



All-island Obesity News

E-bulletin of the All-island Obesity Action Forum
Volume 2, Issue 5, September/October 2010

Dear colleagues,

Nowadays, more than ever, it is important to show evidence of effectiveness in what we do. On 09 November, the Forum will host a workshop titled '[The Good, the Bad and the Learning: Evaluating Obesity Interventions](#)' which will explore ways in which we can do this and in different contexts. We are delighted to have guest speakers such as Dr Charlie Foster from the University of Oxford and Dr Paul Chadwick from MEND. I would encourage you to [register for this event](#) as soon as possible as places are limited. A number of Forum member organisations are also hosting events over the coming weeks and I would encourage you to view these on our [online calendar](#).

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](#).

What's in this issue?

- [Obesity Prevention NI Update](#)
- [General news](#)
- [Nutrition news](#)
- [Physical activity news](#)
- [Resources/publications](#)
- [Campaigns/initiatives](#)
- [Funding](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Call for papers](#)
- [Forthcoming events](#)
- [Report from past event](#)
- [All-island Obesity Action Forum Members](#)

If you would like to **subscribe** to or **include any information** in this bi-monthly e-bulletin please email us at obesityforum@safefood.eu.

[Obesity Prevention Steering Group NI Update](#)

The Health Development Policy Branch of the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety issues a newsletter which provides an update on the development of the Obesity Prevention Strategic Framework (OPSF). The latter seeks to tackle the rise in overweight and obesity in Northern Ireland. If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter please contact the Health Development Team at hdpb@dhsspsni.gov.uk or by post at: Room C4.12 Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SQ.

[Back to top](#)

GENERAL NEWS

04.10.10: Health drive required for 'Ulster fry economy' (ROI, Irish Examiner p.15)

With some of the worst public health statistics in Britain, policymakers in Northern Ireland have instigated a raft of significant campaigns over the years to encourage increased exercise and a balanced diet as a way of countering obesity, heart disease and other associated conditions. The traditional Ulster fry, seen as particularly unhealthy due to its high levels of saturated fat, has been a target of some of these drives, with the public being advised to cut down on its intake and to grill, rather than fry, as much as possible. Article by Richard Ramsey.

04.10.10: Food Standard Agency's Chief Scientist Annual Report published (UK)

The Food Standards Agency has today published the fourth annual Chief Scientist report, covering the Agency's scientific work from April 2009 to March 2010. [Read more.](#)

03.10.10: Slim Bill attacks heart problem by shedding 24lb on plant diet (US, Sunday Independent, p.3)

Former president adopted new regime after daughter Chelsea insisted he lose weight before walking her down aisle. At his daughter Chelsea's wedding this summer, a beaming Bill Clinton was not only singing the praises of the bride and groom, he was also extolling the virtues of a book called The China Study. The work so enthusiastically recommended by the former president was not, however, an analysis of Asian geopolitics. Rather, it was the blueprint for the diet to which he attributed his slim new look. Mr Clinton's love of burgers and barbecue — and his battles with heart disease — are well known. But he has now gone public with the secret he shared with wedding guests: he is following a near-vegan regimen. Article by Philip Sherwell.

October 2010: Determinants of childhood obesity and association with maternal perceptions of their children's weight status: the "GENESIS" study (Greece)

This study examined peri-natal, parental, and lifestyle determinants of childhood obesity and how these factors are associated with maternal misperceptions of their children's weight status. The present study showed that the prevalence of overweight and obesity was 16.2% and 17.5%, respectively. In conclusion, rapid infancy weight gain and higher parental BMI were the main determinants of obesity in preschool years. Maternal underestimation of children's weight status was more likely for children with rapid weight gain in infancy. [Read abstract](#) in J Am Diet Assoc.

29.09.10: Nutrition in infancy and long-term risk of obesity: evidence from two randomized controlled trials (UK)

Researchers investigated the effect of early growth promotion on later body composition in two studies of infants born small for gestational age (weight <10th percentile in study 1 and <20th percentile in study 2). In two prospective randomized trials, they showed that a nutrient-enriched diet in infancy increased fat mass later in childhood. They concluded that these experimental data support a causal link between faster early weight gain and a later risk of obesity, have important implications for the management of infants born small for gestational age, and suggest that the primary prevention of obesity could begin in infancy. [Read abstract](#) in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

[Back to top](#)

29.09.10: Government meetings to strike 'Responsibility deal' with industry on health (UK, Marketing Week)

The role of advertising in improving people's health could be discussed in a series of meetings that will allow the Government to develop its "public health responsibility deal"

between government, charities, consumer groups and the food and drinks industry. Trade bodies, retailers and manufacturers, including the Advertising Association, Food and Drink Federation, Diageo and Unilever, and supermarkets such as Tesco, Asda and Sainsbury's, are to take part in a series of meetings with ministers aimed at promoting healthier lifestyles. [Read more](#).

29.09.10: Ministers welcome joint funding deal boost for pioneering biomedical research (ROI)

Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney T.D., and Minister for Labour Affairs and Public Service Transformation, Dara Calleary T.D., have welcomed the announcement of a partnership agreement between Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the Health Research Board (HRB), with the Wellcome Trust, a global charitable foundation based in the UK. The new SFI-HRB-Wellcome Trust Biomedical Research Partnership will mean that the prestigious Wellcome Trust will jointly fund biomedical researchers in Ireland with Science Foundation Ireland and the Health Research Board. [Read more](#).

29.09.10: The impact of BMI on direct costs in Children and Adolescents: empirical findings for the German Healthcare System based on the KiGGS-study (Germany)

This is the first German study to assess aspects of the economic burden associated with overweight and obesity in children and adolescents based on a representative cross-sectional survey. Average annual total costs were estimated to be €442 (95% CI [402-486]). High socioeconomic status, residence in West Germany and underweight had a significant negative impact on total costs in multivariate analysis. The effect of overweight on total costs is positive but not significant; neither is the effect of obesity. However, overweight and obese children exhibit significantly higher physician costs and a higher probability of being high utilisers of healthcare services. [Read abstract](#) in Eur J Health Econ.

29.09.10: Preventing excessive gestational weight gain: a systematic review of interventions (Australia)

The aim of the current review was to identify, and evaluate the effect of key variables designed to modify risk factors for excessive weight gain in pregnant women that have been targeted in interventions over the last decade. The findings were inconsistent in relation to what factors need to be targeted in intervention programmes to reduce GWG. Consideration of psychological factors relevant to pregnancy, in addition to behavioural changes in relation to eating and physical activity, is suggested for future intervention studies. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity Reviews.

29.09.10: Attrition in paediatric weight management: a review of the literature and new directions (US)

There are a few reports in the literature demonstrating high rates of attrition from paediatric weight management programmes, ranging from 27% to 73%. While some studies show that racial/ethnic minorities, the economically disadvantaged and those with higher levels of obesity are at risk, other studies do not. There is some consistency in reasons given by families for attrition from treatment, most often scheduling issues and programmes not meeting family needs or expectations. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity Reviews.

[Back to top](#)

28.09.10: Politicians join forces to tackle weighty issue (IOI)

A cross-party group of TDs and Senators today announced their participation in Weigh2Live (www.weigh2live.safefood.eu), **safefood's** free weight loss website, in an attempt to continue to shed some weight and improve their lifestyles. Ten politicians have signed up to participate in the Weigh2Live programme, including Senators David Norris, Phil Prendergast, Jerry Buttimer and Denis O'Donovan and TDs, Fergus O'Dowd, Eamon Scanlon, Jimmy

Devins, John O'Mahony, Seán Connick and Aengus Ó Snodaigh. Today's announcement builds on the success of a group of politicians participating in the RTE television show, Operation Transformation, earlier this year. [Read more](#).

28.09.10: Obesity leading to joint replacements in young (ROI, Irish Times – Supplement)

Patients more likely to need second or third replacement due to limited lifespan of artificial joints. Hip and knee replacements are required in more and more young people due to obesity, a conference on nutrition has heard. The comments were made by Dr Bernadette Carr, medical director of VHI, at the conference on obesity organised by the Nutrition and Health Foundation (NHF) in Dublin last week. Dr Carr said obesity was an independent risk factor in the development of osteoarthritis, particularly of the knee. [Read article](#) by Joanne Hunt.

28.09.10: Battling the bulge (ROI, Irish Times Supplement)

It's striking to see a man or woman approaching 50 who has managed to stay in great shape. Many people who got away with dietary murder in their 20s are unprepared for what happens next. Suddenly their trusty stay-slim formula no longer works. Even Elizabeth Hurley, a woman renowned for superhuman discipline in the food department, says she is finding it more and more difficult to maintain her figure, readily admitting: "You definitely get fatter as you get older". If she finds it tough, it is tempting to give up the fight and reach for the elasticated trousers. But ' does ageing and weight gain go hand in hand, or is "middle-age spread" avoidable? [Read article](#) by Carol Ryan.

27.09.10: The role of obesity and lifestyle behaviours in a productive workforce (Netherlands)

This study aimed to investigate the role of lifestyle factors in relation to the presence and degree of productivity loss at work and sick leave. A cross-sectional study recruited 10 624 workers in 49 companies in the Netherlands in 2005–2009. The researchers concluded that lifestyle-related factors, especially smoking and obesity, were associated with the presence and duration of sick leave and degree of productivity loss at work. More than 10% of sick leave and the higher levels of productivity loss at work may be attributed to lifestyle behaviours and obesity. Hence, primary interventions on lifestyle may have a noticeable contribution to maintaining a productive workforce. [Read abstract](#) in Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

27.09.10: Public asked about health cash reward scheme (UK, BBC News)

A public consultation is being launched over whether the NHS in England and Wales should offer financial incentives to encourage healthier lifestyles. NICE, the advisory body for the health service has already been exploring the issue. But it now wants to know what the public thinks after the idea got the thumbs up from its citizen's council. [Read more](#).

27.09.10: The right steps to a healthier heart (ROI, Irish Independent)

Thousands of people went the extra mile in aid of the Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) on World Heart Day yesterday. Huge numbers took part in walks organised all over the country as part of the national day of awareness of heart disease and stroke. Former international rugby captain Keith Wood lent his support to promote the health benefits of walking. [Read article](#) by Fiona Ellis.

[Back to top](#)

27.09.10: The new frugal way with food (ROI, Irish Times)

Food prices have fallen by 14 per cent this year - not that cash-strapped families have noticed - so it's time, says cookbook author Elizabeth Carty, to get shrewd about food.

How much does it cost to feed a family of four for a week? A couple of hundred quid? More than that? Less? Last week Pricewatch carried out a not entirely scientific straw poll on Twitter and within an hour we had dozens of responses. Some people based their answers on personal experience, others on the experience of their mates, while a few made what we suspect were wild guesses. Estimates of how much it would cost to feed our fictitious family for a week came in at anywhere between EUR60 per week and EUR500 - we reckon the chap who's spending that much must be feasting on tKobe burgers every day. The average price, the Twitterati decided, was EUR200 a week. [Read article](#) by Conor Pope.

26.09.10: China faces obesity explosion (China, BBC News)

The Aimin Fat Reduction Hospital in the Chinese city of Tianjin does not hide its aims behind an inoffensive name. It currently has more than 100 patients, but only one goal - to get them to lose weight.

It is one of many hospitals, clinics and camps that have sprung up across China to help the country's growing army of overweight and obese citizens. These people are more liable to suffer from a range of illnesses, and are already putting pressure on China's healthcare system. [Read more.](#)

25.09.10: Irish among fattest in Europe as our obesity rate soars (ROI, Irish Independent)

Irish people are now the second fattest in Europe, with the levels of obesity soaring by a worrying 40% over the past decade. A study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has found that one in four adults here can be classed as obese - or nearly 30lbs above a normal, healthy weight. It also found that more than two in three Irish women and one in two Irish men are classed as overweight - or 10% above their healthy weight. The US is home to the largest people on the planet, with more than 30pc of men and women clinically obese. It is followed by Mexico, Chile, New Zealand and then Britain. [Read article](#) by Jason O'Brien.

24.09.10: Why are 6 of top 7 fattest countries English speaking ones? (US, MediLexicon)

The countries in the world with the highest obesity rates are (in order) USA, Mexico, New Zealand, Australia, United Kingdom, Canada and Ireland. With the exception of Mexico, all the fattest countries have one thing in common - they are English-speaking nations. In fact, the latest OECD report on obesity rates of 33 countries includes 6 English-speaking ones in the top 7, and none in the rest of the list. [Read more.](#)

24.09.10: Slides and clothes grow as children get fatter (UK, BBC News)

It's hard to ignore the increasing size of the nation's children when you see a slide from 25 years ago next to its present day counterpart. We are not talking a couple of centimetres to allow for changing fashion and bulging pockets, but a 50% increase in the width of the bit that bottoms slide down. "Of course we're not saying that children's bottoms have got 50% bigger," smiles Chris Martyn-Smith, Managing Director of TP Activity Toys. They have been making children's play equipment for the past half century and have been adapting their designs as children's shapes have changed. [Read more.](#)

[Back to top](#)

23.09.10: Setting Population Targets for Measuring Successful Obesity Prevention (Australia)

Target setting is a critical component of public health policy for obesity prevention; however, there is currently no context within which to choose such targets. We analyzed the changes in current weight gain that would be required to meet Australian targets. By using transition-based multistate life tables to project obesity prevalence, we found that meeting national healthy weight targets by 2017 will require a 75% reduction in current 5-year

weight gain. A reliable model of future body weight prevalence is critical to set, evaluate, and monitor national obesity targets. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Public Health

23.09.10: Global non-communicable diseases – where worlds meet (US)

Like climate change, the relentless worldwide spread of non-communicable diseases offers an opportunity for low-, middle-, and high-income countries to join forces in addressing a major global challenge that threatens health and economies alike. A recent report from the World Health Organization identified six risk factors associated with non-communicable diseases as the leading global risk factors for death: high blood pressure, tobacco use, high blood glucose levels, physical inactivity, overweight or obesity, and high cholesterol levels. Together, these factors contribute to a large proportion of the deaths resulting from cardiovascular diseases, metabolic causes, and cancer. [Read abstract](#) in NEJM.

22.09.10: Socioeconomic disparities in trajectories of adiposity across childhood (Eng)

Using data from the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children researchers modelled trajectories of ponderal index (PI) (n=12,246) from birth to two years and body mass index (BMI) (n=11,380) from two to 10 years. There was little socioeconomic patterning of PI from birth to two years. Socioeconomic differences in BMI began to emerge by four years old, and widened with increasing age. [Read abstract](#) in Int. J. of Pediatr. Obes.

22.09.10: Global prevalence and trends of overweight and obesity among preschool children (Global)

In 2010, 43 million children (35 million in developing countries) were estimated to be overweight and obese; 92 million were at risk of overweight. The worldwide prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity increased from 4.2% in 1990 to 6.7% in 2010. This trend is expected to reach 9.1%, or ≈60 million, in 2020. The estimated prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity in Africa in 2010 was 8.5% and is expected to reach 12.7% in 2020. The prevalence is lower in Asia than in Africa (4.9% in 2010), but the number of affected children (18 million) is higher in Asia. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Clin Nutr.

22.09.10: City-dwelling women face diet and exercise challenges (US, Medical News Today)

Ob-gyns need to appreciate the unique challenges facing their overweight and obese urban patients when it comes to counselling them about diet and exercise, according to The American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. In new recommendations issued today, The College says physicians and public health officials should also take into consideration individual behaviours as well as the broader community obstacles to healthy lifestyles in order to help women lose weight. [Read more](#).

21.09.10: A heavy burden: The individual costs of being overweight and obese in the United States (US)

Being obese does not only pose a potential health risk, it also costs money, say researchers from George Washington University in a new report. They found that obesity costs the average female \$4,879 and male \$2,646 annually in lost productivity, employee sick days, and other costs. It is well known that obese individuals have overall higher medical bills, but the authors say that this is only a part of the economic impact. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

17.09.10: The risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes in women who are overweight or obese (Australia)

The aim of this study was to assess the prevalence and impact of mothers being overweight and obese in early to mid-pregnancy on maternal, peripartum and neonatal outcomes. Of the 1661 women included, 43% were overweight or obese. Obese women were at increased risk of pre-eclampsia ($p < 0.0001$) and gestational diabetes ($p = 0.01$) compared with women with a normal BMI. Obese and overweight women were more likely to be induced and require a caesarean section compared with women of normal BMI. Babies of women who were obese were more likely to be large for gestational age ($p < 0.0001$) and macrosomic ($p = 0.0003$) compared with those of women with a normal BMI. [Read abstract](#) in BMC Pregnancy Childbirth.

17.09.10: Temporal trends in misclassification patterns of measured and self-report based body mass index categories - findings from three population surveys in Ireland (ROI)

The objective of this study was to examine temporal trends in misclassification patterns, as well as sensitivity and specificity, of clinically measured versus self-report based body mass index (BMI) from three national lifestyle surveys over a 10-year period. The authors conclude that BMI values based on self-reported determinations of height and weight in population samples are underestimating the true prevalence of the obesity epidemic and this underestimation is increasing with time. The decreased sensitivity and consistently high specificity scores in the obese category across time, highlights the limitation of self-report based BMI classifications and the need for simple, readily comprehensible indicators of obesity. [Read abstract](#) in BMC Public Health.

14.09.10: IHF launches RED ALERT for women

Ireland's female celebrities have come out in force to let women know that heart disease is not just a man's disease – it is the no.1 killer of Irish women. THIS IS NOT A RED DRESS, IT'S A RED ALERT was the message from the unforgettable line-up of ladies in red supporting the Irish Heart Foundation heart month campaign which included former Miss World Rosanna Davison, actress Martina Stanley who plays Dolores from Fair City, singer Hazel Kaneswaran, TV3 presenter Sinead Desmond and Nessa Childers MEP. According to the national charity fighting heart disease and stroke, this September is a RED ALERT to all Irish women to know that as many women (5,000) as men die from cardiovascular diseases and it is important to Go Red for Women and take action to reduce your risk. [Read more](#).

16.09.10: Women's Challenges with Postpartum Weight Loss (US)

This study was designed to examine women's experiences of weight loss during the postpartum period. Themes that emerged from the interviews related to women's challenges with return to pre-pregnancy weight. These included: time and motivation issues, the need for support, and weight and other struggles. This study provides a look inside the lives of women faced with the reality of losing weight after childbirth. Losing weight after delivery is multi-faceted and influenced by many factors. [Read abstract](#) in Matern Child Health J.

[Back to top](#)

13.09.10: Studies aim to prevent, treat childhood obesity (US, Medical News Today)

The National Institutes of Health is launching two major research efforts, totalling \$72.5 million, to examine ways to curtail the nation's childhood obesity epidemic. One will study long-term approaches to prevent or treat childhood obesity, and the other will examine community efforts to reduce childhood obesity rates. [Read more](#).

13.09.10: Breakthrough could halt Type 2 diabetes (ROI, Irish Examiner)

A breakthrough by scientists at Trinity College could prevent the onset of Type 2 diabetes, affecting about 14% of over 40s and which is obesity related. The research, state-funded through Science Foundation Ireland and which involved collaborators in other universities, including UCD, claims to have found what could be the underlying cause of the disease. Scientists believe a hormone known as IAPP, which gets deposited in the pancreas, is the trigger for the disease. [Read article](#) by Jennifer Hough.

13.09.10: PE lessons can help tackle our obesity crisis but there has to be more to them than GAA sports (ROI, Evening Echo, p.18)

Irish children are eating themselves to death. Literally. Turn up outside any large school in Ireland around 9am on a weekday morning and you will see the evidence for yourself. Dozens of obese boys and girls being dropped off at the school gate and puffing and wheezing their way from car seat to classroom chair. The school run has become the school waddle. There are many reasons for this obesity epidemic. Health expert Professor Niall Moyna made a public address on obesity in Cork this week in which he warned of some teenagers facing amputations in their mid-20s unless action is taken now to address the crisis.

13.09.10: 'Focus on health inequalities' programme 27 October-24 November 2010

Focus on Health Inequalities (27 October 2010 – 24 November 2010) is a programme of events to highlight innovative action being taken by the Public Health Agency, together with partners, to address health inequalities and the wider determinants of health and wellbeing across Northern Ireland. There will be a focus on poverty, disadvantage, economics and promoting a healthier society. A full Calendar of Events is currently being compiled and will be available to download below in the near future. [Read more](#).

13.09.10: NHS Birmingham begins children obesity warning campaign (UK, The Drum)

An integrated campaign will be launched today by NHS Birmingham East and North to communicate to parents the need for them to have control over their children's eating habits. The campaign, by Dr Foster Intelligence, will run across online and poster and include a series of workshops over a four-week-period. The campaign will target areas within the region which have a high rate of childhood obesity, which can lead to health problems such as heart disease, type two diabetes and strokes, among other health risks. Six-sheet posters featuring photographs taken by celebrity photographer Rankin will be used to highlight the potential consequences of childhood obesity later in life. [Read more](#).

09.09.10: Surgery for obese could 'save millions of pounds' (UK)

Following NICE guidance on bariatric surgery could save the economy hundreds of millions of pounds and the NHS around £56 million every year, leading surgeons said yesterday. The financial toll of unemployment, housing and incapacity benefit, hospital admissions and prescriptions is increasing every year but could be cut dramatically if people were given surgery, the report says. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

07.09.10: Trends in obesity and abdominal obesity among adults in the United States from 1999-2008 (US)

Researchers used data from up to 22,872 men and non-pregnant women aged ≥ 20 years from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 1999-2008. Between 1999 and 2008, both obesity and abdominal obesity increased in men, and abdominal obesity increased in women. [Read abstract](#) in International Journal of Obesity.

07.09.10: Smoking and obesity critical to controlling diabetes levels (ROI, Irish Times – Supplement)

Tackling smoking and obesity continue to be the major challenges in the provision of diabetes care, new research has found. The findings were published yesterday in a report on the Midland Diabetes Structured Care Programme, a 12-year long initiative in which patients with the illness were treated by primary care services in their own communities. [Read article](#) by Joanne Hunt.

07.09.10: Framing messages about weight discrimination: impact on public support for legislation (US)

The purpose of this study was to assess the public support for potential legislation to prohibit weight-based discrimination against obese individuals in the United States, and to examine whether certain message frames about weight discrimination influence public support. The authors suggest the findings provide evidence of current levels of public support for legislation to prohibit weight-based discrimination, and offer potential ways for policy makers and interest groups to communicate messages about weight discrimination in efforts to increase support. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Obes (Lond).

07.09.10: Call for North and South to co-operate more on health (ROI, Irish Times)

A report by the Departments of Health in the Republic and Northern Ireland has recommended greater cross-Border co-operation in tackling a variety of health issues ranging from obesity and suicide prevention to child protection. The report says that by both departments working together to address major health issues “significant additional benefits to the population of each jurisdiction can be achieved, which could not be achieved by each system working in isolation”. The North-South feasibility study makes 37 recommendations, including 10 which it says should be taken forward as a priority because they “offer the opportunity for a more immediate impact on patient and client care”. [Read article](#) by Eithne Donnellan.

06.09.10: Long-Term Weight Loss An Uphill Struggle (US, Medical News Today)

Only about one in every six Americans who have ever been overweight or obese loses weight and maintains that loss, according to Penn State College of Medicine researchers. While that number is larger than most weight-loss clinical trials report, the majority of Americans are still unable to lose weight and keep it off. [Read more](#).

06.09.10: Report finds delivery of care to diabetes patients significantly improved (ROI)

The most recent audit report of the Midland Diabetes Structured Care Programme was launched by An Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD. The Health Service Executive Midland Diabetes Structured Care Programme is a primary care based programme dedicated to improving the quality of care for patients with Diabetes, mainly those with Type 2 Diabetes. The audit report concentrates on a sample of 1,071 diabetes patients taken from the cohort of 3,700 patients who are attending the 30 general practices in the counties of Laois, Offaly, Longford and Westmeath that are enrolled in the Programme. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

06.09.10: Best practice principles for community-based obesity prevention: development, content and application (Australia)

Based on analysis of a range of literature, a preliminary set of principles was drafted and progressively revised through further analyses of published literature and a series of consultations. The framework for best practice principles comprises: community engagement, programme design and planning, evaluation, implementation and sustainability, and governance. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity Reviews.

03.09.10: Reflections on community-based population health intervention and evaluation for obesity and chronic disease prevention: the Healthy Alberta Communities project (Canada)

The aim of this study was to reflect upon a population health intervention for obesity and chronic disease prevention, with specific attention to the processes of change and developing, implementing and evaluating an intervention in a community-university-government partnership context. Guided by assumptions of community-based participatory research, and using a validated capacity-building tool, the investigators described and reflected critically upon the level and nature of capacity built (for both research and intervention) as indicators of the process and contextual influences on intervention success. Capacity was built in communities through collaborative approaches. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Public Health.

03.09.10: The Spread of Behavior in an Online Social Network Experiment (US)

A researcher in Massachusetts investigated the effects of network structure on diffusion by studying the spread of health behavior through artificially structured online communities. Individual adoption was much more likely when participants received social reinforcement from multiple neighbors in the social network. The behavior spread farther and faster across clustered-lattice networks than across corresponding random networks. [Read abstract](#) in Science.

02.09.10: Minister Harney launches the findings of the All-Ireland Traveller Health Study (IOI)

Mary Harney, Minister for Health & Children, welcomed the publication of the findings of the All-Ireland Traveller Health Study, which she launched in July 2007. The Department of Health and Children in conjunction with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland commissioned the School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Population Science, University College Dublin to conduct the Study. Using innovative new methods, Travellers themselves, together with frontline service providers, worked with UCD researchers to collect the data. [Read more](#).

02.09.10: A Tale of Two ObesCities: The Role of Municipal Governance in Reducing Childhood Obesity in New York City and London (US/UK)

Given the concentration of the world's population, income inequalities, unhealthy diets, and patterns of physical activity in cities, urban areas bear a disproportionate burden of obesity. To address these issues, in 2008, researchers from the City University of New York and London Metropolitan University created the Municipal Responses to Childhood Obesity Collaborative. Based on a review of existing initiatives in London and New York City, the Collaborative recommended 11 broad strategies by which each city could reduce childhood obesity. [Read abstract](#) in J Urban Health.

01.09.10: Landmark agreement extends Advertising Standards Authority's digital remit (UK)

The digital remit of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is to be extended significantly to deliver more comprehensive consumer protection online. The ASA's present remit online includes ads in paid-for space and sales promotions wherever they appear. But from next year, the rules in the UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (the CAP Code) will apply in full to marketing communications online, including the rules relating to misleading advertising, social responsibility and the protection of children. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

01.09.10: Relation of food cost to healthfulness of diet among US women (US)

Spending more on food isn't the only way to buy the healthiest diet, new research shows. "Increased spending on nuts, soy and beans, and whole grains, and less spending on red and processed meats and high-fat dairy, may be the best investment for dietary health," Dr. Adam M. Bernstein and colleagues from the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston and colleagues conclude. The trick, according to the researchers, is to spend more on plant-based foods. [Read abstract](#) in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition

01.09.10: Shortened Night time Sleep Duration in Early Life and Subsequent Childhood Obesity (US)

To test associations between daytime and night time sleep duration and subsequent obesity in children and adolescents. For younger children (aged 0-4 years at baseline), short duration of night time sleep at baseline was strongly associated with increased risk of subsequent overweight or obesity. For older children (aged 5-13 years), baseline sleep was not associated with subsequent weight status; however, contemporaneous sleep was inversely associated. Daytime sleep had little effect on subsequent obesity in either group. [Read abstract](#) in Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.

01.09.10: Impact of early psychosocial factors (childhood socioeconomic factors and adversities) on future risk of type 2 diabetes, metabolic disturbances and obesity: a systematic review (Germany)

Two systematic reviews were carried out. Longitudinal, population- or community-based studies were included if they contained data on psychosocial factors in childhood and either diabetes incidence or obesity risk. The authors conclude that, taken together, there is evidence that childhood SES is associated with type 2 diabetes and obesity in later life. The database on the role of psychological factors such as traumata and childhood adversities for the future risk of type 2 diabetes or obesity is too small to draw conclusions. Thus, more population-based longitudinal studies and international standards to assess psychosocial factors are needed to clarify the mechanisms leading to the observed health disparities. [Read abstract](#) in BMC PH.

September 2010: Peer weight norm misperception as a risk factor for being over and underweight among UK secondary school students (UK)

Erroneous perceptions of peer weight norms may be important risk factors for being underweight and overweight. This study assessed misperceptions of peer weight norms and their association with being overweight or underweight among UK youth. Researchers found that pervasive misperceptions of peer weight norms may contribute to unhealthy weight-related behaviours and help perpetuate students' overweight or underweight status. They advise that future research should examine perceptions of other weight-related peer norms and explore what may create misperceptions. [Read abstract](#) in European Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

September 2010: Associations of television viewing, physical activity and dietary behaviours with obesity in aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadian youth (Canada)

Researchers aimed to determine associations of diet, physical activity and television (TV) viewing time with obesity among aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth in conjunction with socio-economic variables. Compared to non-aboriginal youth, physical activity participation among aboriginal youth was higher, but consumption of vegetables and dairy products was lower, and more aboriginal youth were 'high' TV watchers. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

[Back to top](#)

31.08.10: Increasing community capacity to prevent childhood obesity: challenges, lessons learned and results from the Romp & Chomp intervention (Australia)

Romp & Chomp was a community-wide obesity prevention intervention conducted in Geelong Australia with a target group of 12,000 children aged 0-5 years. The aim of this study was to determine if the capacity of the Geelong community, represented by key stakeholder organisations, to support healthy eating and physical activity for young children was increased after Romp & Chomp. The thematic analysis revealed the establishment of sustainable partnerships, use of specialist advice, and integration of activities into ongoing formal training for early childhood workers. Complex issues also emerged from the key informant interviews regarding the challenges of limited funding, high staff turnover, changing governance structures, lack of high level leadership and unclear communication strategies. [Read full article](#) in BMC Public Health.

30.08.10: Pediatric weight management programs in Canada: Where, What and How? (Canada)

Of the 18 paediatric weight management programs that were identified, all included multidisciplinary teams that take a family-centred, lifestyle/behavioural therapeutic approach; health services were accessed primarily through physician referral. Although many participated in research and were affiliated with academic institutions, most did not systematically evaluate their obesity-related programming. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Pediatr Obes.

28.08.10: Oesophageal cancer rates in men up 50 per cent in a generation according to Cancer Research UK (UK)

Oesophageal cancer rates in men have risen by 50 per cent over the last 25 years, according to new figures published by Cancer Research UK today. Professor Janusz Jankowski, a Cancer Research UK funded clinician at the Barts & The London School of Medicine & Dentistry, said: "We don't know exactly why we're seeing this steep rise in oesophageal cancer rates, and why it's having such a dramatic effect on men. "But we think the obesity epidemic may be a big reason behind the increase. We know that being overweight significantly increases the risk of adenocarcinoma – the main type of oesophageal cancer that's on the up. Our changing diets are also likely to be influencing the rise with people eating less fruit and vegetables. [Read more](#).

27.08.10: A qualitative study comparing commercial and health service weight loss groups, classes and clubs (Scot)

The present study aimed to compare and contrast leaders' and attendees' experiences of health service and commercial weight loss groups, through in-depth interviews and group observations. Commercial and health service groups differ in access; attendee and leader autonomy; engagement in group processes; and approaches to leadership and training, which could influence weight loss outcomes. Health service groups can provide different group content and experiences, particularly for those with chronic diseases and for populations less likely to attend commercial groups, such as men. [Read abstract](#) in J Hum Nutr Diet.

27.08.10: Ten-fold rise in gastric bands and other weight-loss ops (UK, BBC News)

The number of people in England undergoing surgery on the NHS to help them lose weight has increased ten-fold in less than a decade. The British Medical Journal (BMJ) reports operations such as gastric banding and bypasses rose from 238 a year to more than 2,543 in 2007. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

27.08.10: NHS faces 'overwhelming obesity burden' (UK, Nursing Times)

Health experts have warned of obesity's "overwhelming" burden on the NHS as figures showed a 785% rise in weight-loss surgery. Some doctors are "skirting around the rules" and not insisting on months of lifestyle change before allowing patients to undergo surgery, specialists said. Operations carried out for the most obese people in England soared over the past five years, according to the NHS Information Centre. [Read more](#).

27.08.10: Tobacco, formula and frequent pregnancies: the obesity trinity (US)

In a first person paper published in the August 27, 2010 issue of *Childhood Obesity*, Dr. Melinda Sothorn, Director of Health Promotion and Professor of Public Health at LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans, provides three ways to de-program the 1950s obesity trinity (the combination of prenatal tobacco use, infant formula, and frequent pregnancies) underlying the current obesity epidemic in the United States and protect future generations from its health consequences. [Read article](#) in *Childhood Obesity*.

26.08.10: Introduction of laparoscopic bariatric surgery in England: observational population cohort study (Eng)

The purpose of this study was to describe national trends in bariatric surgery and examine the factors influencing outcome in bariatric surgery in England. The authors found that bariatric surgery has increased exponentially in England. Although postoperative weight loss and reoperation rates were not evaluated in this observational population cohort study, patients selected for gastric banding had lower postoperative mortality and readmission rates and a shorter length of stay than did those selected for gastric bypass. [Read abstract](#) in *BMJ*.

26.08.10: Mediators of Maternal Depression and Family Structure on Child BMI: Parenting Quality and Risk Factors for Child Overweight (US)

Risk factors for child obesity may be influenced by family environment, including maternal depression, family structure, and parenting quality. Researchers tested a path model in which maternal depression and single parent status are associated with parenting quality, which relates to three risk factors for child obesity: diet, leisure, and sedentary behaviour. Results showed that associations of maternal depression and single parenthood with child BMI are mediated by parenting quality and its relation to children's leisure activity and sedentary behaviour. [Read abstract](#) in *Obesity*.

25.08.10: Long-term increase of fat mass after a four week intervention with fast food based hyper-alimentation and limitation of physical activity (Sweden)

The aim of this study was to study long term effects on body composition after a four week intervention with fast food based hyper-alimentation and limited physical activity in young normal weight subjects. One year after the intervention there was an increase of fat mass but unchanged fat free mass. As the change of fat mass was larger than expected from epidemiological studies and as there was no increase of body weight in controls it raises the issue whether there is a long-term effect to increase fat mass of a short period of hyper-alimentation. [Read article](#) in *Nutrition & Metabolism*.

[Back to top](#)

24.08.10: Will cardiovascular disease prevention widen health inequalities? (UK)

The high-risk approach to prevent CVD typically involves population screening. Evidence suggests this high-risk approach typically widens socioeconomic inequalities. Such inequalities have been reported in screening, healthy diet advice, smoking cessation, statin and anti-hypertensive prescribing, and adherence. The alternative approach is population-wide CVD prevention. For example, legislating for smoke-free public spaces, banning dietary trans fats, or halving daily dietary salt intake. Such strategies are generally effective and

cost-saving; there is also increasing evidence that they can reduce health inequalities. [Read article](#) in PLoS Medicine.

24.08.10: England 'leading the world on obesity prevention' say global health experts (Eng)

England leads the world in the development of policies to prevent obesity, a group of senior international experts say in a letter addressed jointly to the Minister for Public Health, Anne Milton and Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley. The letter, from the Scientific Advisory Council of the International Obesity TaskForce (IOTF), praises the global leadership taken by England and especially commends the current 'world-class' surveillance schemes, the current controls on the marketing of unhealthy food to children, the development of nutrient profiling – a world first – along with moves to re-formulate processed foods and develop clear front-of-pack nutrition labelling, to enhance school meals standards, and to back these initiatives with targeted social marketing campaigns combined with monitoring and evaluation. [Read more](#).

17.08.10: Barriers encountered when recruiting obese pregnant women to a dietary intervention (UK)

This study assessed the feasibility of recruiting individuals to a proposed dietary intervention project aimed at reducing the incidence of excessive weight gain during pregnancy for mothers with a raised body mass index (BMI) in early pregnancy. Researchers found recruitment for this study and any future obesity intervention study is problematic due to the perceived sensitivity surrounding obesity in pregnancy and the subsequent discomfort that professionals feel about raising the issue. [Read abstract](#) in Nursing Times.

13.08.10: Tackling the problem of overweight and obesity: the Dutch approach (Netherlands)

The Ministry of Health facilitates three complementary initiatives to tackle overweight and obesity: i) the Knowledge Centre Overweight (KCO) (since 2002) to enhance knowledge about prevention and treatment of overweight, ii) the Covenant on Overweight (CO) (since 2005), a public-private partnership, iii) the Partnership Overweight Netherlands (PON) (since 2008), to facilitate the development and implementation of a chronic disease management model. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity Facts.

13.08.10: A review of web-based weight loss interventions in adults (US)

This review highlights peer-reviewed literature on randomized controlled trials that examine Internet-delivered weight loss and maintenance programmes. The reviewed studies show intervention results ranging from no weight loss to an average loss of 7.6 kg. It is difficult to draw a definitive conclusion on the potential impact of Internet-based weight loss as study methods are highly variable between papers, low adherence was recorded and not all studies include a control group. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity Reviews.

[Back to top](#)

August 2010: Weight loss interventions in young people (18 to 25 year olds): a systematic review (UK)

This systematic review assesses weight loss interventions in young adults (18-25 years), who are vulnerable to weight gain. Before and after comparison of behavioural/motivational interventions (-2.40 kg; 95% CI -5.4 to 0.6) and combination interventions (-2.96; 95% CI -4.4 to -1.5) consistently showed weight loss. Behavioural/motivational interventions increased self-efficacy, the desire to control weight, boosted self-esteem, and increased satisfaction with body areas and appearance. Interventions also showed improvements in HDL cholesterol, insulin, glucose and maximum oxygen uptake. However, recruitment to participation in interventions was a barrier for this age group with small sample sizes and short-term interventions. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity Reviews.

August 2010: Efficacy and safety of anti-obesity drugs in children and adolescents: systematic review and meta-analysis (UK)

Researchers undertook a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials to summarize the efficacy of anti-obesity drugs in reducing BMI and improving health in children and adolescents. They conclude that sibutramine in adolescent's produces clinically meaningful reductions in BMI and waist circumference of approximately 0.63 SD, with improvements in cardiometabolic risk. Orlistat modestly reduces BMI (effect size approximately 0.24 SD) with a high prevalence of gastrointestinal adverse effects. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity Reviews.

Recently published research in obesity journals

International Journal of Obesity

- [Volume 34, Issue 9 \(September 2010\)](#)

Obesity: A Research Journal

- [Volume 18, Issue 10 \(October 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 18, Issue 9 \(September 2010\)](#)

Obesity Reviews

- [Volume 11, Issue 10 \(October 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 11, Issue 9 \(September 2010\)](#)

[Back to top](#)

NUTRITION NEWS

October 2010: Long-term sustainability of a worksite canteen intervention of serving more fruit and vegetables (DK)

The objective of this study was to analyse the 5-year sustainability of a worksite canteen intervention of serving more fruit and vegetables (F&V). The present study indicates that sustainability of F&V is possible in worksites where the participatory and empowering approach, self-monitoring, environmental change, dialogue with suppliers and networking among worksite canteens are applied. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

October 2010: Lifetime health outcomes of breast-feeding - a comparison of the policy documents of five European countries (EU)

This study set out to (i) identify and describe prevailing infant feeding policy documents in five diverse European countries; (ii) analyse types of health outcomes for the infant that are associated with feeding breast milk rather than formula milk in the documents of different countries; and (iii) assess the extent to which documents reflect the WHO global recommendation of exclusive breast-feeding for six months. Policy documents in the study countries varied in the extent to which they reflect the health outcomes for the baby of breast-feeding, and this may limit effective promotion by health professionals. The authors conclude there is scope to improve the process of bringing evidence and recommendations into policy documents. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

October 2010: Associations between habitual school-day breakfast consumption, body mass index, physical activity and cardiorespiratory fitness in English schoolchildren (UK)

The aim of this study was to assess associations between habitual school-day breakfast consumption, body mass index (BMI), physical activity (PA) and cardiorespiratory fitness (CRF). Researchers found that habitual breakfast consumption is associated with healthy BMI and higher PA levels in schoolchildren. In boys, regularly eating breakfast is also associated with higher levels of CRF. The higher PA observed in habitual breakfast eaters may explain the higher CRF values observed. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

October 2010: Vitamin D status and measures of cognitive function in healthy older European adults (EU)

Data from human studies that have investigated the association between vitamin D status and cognitive function in elderly adults are conflicting. The objective of this study was to assess vitamin D status in older European subjects ($n=387$; aged 55–87 years) and examine its association with measures of cognitive function. Researchers found that vitamin D insufficiency, but not deficiency, is widespread in the older population of several European countries. Low vitamin D status was associated with a reduced capacity for spatial working memory, particularly in women. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

October 2010: Major dietary patterns of young and middle aged women: results from a prospective Australian cohort study (Australia)

The aim of this study was to assess the major dietary patterns of two age cohorts of women, to determine to the extent to which the dietary patterns differ between the cohorts and to assess whether they vary according to socio-demographic and behavioural characteristics and patterns of nutrient intake. Six dietary patterns were identified and were labelled: cooked vegetables; fruit; Mediterranean-style; processed meat, meat and takeaway; reduced fat dairy; and high-fat and sugar foods. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

30.09.10: Transfer of nutrition policy to health departments (UK)

Responsibility for nutrition policy will transfer on 01 October from the Food Standards Agency to the Department of Health in England and to the Welsh Assembly Government in Wales. [Read more](#).

29.09.10: Nutrition in infancy and long-term risk of obesity: evidence from two randomized controlled trials (UK)

In two prospective randomized trials, researchers showed that a nutrient-enriched diet in infancy increased fat mass later in childhood. They conclude that these experimental data support a causal link between faster early weight gain and a later risk of obesity, have important implications for the management of infants born small for gestational age, and suggest that the primary prevention of obesity could begin in infancy. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Clin Nutr.

28.09.10: Assessing dietary intake in children and adolescents: Considerations and recommendations for obesity research (Australia)

The aim of this paper is to guide researchers and practitioners in selecting the most appropriate dietary assessment method for situations involving children and adolescents. This paper presents a summary of the issues to consider when choosing a method, a description of some of the more commonly used dietary assessment methods for young people and a series of case-studies to illustrate the range of circumstances faced when measuring dietary intake. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Pediatr Obes.

28.09.10: Effort to reduce salt intake feels the pinch of recession (ROI, Irish Times – Supplement)

Efforts to reduce the amount of salt in the food we eat are foundering as suppliers and manufacturers show increasing resistance to the State's salt reduction programme. Five companies and trade organisations have been removed from the programme run by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) after failing to make submissions in the past two years. [Read article](#) by Paul Cullen.

[Back to top](#)

28.09.10: Nestle to expand medical food arm (ROI, Irish Independent)

Nestle, famous for products such as Kit Kat, Aero and Yorkie, revealed yesterday that it is to promote low-protein chocolate bars and non-fattening soups. The move came as the Swiss food group announced a significant expansion of its medical nutrition activities. It is to pump hundreds of millions of dollars into Nestle Health Science, a subsidiary to be launched next year. [Read more.](#)

27.09.10: Caterers are committed to providing healthier food (UK)

The Food Standards Agency has been working in partnership with more than 45 major UK caterers to provide healthier choices for their customers when eating out. The companies involved cover the breadth of the catering industry and include many well known restaurants, pubs, coffee shops and sandwich chains. In addition the Agency is working with workplace caterers and catering suppliers. [Read more.](#)

27.09.10: Government wants calorie counts on menus (UK, Marketing Week)

The Government wants fast-food chains and restaurants to advise customers of the calorie count in their food. The Department of Health is said to be discussing a voluntary system with the food industry that would see information displayed on menus, tables and counters. The move is aimed at encouraging people to choose healthier options and cut obesity rates. [Read more.](#)

27.09.10: MEP 'quite confident' Council of Ministers will back traffic light labels (UK)

MEP Glenis Willmott is "quite confident" that the European Council will overturn the European Parliament's (EP's) decision to scrap colour-coded front-of-pack food labelling in the EU. After the first reading of the Food Information Regulation (FIR) in the EP in June, MEPs rejected proposals to include mandatory traffic light labelling on processed foods and instead opted for a GDA-based (Guideline Daily Amount) system. [Read more.](#)

23.09.10: To what extent have sweetened beverages contributed to the obesity epidemic? (US)

A systematic literature review was conducted to determine whether sweetened beverage intake increases the risk for obesity, and the extent to which it has contributed to recent increases in energy intake and adiposity in the USA. Researchers found that obesity rates and sweetened beverage intake have increased in tandem in the USA. Studies consistently show that higher intake of sweetened beverages is associated with higher energy intake. Energy in liquid form is not well compensated for by reductions in the intake of other sources of energy. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

23.09.10: Using Geographic Information Systems and Local Food Store Data in California's Low-Income Neighborhoods to Inform Community Initiatives and Resources (US)

Researchers examined conditions in California low-income neighborhoods that affect obesity to inform program planning, nutrition education, community participation, investment of resources, and involvement of stakeholders. Thirty-one percent of neighborhoods mapped had no supermarket within any of their census tract boundaries, but health department staff members estimated that 74.2% of residents had access to a large grocery store within 1 mile. Eighty-one percent of small markets sold produce, and 67.6% offered 4 or more types of fresh vegetables. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Public Health.

[Back to top](#)

17.09.10: Infant-feeding patterns and cardiovascular risk factors in young adulthood: data from five cohorts in low- and middle-income countries (Global)

This study tested the hypothesis that longer duration of breastfeeding and later introduction of complementary foods in infancy are associated with reduced adult cardiovascular risk. Researchers found there was no evidence that longer duration of breastfeeding is protective against adult hypertension, diabetes or overweight/adiposity in these low-/middle-income populations. They concluded that further research is required to determine whether 'exclusive' breastfeeding may be protective. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Epidemiol.

14.09.10: Packing a healthy punch for lunch (NI)

In Northern Ireland over 127,000 children bring their own food to school so it is important to ensure that food is both appetising and is good for health. Recent surveys looking at children's lunchboxes revealed that they are often too high in fat, salt and sugar, with just under half of the lunchboxes containing no fruit. To help parents and carers make lunchboxes healthier, the Public Health Agency has produced a leaflet, *Are you packing a healthy lunch?* in collaboration with **safefood**, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Education. [Read more](#).

13.09.10: First Lady Addresses the National Restaurant Association Meeting (US)

Read remarks by the First Lady, Michelle Obama, to the National Restaurant Association meeting in which she talks about the role that food, and restaurants especially, play in our own lives and in the life of our nation. [Read more](#).

08.09.10: Exposure to non-core foods and beverages in the first year of life (Australia).

This study investigated the proportion of Australian infants who were introduced to non-core foods and beverages and factors that are associated with the introduction of non-core foods and beverages to infants in the first year of life. The three non-core foods most commonly introduced to infants by 52 weeks post-partum were biscuits and cakes (91.6%, n = 415), hot chips/French fries (78.6%, n = 356) and ice-cream (68.2%, n = 309). Independent predictors of introduction of non-core foods and beverages by 52 weeks post-partum were age at which solids were first introduced and the presence of older siblings. [Read abstract](#) in Nutrition & Dietetics.

08.09.10: Front-of-pack nutrition label stimulates healthier product development: a quantitative analysis (Netherlands)

This is the largest study to date to investigate the effect of a nutrition logo on the development of healthier products by food manufacturers. The results indicate that the Choices logo has motivated food manufacturers to reformulate existing products and develop new products with a healthier product composition, especially where sodium and dietary fibre are concerned. [Read abstract](#) in Int. J. of Phys. Act. and Beh. Nutr.

07.09.10: Food marketing in Irish schools (ROI)

Marketing of unhealthy food to children is linked to the increased prevalence of obesity worldwide. This paper aims to explore ways in which schools respond to commercial activity around food marketing. A survey was employed to investigate the extent of commercial activity in post-primary schools in Ireland, with a focus on food marketing. Food sales were a prevalent form of commercial activity in schools with 81.4 per cent operating shops or canteens that sell snacks, 44.7 per cent drinks vending machines and 28.0 per cent snack vending machines. A total of 38 per cent of schools reported that they accept for-profit sponsorship and the primary reason was inadequate funding for equipment (91.6 per cent), especially sports equipment. [Read abstract](#) in Health Education.

[Back to top](#)

03.09.10: Energy density, energy costs and income – how are they related? (Netherlands)

The objective of this study was to examine the association between energy density and energy costs in single food items and composed diets, and to explore differences in energy density and energy cost between income levels. In the Netherlands energy density was inversely related with energy costs, implying that healthier diets cost more. However, we could not find differences in energy density or costs between income levels. Future research, using precise food expenditures, is of main importance in studying the economics of obesity and in the aim of making the healthier choice easier. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

02.09.10: Chefs' Opinions about Reducing the Calorie Content of Menu Items in Restaurants (US)

A survey was conducted among chefs attending US culinary meetings about strategies for creating reduced-calorie foods and opportunities for introducing such items on restaurant menus. Nearly all chefs (93%) thought that the calories in menu items could be reduced by 10-25% without customers noticing. To decrease the calories in two specific foods, respondents were more likely to select strategies for reducing energy density than for reducing portion size ($P < 0.004$). Low consumer demand was identified as the greatest barrier to including reduced-calorie items on the menu by 38% of chefs, followed by the need for staff skills and training (24%), and high ingredient cost (18%). [Read abstract](#) in Obesity.

01.09.10: Mediterranean dietary patterns and prospective weight change in participants of the EPIC-PANACEA project (UK)

Researchers assessed the association between the adherence to the Mediterranean dietary pattern (MDP), prospective weight change, and the incidence of overweight or obesity. Individuals with a high adherence to the MDP according to the rMED (11-18 points) showed a 5-y weight change of -0.16 kg (95% CI: -0.24, -0.07 kg) and were 10% (95% CI: 4%, 18%) less likely to develop overweight or obesity than were individuals with a low adherence to the MDP (0-6 points). The low meat content of the Mediterranean diet seemed to account for most of its positive effect against weight gain. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Clin Nutr.

01.09.10: Government food labelling changes (UK)

From today, there are changes being made to which Government departments have responsibility for food labelling policy. [Read more](#).

01.09.10: Encouraging healthy beverage intake in child care and school settings (US)

Inappropriate intake of sugar-sweetened beverages, fruit juice, and whole milk is associated with obesity and obesity-related co-morbidities. As numerous children spend many hours in schools and child care, these settings provide a potential means for general pediatricians to reach children and their parents with interventions to encourage intake of guideline-recommended beverages. This review describes the beverages currently offered within child care facilities and schools and summarizes school and child care-based interventions and policies to encourage healthy beverage intake. [Read abstract](#) in Curr Opin Pediatr.

[Back to top](#)

01.09.10: Diet and cancer prevention: Contributions from the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) study (EU)

Authors present the main findings observed to date from the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) on dietary factors associated with the most frequent cancer sites. They observed the following significant associations: gastric cancer

risk was inversely associated with high plasma vitamin C, some carotenoids, retinol and $\hat{1}\pm$ -tocopherol, high intake of cereal fibre and high adherence to Mediterranean diet, while red and processed meat were associated with increased risk. [Read abstract](#) in Eur J Cancer.

September 2010: Television food advertising to children: A global perspective (UK)

This article reports on collaboration among 13 research groups in Australia, Asia, Western Europe, and North and South America. They found that food advertisements composed 11% to 29% of advertisements. Noncore foods were featured in 53% to 87% of food advertisements, and the rate of noncore food advertising was higher during children's peak viewing times. Most food advertisements containing persuasive marketing were for noncore products. Across all sampled countries, children were exposed to high volumes of television advertising for unhealthy foods, featuring child-oriented persuasive techniques. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Public Health.

September 2010: Schoolchildren's Consumption of Competitive Foods and Beverages, Excluding à la Carte (US)

Competitive foods/beverages are those in school vending machines, school stores, snack bars, special sales, and items sold à la carte in the school cafeteria that compete with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal program offerings. Competitive foods/beverages use, excluding à la carte items, was examined using the third School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA III), a nationally representative sample of 2309 schoolchildren in grades 1 to 12. Consumers of competitive items other than à la carte had significantly higher mean energy, sugar intakes, and lower sodium, dietary fiber, B vitamins, and iron intakes than non-consumers. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of School Health.

September 2010: The beneficial effect of family meals on obesity differs by race, sex, and household education: the national survey of children's health, 2003-2004 (US)

The purpose of this study was to examine family meal frequency as a protective factor for obesity in a US-based sample of non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, and Hispanic children age 6 to 11 years, and to identify individual, familial, and socioeconomic factors that moderate this association. Data were from the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health (n=16,770). The authors conclude the following: family meals seem to be protective of obesity in non-Hispanic white children and non-Hispanic black boys, whereas they may put Hispanic boys living in low-education households at risk. [Read abstract](#) in J. Am. Diet. Assoc.

31.08.10: Infants' diet raises risk of obesity and illness (ROI, Irish Times - Supplement)

A significant proportion of six-month-old infants in Ireland are regularly consuming foods high in sugar, fat and salt, putting them at risk of becoming overweight and obese later in life, a new study reveals. The study has also found that the majority of Irish babies are weaned onto solids far too early - some as early as 12 weeks and often on the advice of the maternal grandmother. [Read article](#) by Michelle McDonagh or [read abstract](#) in the British Journal of Nutrition.

[Back to top](#)

31.08.10: Treating your child to a real slice of life.... (ROI, Irish Times - Supplement)

It is hardly your typical nursery food: lemon and dill hold with red pepper and spring onion couscous; beef moussaka with fresh aubergine and au gratin potato; fish bouillabaisse with mashed potato. These are some of the delicacies on this month's menu at the Park Academy Childcare centres in Dublin, where chefs aim to educate the palates of their young charges as well as meet their nutritional needs. [Read article](#) by Sheila Wayman.

31.08.10: The Effect of Dietary Patterns on Estimated Coronary Heart Disease Risk – results from the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Trial (US)

The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet is recommended in the 2005 US Dietary Guidelines. To understand the potential benefits of DASH on coronary heart disease (CHD), we applied the Framingham risk equations to calculate 10-year risk of developing CHD using data from the DASH trial. Compared with control and F/V, the DASH diet reduced estimated 10-year CHD risk by 18% and 11%, respectively. In addition to reducing blood pressure, the DASH diet should substantially reduce the risk of CHD. [Read abstract](#) in *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*.

30.08.10: 'Five-a-day' nutrition campaign bearing fruit among consumers (ROI, Irish Times)

There has been a 20 per cent increase in the numbers of people claiming to eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day, according to a survey commissioned by Bord Bia, the Irish food board. Some 45 per cent of consumers said they ate five or more portions a day. When asked the same question in 2006, 25 per cent of people said they ate five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Some 70 per cent of people surveyed knew the recommended intake of fruit and vegetables was five portions or more a day. This was a 20 per cent increase on the previous survey. [Read article](#) by Alison Healy.

30.08.10: Substantial decline in sugar-sweetened beverage consumption among California's children and adolescents (US)

The authors present an analysis of the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) that examines trends in childhood and adolescent obesity as well as trends in sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) consumption. They compared three separate cross-sectional samples (2003, 2005, and 2007) from biennial CHIS for three age groups. From 2003 to 2007, each age group experienced a substantial decline in high SSB consumption. Children and teenagers in 2005 and 2007 were significantly less likely than those surveyed in 2003 to have high SSB consumption after adjusting for gender, age, race/ethnicity, poverty level, and parental education ($P < 0.001$). [Read abstract](#) in *Int J Gen Med*.

27.08.10: School nutrition programs and the incidence of childhood obesity (US)

With children going back to school, parents are concerned that their youngsters are staying fit and eating right, especially those who dine in a school cafeteria. New research funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture finds that children who eat school lunches that are part of the federal government's National School Lunch Program are more likely to become overweight. The same research study found, however, that children who eat both the breakfast and lunch sponsored by the federal government are less heavy than children who don't participate in either, and than children who eat only the lunch, says economist Daniel L. Millimet at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. [Read more](#).

26.08.10: New research carried out by CASH has found surprising levels of salt hidden in lunchtime salads and pasta bowls (UK)

A shocking one in 10 ready-made salads on sale contains more salt than a Big Mac, according to the Consensus Action on Salt (Cash) research. Out of the 270 salad and pasta bowls surveyed, only six contained less salt than a packet of crisps and a tenth had more than the 2.1g contained in a Big Mac burger. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

23.08.10: Less is More - Study Shows that Teens Who Sleep Less Eat More Fatty Foods and Snacks (US)

A recent study published in the journal *SLEEP* shows that teens who slept less than eight hours per weeknight ate higher proportions of fatty foods and snacks than adolescents who slept eight hours or more. The results suggest that short sleep duration may increase

obesity risk by causing small changes in eating patterns that cumulatively alter energy balance, especially in girls. [Read more](#).

19.08.10: Price changes alone are not adequate to produce long-term dietary change (US)

Taxation has been proposed as a means to reduce consumption of unhealthy food items. However, it is unknown if taxation without regulations or other activities known to shift eating behaviors lead to long-term dietary change. This unexplored issue is examined using data from the Russia Longitudinal Monitoring Survey. Data were from adults aged 25–55y who participated in the nationally representative Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey. The proportion of dietary fat from high-fat meat and high-fat dairy items were lowest in 1998 and increased over subsequent years despite increasing costs. Percent fat from fats and oils continued to decline with rising costs. Price changes led to substantial shifts in the structure of food consumption. However, except for the most expensive items, consumption of items returned to levels consumed in the former Soviet Union following price stabilization. [Read abstract](#) in the Journal of Nutrition.

August 2010: The Use of Mobile Devices in Aiding Dietary Assessment and Evaluation (US)

Authors describe a novel mobile telephone food record that will provide an accurate account of daily food and nutrient intake. Their approach includes the use of image analysis tools for identification and quantification of food that is consumed at a meal. Images obtained before and after foods are eaten are used to estimate the amount and type of food consumed. [Read abstract](#) in IEEE J Sel Top Signal Process.

[Back to top](#)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY NEWS

28.09.10: Occupational, Commuting, and Leisure-Time Physical Activity in Relation to Heart Failure Among Finnish Men and Women (Finland)

The purpose of this study was to examine the association of different levels of occupational, commuting, and leisure-time physical activity and heart failure (HF) risk. Study cohorts included 28,334 Finnish men and 29,874 women who were 25 to 74 years of age and free of HF at baseline. Active commuting had a significant inverse association with HF risk in women, but not in men, before adjustment for occupational and leisure-time physical activity. The joint effects of any two types of physical activity on HF risk were even greater. The authors conclude that moderate and high levels of occupational or leisure-time physical activity are associated with a reduced risk of HF. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of the American College of Cardiology.

27.09.10: “Step by Step” – A feasibility study of a lunchtime walking intervention designed to increase walking, improve mental well-being and work performance in sedentary employees (UK)

Following an extensive recruitment campaign, a 16-week lunchtime intervention to increase walking was implemented with insufficiently physically active University employees. Participants were randomised to an immediate treatment or a delayed treatment control (to start at 10 weeks) group. For the first ten weeks of the intervention, participants took part in three facilitator-led group walks per week each of thirty minutes duration and were challenged to accumulate another sixty minutes of walking during the weekends. In the second phase of the intervention, the organised group walks ceased to be offered and participants were encouraged to self-organise their walks. Motivational principles were employed using contemporary motivational theory. [Read article](#) in BMC Public Health.

24.09.10: Children focus of new physical activity campaign (NI)

The Public Health Agency (PHA) has launched a physical activity campaign (www.getalifegetactive.com) to encourage our children to be more active. Research shows 82% of parents believe their child is getting the recommended daily amount or more, of physical activity, but the reality is that less than a quarter (24%) of 9 -11 years olds take part in the recommended 60 minutes physical activity, 7 days a week. Speaking during the launch at Brooklands Primary School, Dundonald, Dr Eddie Rooney, Chief Executive of the PHA, said: "Physical activity is really important for children if they are to grow into healthy adults. Children's physical activity needs are not the same as adults – they have a natural desire to be active and this should be encouraged both at home and at school. [Read more.](#)

24.09.10: British Heart Foundation finds that more than 1 in 3 workers too embarrassed to be seen breaking a sweat (UK)

The British Heart Foundation reveal new survey results which show that more than one in three (35%) workers avoid exercise during their working day because they don't want to be seen getting hot and sweaty in front of colleagues. Over half (55%) spend more than half their working day sitting or standing still. Nearly as many (48%) eat lunch at their desks, while just over one in six workers (16%) feel the pressure to take a shorter break. The figures paint a worrying picture of Britain's workplace habits, with 81% of UK workers failing to get the recommended amount of exercise a week. [Read more.](#)

24.09.10: Car-free zone to encourage youngsters to walk to school (Scotland, Herald)

Scotland's first vehicle exclusion zone for schools is to be pioneered in Glasgow to help reduce traffic accidents and encourage children to walk. A pilot scheme involving two primary schools on the south side of the city was launched by Glasgow City Council yesterday and coincides with a city-wide push to involve pupils and parents in road safety. [Read more.](#)

22.09.10: Physical inactivity 'is costing the country EUR1.6bn every year' (ROI, Irish Examiner), pg 3

Physical inactivity is costing Ireland around EUR1.6 billion per year, a health expert warned yesterday. And the cost was likely to increase, with almost seven out of ten (69%) adults not meeting the Department of Health's recommended levels of physical activity. [Read article](#) by Evelyn Ring.

20.09.10: Overestimation of physical activity level is associated with lower BMI: a cross-sectional analysis (UK)

This study aimed to characterize a high-risk population according to the discrepancies between objective and self-rated physical activity (PA), defined as awareness. 63.3% of participants (N=231) were inactive according to objective measurement. Of these, 45.9% rated themselves as active ('Overestimators'). [Read abstract](#) in International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity.

[Back to top](#)

17.09.10: Plan for 2,000km national cycle-path network unveiled (ROI, Irish Times)

Plans for a 2,000km national network of cycle paths connecting cities and major town across the Republic have been drafted by the National Roads Authority. Work on a detailed route for the first "interurban" cycle path from Dublin to Galway began recently and is due to be completed by the end of the year. The authority has mapped out 13 route "corridors" serving the cities of Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Galway, and almost 100 large towns which will make up the National Cycle Network. The routes pass through all of the 26

counties except Longford and vary in length from 52km (Drogheda to Trim) to 286km (Wexford to Tralee). [Read article](#) by Olivia Kelly.

17.09.10: Assembly Committee Says Sport Can Make a Real Contribution to Health (NI)

The Assembly Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee says that participation in sport and physical activity needs to be prioritised across all Government departments. The message came as they launch their Report into participation in sport and physical activity in Northern Ireland. The Committee believes that the Executive must allocate the necessary funds to encourage this participation under the forthcoming comprehensive spending review which will set local spending priorities. As part of this, the DHSSPS (spell out) should invest more of its budget on health preventative measures to encourage more physical activity. [Read more](#).

16.09.10: Exercise 'not the solution to obesity' (ROI, Irish Times)

Despite providing great health benefits exercise is not the best way to tackle obesity. Drastic reductions in calorie intake are the most effective way to counter this growing health problem, a researcher has claimed. Prof John Speakman of the University of Aberdeen presented challenging findings at the UK Festival of Science in Birmingham yesterday. They showed our activity levels had not changed over the last 30 years and that the "obesity epidemic" was mainly caused by increases in the amount we eat. [Read article](#) by Alison Jones.

13.09.10: Changes in Children's Physical Activity Over 12 Months: Longitudinal Results from the SPEEDY Study (UK)

Physical activity among 10 year olds dropped during the course of a year-long study with girls faring the worst, particularly at the weekend, researchers have said. The study of 844 children found that girls became more sedentary than boys and that all children did less physical activity on weekends compared with weekdays. [Read abstract](#) in Pediatrics.

13.09.10: An activity-based intervention for obese and physically inactive children organized in primary care: feasibility and impact on fitness and BMI A one-year follow-up study (Norway)

The aim of this study was to investigate the feasibility and impact on BMI and physical fitness of an intervention for obese and inactive children, based on physical activity and carried out in primary health care. It involved a 40-week structured intervention based on physical training with some lifestyle advice for the obese child and one parent. Dropout was substantial and depended on the attendance and compliance with physical activity by the parents. [Read abstract](#) in Scand J Prim Health Care.

10.09.10: The 6th All Island Sports Conference – 21-22 October 2010 (IOI)

The Irish Sports Council, Sport Northern Ireland and Dublin City Council will jointly host the 6th All-Island Sports Conference in the newly opened Aviva Stadium and the National Conference Centre on Thursday 21 and Friday 22 October 2010. The Conference is an integral part of the Dublin City's European Capital of Sport 2010 Programme. The Conference, titled 'Active Participation: Be Part of the Debate' will have participation as its primary theme. The Conference is aimed at decision makers and policy makers who shape the many varied and different aspects of promoting active participation. These include representatives from the European Community, local authorities, health promotion, education, as well as decision makers from national governing bodies of Sport and community and voluntary organisations such as the Local Sports Partnerships. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

02.09.10: Charity 'Living Streets' calls for vehicle "exclusion zones" (UK)

Over the past decade, the number of children who walk to school in the UK has dropped from approximately 56% to 48%, with an enormous 43% being driven to school in cars. As pupils return to school this week for another academic year, Living Streets is calling on schools and local authorities to implement car free zones around the school gates preventing parents from parking, dropping their children off or waiting in their cars. to encourage a safer environment for walking to school. [Read more](#).

01.09.10: Family Dog Ownership and Levels of Physical Activity in Childhood: Findings From the Child Heart and Health Study in England (Eng)

Dog ownership is associated with higher physical activity levels in adults; whether this association occurs in children is unknown. Researchers used accelerometry to examine physical activity levels in 2065 children aged 9 to 10 years. Children from dog-owning families spent more time in light or moderate to vigorous physical activity and recorded higher levels of activity counts per minute (25; 95% confidence interval [CI] = 6, 44) and steps per day (357; 95% CI = 14, 701) than did children without dogs. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Public Health.

September 2010: Associations between recreational walking and attractiveness, size, and proximity of neighbourhood open spaces (Australia)

Researchers examined associations of attractiveness, size, and proximity of multiple neighbourhood open spaces with recreational walking. Adults participating in the Residential Environments (RESIDE) study (n=1366) in Perth, Australia, reported time spent engaging in recreational walking within their neighbourhoods. For adults, the presence of a large, high-quality park within walking distance of one's home may be more important in promoting sufficient amounts of walking for health benefits than is the presence of an open space within a shorter distance. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Public Health.

September 2010: The physical activity vital sign: a primary care tool to guide counselling for obesity (US)

Only 25% of US adults achieve adequate physical activity (PA). Obtaining a PA history is an appropriate first step when evaluating this behaviour. The Physical Activity Vital Sign (PAVS) is a clinical tool designed to screen for PA in adults. Results of this study support the construct validity for the use of the PAVS as a clinical screening tool and suggest the need for additional research to characterize the properties of the PAVS. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of Physical Activity and Health.

September 2010: Effect of change in physical activity on body fatness over a 10-year period in the Doetinchem Cohort Study (EU)

Researchers investigated whether changes in physical activity were related to less gain in either body weight or waist circumference (WC). An increase in physical activity was associated with a statistically significant lower gain in body weight and in WC, which was maintained during the following five years. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

[Back to top](#)

September 2010: Influence of schoolyard renovations on children's physical activity: The learning landscapes program (US)

Researchers examined whether schoolyard improvements led to increased physical activity levels among both boys and girls and assessed the aspects of schoolyard design that have an impact on physical activity. They found that renovated schoolyards increase the number of children who are physically active, as well as their overall activity levels, and reduce sedentary behaviours. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Public Health.

31.08.10: WCRF says walking more could prevent 10,000 breast and bowel cancers (UK)

About 10,000 cases of breast and bowel cancer could be prevented every year in the UK through people being more physically active, according to World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF). WCRF scientists have estimated that about 4,600 bowel cancer cases could be prevented simply if people in the UK did more brisk walking and other forms of moderate activity, which is activity that makes your heart beat a bit faster and makes you breathe more deeply. And about 5,500 breast cancer cases could be prevented in the same way. [Read more.](#)

31.08.10: Physical Activity Attenuates the Genetic Predisposition to Obesity in 20,000 Men and Women from EPIC-Norfolk Prospective Population Study (UK)

Researchers at the MRC Epidemiology Unit in Cambridge aimed to assess the influence of a physically active lifestyle on the genetic predisposition to obesity in a large population-based study. They genotyped 12 SNPs in obesity-susceptibility loci in a population-based sample of 20,430 individuals (aged 39-79 y) from the European Prospective Investigation of Cancer (EPIC)-Norfolk cohort with an average follow-up period of 3.6 y. They found that living a physically active lifestyle is associated with a 40% reduction in the genetic predisposition to common obesity. [Read abstract](#) in PLoS Medicine.

30.08.10: Plans for new children's play areas axed (UK, Sky News)

Plans for hundreds of new children's playgrounds are facing the axe as the Department for Education cuts funding. Up to 400 proposed playgrounds promised by the last government will be scrapped as the coalition draws up £20m of cuts to local authority funding. [Read more.](#)

27.08.10: Age & Opportunity and Irish Sports Council announce 2010 Go for Life Grant Scheme (ROI)

Age & Opportunity and the Irish Sports Council announced that €350,000 has been allocated under the tenth National Grant Scheme for Sport and Physical Activity for Older People. The Scheme promotes opportunities for older people to participate in sport and physical activity. Applications for grants are requested from Clubs and Groups countrywide. Grants range from €350-€850 and are typically used by groups to purchase equipment or so that members may explore a new sporting activity. Note this funding call closed on 30 September 2010. [Read more.](#)

24.08.10: Sedentary work, low physical job demand, and obesity in US workers (US)

This study sought to investigate the role of low physical activity at work (sedentary work or low physical job demand) in the increasing prevalence of obesity of US workers. This cross-sectional and secondary data analysis included 1,001 male and 1,018 female workers (age range: 32-69) from the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS) II study (2004-2006). Sedentary work and physical job demand were measured by questionnaire items. After controlling for covariates, sedentary work, low physical job demand, or their combination increased the risk for total and central obesity in male workers, particularly when they worked longer than 40 hr per week. Sedentary work marginally increased the risk for total and central obesity in female workers. [Read abstract](#) in Am. J. Ind. Med.

[Back to top](#)

20.08.10: National Cycle Network Scoping Study and Dublin-Galway Route Feasibility & Delivery Study published (ROI)

Ireland's National Cycle Policy Framework presents a vision of "creating a culture of cycling in Ireland". The policy aims not only to deliver a five-fold increase in cycling for commuting purposes, but it also explicitly recognises the need to support and encourage all other types of cycling, including recreational and tourist cycling. In response to this objective, and at the request of the Minister, the National Roads Authority undertook to carry out a scoping study into the delivery of a National Cycle Network that would encourage cycling as a transport mode, leisure activity, and tourist attraction in Ireland. An advisory group, under the auspices of the National Trails Advisory Committee assisted in the project. [Read more](#) or visit the [Smarter Travel website](#).

20.08.10: Exploring the health benefits of increased physical activity in schoolchildren from different socio-educational backgrounds (Germany)

A year-long study into the effects of increased physical activity at school has shown that children's fitness levels and body composition do improve with daily participation in sport – and particularly so for children from deprived backgrounds. [Read more](#).

19.08.10: Walking and cycling to health: A comparative analysis of city, state, and international data (US)

Researchers sought to determine the magnitude, direction, and statistical significance of the relationship between active travel and rates of physical activity, obesity, and diabetes. They concluded that, together with many other studies, their analysis provides evidence of the population-level health benefits of active travel. They advise that policies on transport, land-use, and urban development should be designed to encourage walking and cycling for daily travel. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Public Health.

15.08.10: Leisure time spent sitting in relation to total mortality in a prospective cohort of US adults (US)

Analyses were conducted in a large prospective study of US adults enrolled by the American Cancer Society to examine leisure time spent sitting and physical activity in relation to mortality. Associations were strongest for cardiovascular disease mortality. The time spent sitting was independently associated with total mortality, regardless of physical activity level. [Read abstract](#) in Am. J. Epidemiol.

August 2010: Walking and cycling to health: A comparative analysis of city, state and international data (US)

This study sought to determine the magnitude, direction, and statistical significance of the relationship between active travel and rates of physical activity, obesity, and diabetes. Researchers examined aggregate cross-sectional health and travel data for 14 countries, all 50 US states, and 47 of the 50 largest US cities through graphical, correlation, and bi-variate regression analysis on the country, state, and city levels. They found statistically significant negative relationships between active travel and self-reported obesity. At the state and city levels, we found statistically significant positive relationships between active travel and physical activity and statistically significant negative relationships between active travel and diabetes. [Read abstract](#) in the American Journal of Public Health.

[Back to top](#)

August 2010: Leisure-time physical activity and sedentary behaviour clusters and their associations with overweight in middle-aged French adults (France)

This study aimed to identify leisure-time physical activity (LTPA) and sedentary behaviour patterns, as well as to investigate their relationships with overweight. Patterns combining specific types of physical activity and sedentary behaviour were identified and differed in their relations to overweight in adults. [Read abstract](#) in Int. J. of Obesity.

RESOURCES/PUBLICATIONS

England: New from the National Obesity Observatory

[Collection of Resources on Evaluation - CoRE](#)

Collection of Resources on Evaluation is available on the NOO website and covers: evaluation guidance (including NOO's Standard Evaluation Framework); reports from evaluation of nationally-initiated schemes; and evaluation websites.

[Weekly Knowledge Update](#)

This update highlights new research, reports, resources and news relating to obesity and its determinants.

EU: Improved web-tool for finding EU Public Health data now on-line!

This new version of the ECHI (European Community Health Indicators) tool allows users to view and download the core indicators as dynamic graphs, maps and tables covering all EU countries and stratified by age and gender. Visit the new [ECHI-tool](#).

Int: Global Recommendations on Physical activity for Health

WHO developed the [Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health](#) with the overall aim of providing national and regional level policy makers with guidance on the dose-response relationship between the frequency, duration, intensity, type and total amount of physical activity needed for the prevention of NCDs.

IOI: safefood insights

The [third issue](#) of this quarterly newsletter from **safefood** is now available. If you would like more information about any of the articles featured, or to sign up to receive future copies of insights, please contact us by email at safefoodnewsletter@safefood.eu.

ROI: HealthWell launched

IPH in collaboration with the UKCRC Centre of Excellence for Public Health (NI), led by QUB and the HRB Centre for Health and Diet Research led by University College Cork (UCC) have developed a unique all-island health information website. The Health Well supports evidence-based policy and practice. It is designed for policy-makers, health and social care professionals, managers and agencies, and others who provide services on their behalf. Health Well focuses on health and social care priorities, provides easy access to authoritative sources of data, evidence and good practice and helps people use information effectively. Further information will be available from the Institute of Public Health.

UK: Obesity Learning Centre newsletter

The first issue of the [quarterly OLC newsletter](#) is now available to read on the OLC website. If you would like to subscribe to the newsletter, please contact the OLC to be added to the email list.

World Cancer Declaration tool

The World Cancer Declaration is a tool to help bring the growing cancer crisis to the attention of government leaders and health policymakers in order to significantly reduce the global cancer burden by 2020. It outlines 11 targets to be achieved by 2020 including: significant drops in global tobacco consumption, obesity and alcohol intake. [Read more](#).

[Back to top](#)

CAMPAIGNS/INITIATIVES

IOI: Get (fairly) Fit in 12 Weeks!

During [Men's Health Week 2010](#), the [Men's Health Forum in Ireland](#) (MHFI) launched a free online [12 week fitness training programme](#) for males (and females). This proved to be so successful, that MHFI has left it on the website for anyone who would like to do something useful with their spare time during the winter evenings. The schedule slowly, easily, and realistically build-ups the trainee's capabilities and, ultimately, helps them to get fit enough to take part in either a 10km, 5km or 3km run / walk - if they so wish. Why not have a look and see if it is for you?

IOI: weigh2live...update

My Weigh2Live and *Weigh2Live Together* have been launched on Facebook. People trying to lose weight can either access the Weigh2Live tracking tools through a personalized *My Weigh2Live tab* and use their existing social networks as a private source of peer support and/or come together to discuss their experiences and encourage and support one another. On 28 September a cross-party group of TDs and Senators announced their participation in the 10-week Weigh2Live Programme. Weigh2Live advertising runs in cinemas across the island from 22 October to 04 November 2010. For more information visit www.weigh2live.safefood.eu and www.facebook/safefood.eu.

IOI: Little steps to eating well and being active...update

The current phase of radio and television advertising for the Little Steps campaign with the Health Service Executive will conclude on 17 October. Surplus campaign leaflets for Little Steps are being distributed in ROI as part of the "Which Way" education resource being developed by the HSE. For more information visit www.littlesteps.eu.

IOI: Funding available for dietitians and nutritionists

safefood is funding a limited number of applications from dietitians and nutritionists on the island of Ireland through its Nutrition Exchange Programme. This programme offers individuals the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and expertise, while the collaborative nature enhances communication and cooperation in the nutrition field. The next deadline date for applications is 15 November 2010. [Read more.](#)

NI: Get a Life, Get Active campaign launched by Public Health Agency

Parents and carers are being encouraged to go to the website www.getalifegetactive.com to plan activities as a family, involving children in the decision about where to go and what activity to do. The website is packed with information on the benefits of being active for both children and adults. Encouraging children to play safely outside, limiting television and computer time to less than two hours a day, and when buying toys that encourage physical activity rather than computer games or DVDs, are just a few ways to help children be active. 200,000 physical activity log books (titled *It All Adds Up*) will be distributed to primary schools, Healthy Living Centres, Sure Start Coordinators and Sport NI for children to log how much activity they have taken during the day. The campaign advertising will run from 27 September until 31 October 2010.

NI: FOOD VALUES Pilot Evaluation report published

Food Values is a short programme showing how to get better nutritional value for money when shopping for food. It was developed by the Community Food and Nutrition Team (CFNT) of the Western Health and Social Care Trust. In 2009 **safefood** provided funding for a pilot and subsequent evaluation. [Read report.](#)

[Back to top](#)

ROI: Moving Towards a Fitter Future - Promoting Physical Activity in Early Years

For a child attending pre-school or in childcare, studies show that the likelihood of meeting the recommended guidelines can be strongly influenced by the provider's environment and policy on physical activity¹. According to the National Physical Activity Guidelines for Ireland (2009)², children and young people between the ages of 2 and 18 should be active, at a moderate to vigorous level, for 60 minutes every day. The Report of the National Taskforce on Obesity (2005)³ recommends that the HSE should work with pre-school/childcare services to create an environment that supports active living & healthy eating.

Recognising the importance of the childcare sector in promoting physical activity, the Health Promotion Department, HSE South has developed 'Moving towards a Fitter Future'. The programme consists of a series of interactive workshops which childcare staff attend examining the importance of active play & physical activity for children under five.

Childcare facilities are supported to develop a policy on physical activity i.e. an action plan for the facility that can enable children to become more active. They are also supplied with supportive resources and their suggested uses. Facilities receive follow up visits from a Health Promotion Officer for Physical Activity to support implementation of their policy and any other issues which may arise. To date Health Promotion Officers have teamed up with childcare committees in Cork, Kilkenny & South Tipperary to support 48 facilities in total and are currently evaluating this first phase of the programme. Further information is available from Clare Deasy on 021-4921648 or Meabh McGuinness on 056-7761400. [References available on request]

ROI: Call for Case Studies on Physical Activity and Socially Disadvantaged Groups

The [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO) is collecting case studies to share effective practice in the field of promoting physical activity with socially disadvantaged groups. 'Social disadvantage' relates to socio-economic aspects (including income, employment, education and socio-economic status), as well as to socio-cultural aspects (such as gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, migrant status, and social capital), socio-geographic aspects (such as living in a deprived neighbourhood), and age. You are invited to submit examples of local physical activity projects, initiatives or interventions which have proven to be effective in targeting socially disadvantaged groups. WHO is particularly interested in views on those components which made a critical difference, and helped to reach specific target groups affected by some type of social disadvantage. The [template for submission](#) should be returned by Monday 11th October 2010 to Brian Neeson (HSE case studies only) at: brian.neeson@hse.ie or Adrienne Lynam (case studies from partner organisations / outside agencies) at: adrienne.lynam@hse.ie

[Back to top](#)

FUNDING

ROI: New Grant Scheme for the Development of Community Gardens and Allotments in Dublin is Launched by the Community Foundation

Do you have a green space lying idle? No money to do anything with it? Why not turn it into a community garden? A new fund entitled 'The Community Growers Fund' established at The Community Foundation for Ireland is set to assist unemployed people by getting them involved in the development of community allotments or gardens. The fund which is being created by The Mount Street Club Trust (MSCT) will provide grants to groups who have the capacity to work with the unemployed and can provide space for the development of a garden. The Community Foundation which is an experienced philanthropic and grant making organisation is assisting in this part of the fund. [Read more](#).

NI: Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership (BCPP) Programme – Level 2 Funding Now Available

The Community Development and Health Network's Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership programme promotes and support local communities to work in partnership with community pharmacists to address local health and social wellbeing needs using a community development approach. The latest round of Level 2 funding is now open for applications. Level 2 funding is for those with established partnerships who have a clear vision of what the project wants to achieve. It consists of a maximum of £10,000 for a project that can last up to 2 years. [Read more.](#)

[Back to top](#)

TRAINING

Title: [Behaviour Change Skills: Part 1](#)
Date: 9-11 December 2010
Venue: St Stephen's Hospital, Glanmire, Co. Cork

Title: [Health Impact Assessment \(HIA\) Training Course](#)
Date: 21-23 March 2011
Venue: Holiday Inn, Ormeau Avenue, Belfast.

Title: [European Nutrition Leadership Programme](#) (closing date 30 November 2010)
Date: 13-21 April 2011
Venue: Luxembourg

[Back to top](#)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Title: [ECO2011 – 18th European Congress on Obesity](#)
Date: 25-28 May 2011
Venue: Istanbul
Deadline: 07 November 2010 (Abstract)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

[Back to top](#)

REPORT FROM PAST EVENT

The Nutrition and Health Foundation hosted its third annual seminar entitled **Obesity: a life cycle perspective** on 21 September 2010.

Delivering the opening address at the conference, Minister for Older People and Health Promotion, Áine Brady, T.D., commented; "Responsibility for achieving and maintaining good health is multi-layered; involving the individual, the health sector, education, the food industry and the broader society. It is therefore important that a holistic approach be taken to its protection. Giving people information is the first step in assisting them take control of their own lifestyle and weight, thereby avoiding obesity and the chronic diseases associated with it." Professor Andrew Hill, Professor of Medical Psychology and Head of the Academic Unit of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences delivered the key note address on the relationship between body dissatisfaction, eating patterns and obesity. Other presenters included; Dr. Bernadette Carr, Medical Director of VHI Healthcare, presented an analysis of

the cost of obesity across the lifespan from a health insurers' perspective; Dr. Mary McCarthy, UCC, presented on 'Food choice and health across the life course' and Dr. Catherine Woods, DCU, on 'Why we do, why we don't? Understanding physical activity motivation across the lifespan'. Dr Muireann Cullen, NHF Manger, concluded the seminar by highlighting the important roles that Industry, Government and citizens all have to play in tackling this health crisis that is, obesity. She said, that it is, 'through a co-operative framework, the NHF aims to bring these groups together to raise awareness of the need for a balanced lifestyle and how we can all play our part in achieving a healthier society'. Presentations are available from the NHF [website](#).

ALL-ISLAND OBESITY ACTION FORUM MEMBERS

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

[Back to top](#)