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**Minutes of the fourth meeting of the All-island Obesity Action Forum, held on  
Tuesday 15 June, 2010 at The Stormont Hotel, Belfast**

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**Present**

Dr Kevin Balanda	Institute of Public Health in Ireland
Ms Gerry Bleakney	Public Health Agency
Ms Fiona Coyne	Irish Sports Council
Dr Muireann Cullen	Nutrition and Health Foundation
Mr Brendan Heaney	Diabetes UK Northern Ireland
Ms Vanessa Hetherington	Irish Medical Organisation
Mr Martin Higgins	<b>safefood</b> (Chair)
Ms Claire Holmes	All-island Community Nutrition and Dietetic Group
Ms Maria Jennings	Food Standards Agency
Ms Adrienne Lynam	Health Service Executive
Ms Janis Morrissey	Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute
Prof Marie Murphy	University of Ulster
Ms Clare Smith	Ulster Cancer Foundation
Mr Tom Sullivan	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists Northern Ireland

**In Attendance**

Dr Marian Faughnan	<b>safefood</b>
Ms Marita Hennessy	<b>safefood</b> , Minute Secretary
Dr Aileen McGloin	<b>safefood</b>

**Apologies**

Ms Margo Brennan	Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute
Ms Norma Cronin	Irish Cancer Society
Dr Nazih Eldin	Health Service Executive
Dr Mary Flynn	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Dr Clíodhna Foley Nolan	<b>safefood</b>
Ms Sinead Hanley	Diabetes Federation of Ireland
Ms Janas Harrington	University College Cork
Ms Maureen Mulvihill	Irish Heart Foundation
Ms Ursula O' Dwyer	Department of Health and Children
Prof Ivan Perry	University College Cork
Mr John Tracy	Irish Sports Council
Ms Linda Wilson	Department of Education Northern Ireland

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**1. Welcome and introductions**

Mr Higgins welcomed members to the fourth Forum meeting and in particular welcomed new member organisations to the Forum. These included Diabetes Federation of Ireland, Diabetes UK (Northern Ireland), Irish Medical Organisation and Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Northern Ireland. Apologies and changes in representation were noted. Dr Mary Flynn replaces Dr Brian Redahan on behalf of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, while Dr Nazih Eldin replaces Ms Maria Lordan Dunphy. It was further noted that Mr Brian Mullen retired from the Department of Health and Children and has been succeeded by Mr Luke Mulligan.

## **2. Minutes of meeting 16 June 2008 and matters arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and adopted. There were no matters arising. The Chair requested an amendment to the agreement concerning the publication of minutes. Members agreed to the proposed amendment to circulate minutes within two weeks of the meeting and allow members two weeks to review and approve them, with final draft circulated within a week for sign off so that they can be published online. Round-table introductions followed.

***Action Point 1: Secretariat to circulate draft minutes by 29 June for approval by 13 July and subsequent online publication on 20 July***

## **3. Policy update from each jurisdiction**

Dr Faughnan read out the following update on policy in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) from Ms Ursula O' Dwyer, Department of Health and Children (DoHC):

- The key nutrition focus is on the National Nutrition Policy due to be published in September
- The Healthy Eating Guidelines and Food Pyramid have been edited to include focus-testing results. Final consultation within DoHC and with other key stakeholders is to take place. Booklet text and Food Pyramid should be available in July
- The EU High Level Group (HLG) on Nutrition and Physical Activity is discussing an overall food reformulation proposal to be presented by the EU to the HLG members on 16 June. This discussion will be the starting point for a paper which will be discussed with the EU Platform on Diet and Physical Activity in December. Monitoring of the EU Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related issues is also being discussed
- DoHC is currently reviewing the Intersectoral Group on Obesity and the National Steering Group on Salt Reduction
- WHO Europe has published recommendations on the Marketing of Food and non-Alcoholic Beverages to Children and The White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity Report to the President '[Solving the problem of childhood obesity within a generation](#)', was published in May.
- DoHC is participating in a trans-Atlantic project called StanMark, being led out by the International Association for the Study of Obesity. This project aims to consider the opportunity for trans-Atlantic standards for the marketing of foods and drink activities to children in the current global food and drink market.
- The new '[National Cardiovascular Health Policy: Changing Cardiovascular Health 2010-2019](#)' was launched by Minister Harney on 10 June
- Following a presentation of the EPODE project in 2008 to the EU HLG on Nutrition and Physical Activity, DoHC considered that given the current sponsorship of the EPODE project, it would be incompatible with the objectives being discussed for the National Nutrition Policy.

Ms Jennings, as Chair of Food and Nutrition sub-group involved in drafting 'A Fitter Future for All: Northern Ireland's Obesity Prevention Strategic Framework (OPSF) 2011-2021', provided an update on policy in Northern Ireland (NI). The draft policy has just been signed off by Minister McGimpsey and has been sent to other relevant ministers. Consultation will take place over the summer.

## **4. Tour de Table**

The Chair invited each member to brief the Forum on developments within their organisations since the last meeting. The following points were noted:

### **Food Standards Agency (FSA) NI**

Restructuring is taking place within the agency across the UK following the change of government. The role and responsibility of policy in relation to diet and health is to be taken back into the Department of Health UK. There may be ramifications for activities such as funding of a booster sample in NI as part of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey.

### **Ulster Cancer Foundation**

- The Ulster Cancer Foundation has expanded considerably their focus on obesity prevention across all areas of their work. Both in terms of target groups and settings.

Examples of such include:

- ABC (Against Bowel Cancer) Campaign which runs throughout April each year is being used to not only raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer but also to encourage people to adopt healthy eating patterns in order to help prevent bowel cancer but also to maintain weight control. The key messages of this campaign are consistent with guidelines for obesity prevention.
- The PACE programme targets adult males, supporting them in undertaking physical activity, in order to lead a healthier lifestyle and reduce their risk of disease. The programme consists of: Male Quick Fit sessions in men's workplaces (individual body composition analysis and a 10-minute presentation on health, physical activity and interpretation of the body comp results with follow-up session 12 weeks later); PACE website [www.yourpace.org](http://www.yourpace.org); YouTube channel; Facebook group; Monthly newsletter; Weekly phone calls to provide support
- Nursery Schools are now benefiting from volunteer storytellers who visit nursery's and read a book entitled 'Genevieve and the farmyard Olympics'. It is designed to introduce the concept of healthy eating and physical activity in a fun way to children. There is also a comprehensive programme of activities which complement the story and nursery leaders can avail of this.
- 'Starring Genevieve' - now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, this programme for P1 and P2 children has been successfully evaluated with children, teachers and parents. It develops the concepts that are instigated within 'Genevieve and the farmyard Olympics'. The emphasis is on fun/entertainment but in an educational way and has gained endorsement from the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- Fit Factor is for P3 and P4 children. Over four weeks children learn more about healthy eating and physical activity and become more confident and have greater concentration. This project fully integrates teachers, parents and the local community. Each school which takes part has the opportunity to win £4,000 worth of sports equipment for their school.

### **Diabetes UK Northern Ireland**

- 270 new diagnoses of Type 1 and 2 diabetes every month in 2009 - 10% Type 1.
- 80% of Type 2 diagnosed considered overweight or obese (approx 1,200 last year).
- 1,034 of those aged under 17 with Diabetes, all Type 1. No Type 2 yet! 66,000 adults in 2009.
- 170,000 members across the UK: 120,000 are Type 1, 6,000 Health Care Professionals (3,250 members in NI, 160 Health Care Professionals).
- New UK-wide five year plan to 2015 – Focus on Quality Care, Healthy Lifestyle, Research (Research Grants get 25% of £30 million budget). 380 UK staff cut to 340 in December 2009.
- New Policy and Public Affairs Manager post in NI since January 2010 to engage directly with the Health Service and Political Parties.

- Submitted to Assembly Inquiry on Obesity during 2009 (written and verbal) urging need for early diagnosis, structured patient education and prevention strategy to reduce diabetes complications and reduce costs of the condition
- Members of the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) Obesity Strategy Steering Group NI
- Members of two Diabetes Managed Clinical Networks in Belfast and Western Trusts.

#### **Irish Medical Organisation (IMO)**

- Produced some relevant policy papers – one in 2006 and one in 2008 on lifestyle and prevention of chronic disease
- On 03 June, launched a Position Paper on Obesity - [Obesity in Europe: A joint paper from the Irish Medical Organisation and the British Medical Association Northern Ireland](#). Met with MEPs to discuss.
- Wish to promote a joined-up approach and bring obesity back on the agenda

#### **Action Point 2: Secretariat to circulate IMO Position Paper on Obesity**

#### **All-island Community Nutrition and Dietetic Group/Health Promoting Dietitians NI**

- Annual meeting, funded by **safe food**, will be held on 30 September in Dublin.
- Places still available on the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI)-funded obesity training course on 30-31 July in Dublin
- NI Health Promoting Dietitians Network – greater emphasis on clinical work now as opposed to HP work
- Cook-It programme delivery ongoing across NI, ad hoc in some areas. Funding cuts impacting upon delivery amongst community groups
- The Southern Trust continues to employ a dietitian to implement the Cook-It programme in schools despite funding restrictions
- Dietitians are now delivering nutrition training to Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) to implement the Healthy Choices Workplace Initiative in conjunction with the Public Health Agency and FSA

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

- Activities outlined at the last meeting are ongoing, with some new activity
- Research – now pursuing PhD project in Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) regarding the development of a module on physical activity, nutrition, etc for entry-level students
- Involved in EU Food Framework Study which is looking at 5-16 year olds' knowledge and awareness of nutrition and physical activity, their beliefs and what is important to them. This is a two-year project led by the British Nutrition Foundation
- Two placement students from University College Cork have looked at child-size portions of adult meals in restaurants for 1-12 year olds and their acceptability in conjunction with the Restaurant Association of Ireland.
- New three year strategy and guiding principles in place for members
- Increasing media prominence – issue monthly press release, have bi-monthly slot on TV3 and have regular articles in two health-related magazines

#### **University of Ulster - School of Sports Studies**

- Independent evaluation of family programme (n=20) carried out in NI
- Partners in Medical Research Council study in Exeter looking at primary care intervention to increase walking
- Two-year project 'Sport for Life' aimed at P5 students and has engaged 100 of the 200 most disadvantaged schools. Now at end of first 12-week period. Evaluation methods include physical activity monitors, food diaries and a self-esteem questionnaire

- About to submit a proposal in partnership with the University of Strathclyde and Oxford which aims to assess the effectiveness of the promotion of pedometer usage in increasing physical activity levels

### **Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Northern Ireland**

- Move4Health campaign launched in September. The Minister is due to attend Healthy School Day in a Belfast school on 21 June. These Healthy School Days focus on diet and physical activity in the school setting. A physiotherapist and nutritionist visit schools and talk to parents, children and teachers.
- Await the new OPSF – made submission to Assembly Inquiry last year
- Recent commissioning plan for 2010-2011 states that by March 2012 it is hoped to decrease obesity levels to 9%
- Continuing to roll out Move4Health and highlight contribution physiotherapists and other health professionals can make in tackling obesity

### **safefood**

- Further phase of little steps radio launched on 10 May 2010. Targeted at C2DE following focus groups across the island of Ireland with target audience. Top line results from omnibus research completed last week indicate that the ads resonated well with target audience and they were more likely to visit website after seeing ads. Supported with posters and leaflets for community groups – currently being disseminated through Health Service Executive (HSE)/community group networks. Next phase will start on 27 September – planning underway
- Weigh2Live - Promoting the website resource through TV advertising since December. New phase of advertising started yesterday. Posters and leaflets promoting the website being sent out to GPs (ROI – through Inform publication system; NI – direct contact with GP surgeries). Launched social media element to the campaign with a Facebook page. Politicians who participated in Operation Transformation in ROI are planning to help promote resource by forming an 'exemplar' group on Facebook over the summer
- Eat Out Campaign - **safefood** running radio ad focusing on cutting down on portion sizes when eating out for month of June. In ROI supporting the Happy Heart Eat Out awareness campaign for catering establishments for month of June in collaboration with Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) and HSE. In NI, **safefood** is collaborating with district council EHOs – specifically on how to support their catering award through promotion/marketing
- Food Poverty - Remain a core funder of Healthy Food for All (HFfA). Advisory Committee meetings held 18 March (Belfast) and 17 June; forthcoming meetings 16 September and 16 December. HFfA launching all-island community guide later in the year. Evaluation of 2008-10 development plan just completed. Demonstration Programme ongoing, officially launched by Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, in January 2010 in Belfast. Two networking events held to date – finance (March) and evaluation (May). An external evaluator has been assigned
- A document for consultation on suitable all-island food poverty indicators is being developed in collaboration with the Institute of Public Health and Health Research Board (HRB) Centre for Diet, Diabetes and Obesity
- Obesity continues to be a priority for **safefood** and will continue to support both departments of health in formulating and monitoring policy
- Bi-annual nutrition update will be circulated in July

### **Institute of Public Health (IPH)**

- Launched report '[Making Chronic Conditions Count: Hypertension, Stroke, Coronary Heart Disease and Diabetes](#)' in March
- On 14 June Prof Jim Sallis spoke about the built environment at IPH event '[Ireland on the move: enhancing opportunities for physical activity in the built environment](#)'

### **Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI)**

- Activities outlined at the last meeting ongoing
- [Obesity Journey courses](#) have been extremely successful

### **Irish Heart Foundation (IHF)**

- Continuing activities outlined at the last meeting
- Happy Heart Eat Out Campaign: 600 organisations currently registered and increasing. Press release issued earlier this week encouraging more people to come on board. Initiative will be evaluated amongst restaurant owners and customers
- Working with **safefood** and the HSE to roll out Happy Heart Catering Award nationally
- In May, launched the resource '[Healthy Eating, Active Living](#)' in collaboration with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI). Four training sessions will take place this month, led out by NYCI
- Heart Week in September will now be Irish Heart Month and will be titled 'Women and Heart Disease'. It will tie in with the Red Tag Campaign in the US. A Public Lecture on the topic will be held on 14 September in the Royal College of Physicians Ireland
- Linking in with IMO on food labeling and issued a joint statement. Lobbying MEPs with Irish Cancer Society and NYCI re front-of-pack labeling decision this week
- Await new Code of Practice on the Marketing of Food to Children
- National Heart Alliance launched briefing paper '[Building Young Hearts: Physical activity, young people and the physical environment](#)' in April

### **Health Service Executive (HSE)**

- Restructuring is ongoing. Health Promotion now sits under integrated services with a view to integrating its work with that of primary care teams and networks.
- The Department of Health and Children and the National Physical Activity Steering Group hosted a meeting, facilitated by Prof. Adrian Bauman, University of Sydney on 14 June - "Towards a Physical Activity policy for Ireland: Key Stakeholder Consultation Meeting" The group are also involved with HEPA (Health-Enhancing Physical Activity) Europe in developing a case study on Ireland's promotion of physical activity.
- The Get Ireland Active Working Group, through collaborative working are moving towards a more integrated approach to promoting increased physical activity in Ireland. Building brand awareness and development of the getirelandactive website form part of this work.
- The Weight Management Group of the Intersectoral Group is at the final stages of developing a Weight Management Treatment Algorithm for both adults and children.
- Continue to support Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) Obesity Project and fund research with the National Nutrition Surveillance Centre

### **Irish Sports Council (ISC)**

- Continue to work with HSE on various groups, e.g. Physical Activity Sub-group, Get Ireland Active and also the Department of Education and Skills and Department of Transport
- [Irish Sports Monitor 2008](#) is now available
- Committee reviewing Children's Research Project presently. It will be launched in September
- [Local Sports Partnerships Speak Report 2009](#) just launched

### **Public Health Agency (PHA)**

- Angela McComb is the Interim Lead for Obesity and will attend next meeting
- Most work outlined at the last meeting is ongoing

- Involved in the development of a Catering Award for NI
- Northern Area launching Managed Obesity Network on 18 June
- Funding IPH to conduct audit of interventions – data and make comparisons
- Partnerships with Councils ongoing – some now have specified obesity a priority in their plans. Seeing added value of working together
- Pathway for obesity management in the North East will be rolled out across NI
- Work ongoing with schools through Food in Schools Forum
- EPODE Workshop on 16 June

## **5. Next Forum Meeting**

The next meeting will take place in Dublin on 09 November. The workshop topic will be evaluation. Prof Charlie Foster from Oxford University has been secured. A programme will be drafted over the coming months.

***Action Point 3: Members to contact Secretariat with any suggestions they may have for the next workshop***

## **6. Presentation on Obesity Knowledge Hub**

Dr Balanda provided members with an overview of the activities of the Obesity Knowledge Hub and proposed various synergies between the resource and the Forum.

***Action Point 4: Secretariat to coordinate expressions of interest in participating in the Obesity Knowledge Hub's discussion fora***

## **7. AOB**

### *Forum evaluation*

The Forum is now at its half-way point. It was approved for a three-year period from December 2008 to December 2011 by the North South Ministerial Council. It is timely to evaluate the work that has been undertaken.

### *Future events*

On 20 October 2010, Diabetes UK NI will host a Professional Diabetes Conference: Quality Care for All in the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown

### *Centre for Health & Diet Research Newsletter*

The Centre for Diet and Health Research requested that their newsletter be circulated to members in the absence of a representative being able to attend the meeting.



CHDR e-Newsletter  
23.2.html

Members were encouraged to promote any forthcoming events on the online Forum calendar and to submit any relevant news items to the Secretariat for inclusion in All-island Obesity News.

***Action Point 5: Secretariat to contact members regarding the Forum evaluation process***

***Action Point 6: Members to identify content for future issues of All-island Obesity News and contact Secretariat***

As there was no further business the meeting concluded at 12.10pm.