Professor Dame Carol Black is the UK's National Director for Health and Work, Chairman of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Chairman of the Nuffield Trust - presenting on workplace health and health promotion
3. Dr Mary Flynn, Chief Specialist in Public Health Nutrition, Food Safety Authority of Ireland - presenting on healthy eating and calorie on menus in Ireland.
4. Dr Niamh Murphy, Centre for Health Behaviour Research, Department of Health Sport and Exercise Science, Waterford Institute of Technology - presenting on the Olympic effect on spontaneous physical activity
5. Helen Munday, Director of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs, Coca-Cola Great Britain and Ireland - presenting on the work of Coca Cola in helping to address the obesity issue

#### **- NHF/@Movies Market research on healthy options in cinemas**

The NHF and @ Movies are collaborating on an on-line market research project to determine (a) current consumer behaviours with regards to foods and beverages in cinemas, (b) desire for healthy options (c) smaller portions and (d) calorie posting. The on-line questionnaire is due to go live mid next week on the following websites:

<http://www.movies-at.ie/dundrum/>  
<http://www.movies-at.ie/swords/home.php>  
<http://www.moviesatgorey.ie/>  
<http://www.sgcdungarvan.ie/>

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## General News

### **July 2012: A cross-sectional analysis of the association between night-only or rotating shift work and overweight/obesity among female nurses and midwives. (AUS)**

The aim of this cross-sectional study was to examine the associations between shift work types and overweight/obesity among female nurses and midwives. 2086 participants took part. The study found that rotating shift workers were 1.02 times more likely to be overweight/obese than day workers and night-only shift work was found to be significantly associated with obesity. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

### **24.07.12: Severely obese children's hearts already in danger - BBC News Health**

According to a Dutch Study, severely obese children are putting their heart at danger even while they are still in primary school. Researchers at the VU University Medical Centre in Amsterdam collected data from the Dutch Paediatric Surveillance Unit between 2005 and 2007. Results found that 62% of severely obese children under 12 years of age already had one or more cardiovascular risk factors. Read more on [BBC News](#).

### **25.07.12: Sleep duration and central obesity in women - Differences between short sleepers and long sleepers. (Sweden)**

The aim of this study was to assess characteristics of short sleepers and long sleepers and to assess association between sleep duration and central obesity in a population-based sample of women. Researchers found an independent association between short sleep duration and central obesity, which was strongest in younger women. Read [abstract](#) in Science Direct.

### **21.07.12: Effect of Web-based lifestyle modification on weight control: a meta-analysis.**

Web-based treatment programs are attractive in primary care because of their ability to reach numerous individuals at low cost. The aim of this meta-analysis was to systematically review the weight loss or maintenance effect of the Internet component in obesity treatment programs. A total of 23 studies comprising 8697 participants were included. Results indicate that the Internet component in obesity treatment programs has a modest effect on weight control. However, the effect was inconsistent, largely depending on the type of usage of the Internet or the period of its use. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

### **10.07.12: Motivating or stigmatizing? Public perceptions of weight-related language used by health providers. (US)**

This study examined public preferences and perceptions of weight-based terminology used by health-care providers to describe excess weight. The terms 'weight' and 'unhealthy' were rated most desirable, and the terms 'unhealthy weight' and 'overweight' were rated most motivating to lose weight. The terms 'morbidly obese', 'fat' and 'obese' were rated as the most undesirable, stigmatizing and blaming language used by health providers. Notably, participant ratings were consistent across socio-demographic variables and body weight categories. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

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### **07.07.12: Turning health research into health promotion: A study of causality and 'critical insights' in a United Kingdom health campaign. (UK)**

This article traces the development and production of a major United Kingdom social marketing campaign named Change4Life and examines how ideas about the causes of and solutions to the obesity epidemic are produced in differing ways throughout the health promotion process. The article demonstrates that claims about causality oscillate and alter throughout the research, policy and Change4Life marketing process. Read [abstract](#) in Science Direct.

#### **04.07.12: Parenting an Overweight or Obese Teen: Issues and Advice from Parents. (US)**

This qualitative study addresses the challenges parents of overweight adolescents face and the advice parents of overweight adolescents have for other parents. Topics for potential intervention development include communication and motivation of adolescents regarding weight-related topics, appropriate autonomy, and addressing negative emotions concerning the adolescent's weight status. Targeting these topics could potentially improve acceptability and outcomes for treatments. Read [abstract](#) in Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour.

#### **05.07.12: Nurses' self-care behaviours related to weight and stress. (US)**

This online study examined registered nurses' dietary and exercise practices, weight status, stress levels, and preferred preventive health strategies. Results of this study showed that the majority of participants reported a lack of exercise, and more than half had an irregular meal pattern. The average body mass index was 28.3, and 59.2% were either overweight or obese. The most frequently used stress-release method was eating (n = 32), followed by exercise (n = 31). Read [abstract](#) in Science Direct.

#### **25.07.12: Lifestyle determinants of the drive to eat: a meta-analysis.**

The purpose of this article was to provide a meta-analysis of the relation between lifestyle choices and increases in acute food intake. The 3 most prominent lifestyle factors-television watching, alcohol intake, and sleep deprivation-had significant short-term effects on food intake, with alcohol being more significant than sleep deprivation and television watching. Authors conclude that television watching, alcohol intake, and sleep deprivation are not merely correlated with obesity but likely contribute to it by encouraging excessive eating. Read [full text](#) in American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

#### **27.07.12: Shift work link to 'increased risk of heart problems' -BBC News Health**

BBC News reports that shift workers are slightly more at risk of having a heart attack or stroke than day workers. An analysis of studies involving more than 2m workers in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) said shift work can disrupt the body clock and have an adverse effect on lifestyle. [The BMJ study](#) calculated that shift work was linked to a 23% increased risk of heart attack, 24% increased risk of coronary event and 5% increased risk of stroke. Read more on [BBC News](#).

#### **11.07.12: Ex-smokers 'pile on the pounds' – News (NHS Choices)**

The average weight gain associated with giving up smoking is much higher than previously thought BBC News has reported. The story comes from a study looking at weight change in smokers who managed to quit the habit for up to 12 months, without receiving drug treatment. It found that giving up smoking was associated with an average increase in body weight of 4-5kg (9-11lb), a year after quitting. For more read the following from [NHS Choices](#).

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#### **29.06.12: BMI and obstructive sleep apnoea in the UK: a cross-sectional study of the over-50s. (UK)**

This cross-sectional study aimed to quantify the association between BMI and a recorded diagnosis of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) in primary care for people aged 50 years or over in the UK. After adjusting for confounders, those with a BMI recorded of 40+ kg/m<sup>2</sup> were 27.39 times more likely to have OSA. There was a lower prevalence of OSA with increasing age and levels of deprivation. Read [full text](#) in Primary Care Respiratory Journal.

**03.07.12: Combined oral contraceptives' influence on weight, body composition, height, and bone mineral density in girls younger than 18 years: A systematic review.**

The aim of this review was to investigate the evidence regarding Combined Oral Contraceptives' (COCs) influence on weight, height and bone mineral density (BMD) in girls younger than 18 years. The review concludes that studies in young users are few. Presently, there are no indications of a negative impact of COCs on weight, body composition or height. Lesser increases in BMD cannot be excluded. As the demand for COCs is increasing among the youngest girls, there is a need for prospective studies addressing this issue. Read [abstract](#) in Informa healthcare.

**April 2012: Tooty Fruity Veggie: an obesity prevention intervention evaluation in Australian preschools. (AUS)**

The aim of this study was to introduce an intervention which aimed to decrease overweight and obesity prevalence by improving fundamental movement skills, increasing fruit and vegetable intake and decreasing unhealthy food consumption in a cluster randomised controlled evaluation of preschool children (aged 3-6 years) in New South Wales. Results showed children in intervention preschools significantly improved movement skills, had more fruit and vegetable servings and were less likely to have unhealthy food items and there was a significant difference in waist circumference growth with reduction in BMI compared to controls. Read the [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**June 2012: International application of sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) taxation in obesity reduction: Factors that may influence policy effectiveness in country-specific contexts.**

This paper urges careful consideration of country-specific characteristics by suggesting three points in particular that may influence the effectiveness of a volume-based soft drink excise tax: population obesity prevalence, soft drink consumption levels, and existing baseline tax rates. The authors suggest that SSB or soft drink taxation policy may be more effective in reducing obesity prevalence where existing obesity prevalence and soft drink consumption levels are high. In countries where the baseline tax rate is already considered high, SSB taxation may not have a noticeable impact on consumption patterns or obesity prevalence, and may incur negative feedback from the beverage industry or the general public. Read [abstract](#) in Science Direct.

**24.06.12: More than half of British women's waists 'too big' – BBC News**

Researchers from the charity Nuffield Health found the average waist measurement for women in the UK is 84.9cm (33.43in), compared with the healthy size of 80cm (31.49in) and say that overweight women risk an increased chance of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, infertility and cancer. Read more on [BBC News](#).

**July 2012: Does maternal obesity cause preeclampsia? A systematic review of the evidence.**

A systematic literature review of the previous two decades (1992-2011) was conducted to assess whether maternal obesity causes preeclampsia. Authors conclude that epidemiologic evidence exists linking maternal obesity and preeclampsia. However, the exact causal pathway remains poorly defined. Given the minimal understanding of the nature of this relationship, research studies that utilize prospective designs and expand on the previous examination of biomarkers are recommended to determine potential causative pathways. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**01.07.12: Psychosocial Factors of Different Health Behaviour Patterns in Adolescents: Association with Overweight and Weight Control Behaviours. (Portugal)**

This paper aimed to identify psychosocial factors of different health behaviour patterns in adolescents and its association with overweight and weight control behaviours. Three clusters with different behavioural patterns (physical activity, sedentary, and eating)

composed the results obtained. The sedentary group (34%) had lower self-regulation, body satisfaction, health and wellness, family and classmates relationships, communication with the father than the other two groups. The active gamers (25%) had a smaller BMI but used more unhealthy weight control strategies than the other two groups. The healthy group (41%) was more motivated and more satisfied with school but was not different than the active gamers in most psychosocial variables. Read [full text](#) from the Journal of Obesity.

**18.07.12: A new body shape index predicts mortality hazard independently of body mass index. (US)**

Body Mass Index (BMI) and Waist Circumference (WC) measurements are used as risk indicators of premature death worldwide. This study considered a population sample of 14,105 non-pregnant adults from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey with follow-up for mortality averaging 5 yrs. A Body Shape Index (ABSI) was developed based on WC adjusted for height and weight. Death rates increased approximately exponentially with above average baseline ABSI per standard deviation of ABSI, whereas elevated death rates were found for both high and low values of BMI and WC. ABSI expresses the excess risk from high WC in a convenient form that is complementary to BMI and to other known risk factors. Read [full text](#) on PubMed.

**May 2012: How good are BMI charts for monitoring children's attempts at obesity reduction? (UK)**

The aim of this study was to explore the variability in clinicians' interpretation of BMI patterns and to ascertain the diagnostic accuracy of their judgement by relating it to change in body composition by dual-emission x-ray absorptiometry (DXA). Authors concluded that BMI charts are useful for assessing children's attempts at weight management, and provide a reasonably accurate indication of change in body fat. Recommendations are also made regarding BMI chart design and guidance in interpreting measurements. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**[Nutrition News](#)**

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**May 2012: The fast food and obesity link: consumption patterns and severity of obesity. (US)**

The aim of this study was to examine selected behavioural factors associated with severity of obesity among preoperative bariatric surgery patients, focusing specifically on the effects of fast food consumption. 270 patients took part in this study that used ordered logistic regression to model behavioural and attitudinal effects on obesity. The outcomes were based on the severity of obesity and were measured on the basis of BMI. Results indicated that, among the behavioural factors, fast food consumption exerted the largest influence on higher levels of obesity. These remained after controlling for several social and demographic characteristics. Read [abstract](#) on Springerlink.

**06.08.12: The effects of four hypocaloric diets containing different levels of sucrose or high fructose corn syrup on weight loss and related parameters. (US)**

The objective of this randomized, prospective, double blind trial was to examine the effects of four equally hypocaloric diets containing different levels of sucrose or high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). Reductions were observed in all measures of adiposity including body mass, BMI, % body fat, waist circumference and fat mass for all four hypocaloric groups, as well as reductions in exercise only group for body mass, BMI and waist circumference. Authors concluded that similar decreases in weight and indices of adiposity are observed when overweight or obese individuals are fed hypocaloric diets

containing levels of sucrose or high fructose corn syrup typically consumed by adults in the United States. Read [provisional pdf](#) in BioMed Central.

**August 2012: Facts up front versus traffic light food labels: a randomized controlled trial. (US)**

The aim of this study was to test consumer understanding of the Facts Up Front system (Facts Up Front) compared to the Multiple Traffic Light system (Traffic Light). Facts Up Front displays grams/milligrams and percentage daily value information for various nutrients; Traffic Light uses an interpretive color-coded scheme to alert consumers to low, medium, and high levels of certain nutrients. 703 adults were randomized to one of five front-of-package label conditions: (1) no label; (2) Traffic Light; (3) Traffic Light plus information about protein and fibre (Traffic Light+); (4) Facts Up Front; or (5) Facts Up Front plus information about "nutrients to encourage" (Facts Up Front+). Results show that those in the Traffic Light+ condition performed better than those in the Facts Up Front conditions on measures of nutrition knowledge and label perceptions. Read [full text](#) in America Journal of Preventative Medicine.

**June 2012: A Natural Fiber Complex Reduces Body Weight in the Overweight and Obese: A Double-Blind, Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Study.**

Study researchers investigated the efficacy and safety of proprietary natural fibre complex IQP G-002AS in body weight reduction. Results found that more IQ subjects lost at least 5% of their initial body weight compared to placebo. Compared with placebo, IQ also showed significantly greater reduction in BMI, body fat composition, and waist circumference. IQ was well tolerated with no adverse reactions reported. These results suggest that the natural fibre complex Litramine IQP G-002AS is effective in promoting weight loss. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**25.07.12: Britons failing to reach five-a-day fruit and veg goal – BBC News**

Government figures suggest that less than a third of adults and only one in 10 children are eating their recommended "five-a-day" of fruit and vegetables. The results, published in the National Diet and Nutrition Survey, show that on average, adults eat only four portions a day. People were also found to be eating far too much saturated fat, which can lead to high cholesterol levels, and consequently heart disease. Read [article](#) on BBC News.

**May 2012: Food pattern analysis over time: unhealthy eating trajectories predict obesity.**

The aim of this study was to investigate changes in eating patterns at the individual level across three exam periods, and to prospectively examine the relation of eating trajectories to BMI at the cohort level. Although it may not be realistic for many people to shift from the least to most healthful diet, results from this study suggest that consistent movement in an overall healthier direction is associated with less weight gain. Read [abstract](#) in the PubMed.

**[Physical Activity News](#)**

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**02.07.12: Parent awareness of young children's physical activity. (UK)**

The study assessed parental awareness of child physical activity (PA), and investigated potential reasons for overestimation of their physical activity. The study found that children met the PA guidelines on only 43% of days; parents overestimated their children's PA on 75% of days when children were inactive and parents of girls showed more overestimation than parents of boys. The study concluded that most parents incorrectly classified their child as active when their child was inactive. Read the [abstract](#) in PubMed.

### **16.07.12: Influence of Sports, Physical Education, and Active Commuting to School on Adolescent Weight Status. (US)**

This study aimed to compare the associations between weight status and different forms of physical activity among adolescents. Adolescents were surveyed about their team sports participation, other extracurricular physical activity, active commuting, physical education, recreational activity for fun, screen time, diet quality, and demographics. Authors concluded that team sport participation had the strongest and most consistent inverse association with weight status. Active commuting to school may reduce the risk of obesity, but not necessarily overweight, and should be studied further. Obesity prevention programs should consider strategies to increase team sport participation among all students. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

### **12.07.12: Longitudinal patterns in physical activity and sedentary behaviour from mid-life to early old age: a substudy of the Whitehall II cohort. (UK)**

The authors examined associations of self-reported physical activity, adiposity and socio-demographic factors in mid-life with objectively assessed measures of activity in older age. 394 healthy men and women drawn from the Whitehall II population-based cohort study took part in this study. Results suggest that physical activity behaviour in middle age was associated with objectively measured physical activity in later life after 13 years of follow-up, suggesting that the habits in adulthood are partly tracked into older age. Read [full text](#) in British Medical Journal.

### **August 2012: Young children and parental physical activity levels: findings from the Canadian health measures survey. (CA)**

This survey aimed to investigate the association of children of different ages in the home on two measures of parental physical activity daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) and likelihood of meeting the guideline of 150 minutes of MVPA per week accumulated in 10-minute bouts. The study used data from the Canadian Health Measures Survey and MVPA was measured directly using accelerometry. Mothers whose youngest child was aged <6 years and fathers whose youngest was aged 6-11 years engaged in fewer minutes of daily MVPA than those without dependent children. Research efforts should continue to focus on strategies to encourage parents with young children to establish or re-engage in a physically active lifestyle. Read [abstract](#) in American Journal of Preventative Medicine.

### **17.07.12: Exploring the built environment, physical activity and related behaviours of young people attending school, college and those not in employment. (UK)**

The aim of this qualitative study was to understand where young people are physically active (PA) and the environmental contexts to their activity and to also explore how they perceived both barriers to, and enablers for, PA in their environment. Emergent themes included working and PA, transport and activity, limitations of the environment to PA and gender differences. Results suggest PA was distributed across a range of environments, rather than focused in one locale, or setting. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

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### **National Diet and Nutrition Survey: Headline Results from Years 1, 2 and 3 (combined) of the Rolling Programme 2008/09 – 2010/11 (UK)**

The National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) is a continuous cross-sectional survey, designed to assess the diet, nutrient intake and nutritional status of the general population aged 18 months upwards living in private households in the UK. The NDNS

report for Years 1, 2 and 3 combined (2008/09 and 2010/11) is [available online](#) via the Department of Health.

### **NOO Evidence Sheet: TV viewing and obesity in children and young people.**

TV viewing has been linked to increased obesity among children and young people, but is there evidence to support this view? Find out on [NOO](#).

### **NICE public health briefings for local government: physical activity and workplace health**

NICE has developed public health briefings for a range of different topics. These briefings are meant for local authorities and their partner organisations in the health and voluntary sectors, in particular those involved with health and wellbeing boards. [Read more](#) from NHS.

### **[Forthcoming Events](#)**

**6th September 2012: Association for the study of obesity Ireland (ASOI) Inaugural Conference will be held on 6th September 2012.** Abstracts for poster presentation are welcome from clinicians, practitioners, academics, researchers, and students working in all fields of obesity and who wish to share their learning. Please submit your abstract to [abstracts@asoi.info](mailto:abstracts@asoi.info) no later than **17:00 on Friday 20th July 2012**.

**17-19th September 2012:** The National Cancer Registry is hosting the 34th annual meeting of the International Association of Cancer Registries in Cork. Read more about the event and how to register at <http://www.iacr2012.org/>.

**19 September 2012: Obesity: where do we stand and where do we go from here?** [On-line](#) registration is now available. Book soon as places are filling up fast. Seminar is on Wednesday the 19th of September from 9am to 13.30 in the Gibson Hotel, Dublin.

**September 2012: Family Health Initiative – Healthier Choices, Healthier Families. Early Years,** the organisation for young children is offering families the chance to take part in a fantastic, **FREE**, 12 week 'UP4IT' programme, known locally as the Family Health Initiative. This programme helps support families with children aged 8-11 to become healthier and get more active together. The next programme starts on **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> September** in Old School, Seagoe. The programme is jam-packed with fun activities including swimming, football, inventive new games and much, much more. To find out more about this programme and book your space, please call Diane on 07791334012 or the Early Years office on 028 8554 9416. You can visit <http://www.early-years.org/health/8-11.php> for more information.

Visit the **safefood** website to view a [calendar of forthcoming events](#)

### **[All Island Obesity Action Forum Members](#)**

Full details of [members](#) can be found on the Forum page of the **safefood** website