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**Minutes of the fifth meeting of the All-island Obesity Action Forum, held on  
Tuesday 09 November 2010 at The Gibson Hotel, Dublin**

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**Present**

Dr Kevin Balanda	Institute of Public Health in Ireland
Ms Nicola Canning	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Ms Fiona Coyne	Irish Sports Council
Dr Muireann Cullen	Nutrition and Health Foundation
Dr Nazih Eldin	Health Service Executive
Mr Martin Higgins	<b>safefood</b> (Chair)
Ms Maria Jennings	Food Standards Agency
Ms Alice Kenny	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Ms Angela McComb	Public Health Agency
Ms Janis Morrissey	Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute
Ms Maureen Mulvihill	Irish Heart Foundation
Prof Marie Murphy	University of Ulster
Mr Rob Phipps	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

**In Attendance**

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

**Apologies**

Mr Michael Bell	Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association
Dr Mary Flynn	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Ms Janas Harrington	University College Cork
Mr Brendan Heaney	Diabetes UK Northern Ireland
Ms Claire Holmes	All-island Community Nutrition and Dietetic Group
Mr Gerry McElwee	Ulster Cancer Foundation
Prof Marie Murphy	University of Ulster
Ms Ursula O' Dwyer	Department of Health and Children
Mr John Tracy	Irish Sports Council

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**1. Welcome**

Mr Higgins welcomed members to the fifth Forum meeting. Apologies were noted.

**2. Roundtable introductions**

Members introduced themselves.

**3. Minutes of meeting 15 June and any matters arising**

Draft minutes from the previous meeting were agreed in July 2010. There were no matters arising, however, as a point of information Dr Eldin highlighted that Mr Luke Mulligan in the Department of Health and Children (DOHC) was charged with policy while Dr John Devlin was charged with health promotion.

***Action Point 1: Secretariat to circulate draft minutes by 23 November for approval by 07 December and subsequent online publication on 14 December.***

#### **4. Policy update**

In relation to Northern Ireland (NI), Mr Phipps updated members on the current status of the draft obesity strategy 'A Fitter Future for All: Northern Ireland's Obesity Prevention Strategic Framework (OPSF) 2011-2021'. The draft strategy was signed off by the Minister and is now out for [public consultation](#) until 28 January. The target is to reduce the obesity level by 2021 to 2005 levels and the focus is on prevention. The Health Committee emphasized cross-departmental work in suicide and obesity. Implementation of the strategy will be tasked to the Public Health Agency. It was further noted that Minister McGimpsey had requested a health inequalities action plan. Dr Foley Nolan asked that the NI Food Poverty Network be engaged with on the latter.

Dr Eldin provided an update on policy in the Republic of Ireland (ROI). The Healthy Eating Guidelines and Food Pyramid have been agreed and await the approval of the Minister. Targets for the Cardiovascular Strategy 'Building Healthier Hearts' are now in place.

#### **5. 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:

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

- Activities outlined at the last meeting are ongoing, with some new activity
- Two new members – Susan Marron from St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra and Prof. John Nolan, Consultant Endocrinologist, St. James' Hospital/Trinity College Dublin
- [Consultation on the EU Food Framework Study](#) is underway and closes 10 December
- Interviews for the PhD project in Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) are imminent
- The work with the Restaurant Association of Ireland (RAI), regarding child-size portions of adult meals in restaurants for 1-12 year olds and their acceptability, has been expanded. A survey with 500 parents was recently conducted via pigsback.com. Hope to advance work in this area with the RAI
- Working with Catex in February
- Annual seminar held on 21 September and was well attended
- Attended the Listowel Food Fair
- Holding healthy eating sessions in the Dáil next week
- NHF to host the 2011 annual European Nutrition Foundations' meeting.

##### **All Island Community Nutrition and Dietetic Partnership Group (AICNDPG)**

The AICNDPG held a Study Meeting, sponsored by **safefood** on 30 September 2010 in Dublin. Community Dietitians and other nutrition professionals working throughout the island of Ireland attended an interesting day focusing on obesity – prevention and treatment. During the morning, presentations were made covering a variety of aspects of obesity prevention, treatment and research:

- The Cooperation and Working Together (CAWT) obesity prevention and treatment projects
- The draft NI Obesity Framework
- Profile of obese subjects and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) based on the Fairburn and Cooper model in a primary care setting in Health Service Executive (HSE) Dublin North East

- Establishing best practice principles in targeting lifestyle interventions at obese men in a primary care setting
- Protocols for evaluating obesity interventions

During the afternoon delegates attended one of two 'Soapbox' sessions covering (i) obesity/weight management programmes and (ii) health promotion/obesity prevention. This was an opportunity for Community Dietitians to share their practical and often innovative approaches to obesity prevention and management. These included:

- A variety of weight management programmes using different approaches to lifestyle change including alteration of food behaviour and aimed at adults, families, children and/or young people.
- A heart health programme aimed at farmers and others attending livestock marts, community groups and national ploughing championships
- Development of standardised weight management resources for use by Dietitians
- Evaluations of Cook it! programmes in schools in the North East region of the island, a pilot budgeting for food programme in the Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT), a peer-led nutrition education programme and programmes promoting good health and nutrition among older people
- Projects to promote good nutrition in pre-school and school settings
- Demystifying food labeling among consumers and community organisations in WHSCT
- The NI healthier eating award for caterers

Evaluation and feedback from the study meeting has been collated and shared and there was great satisfaction on all side both with the content of the study meeting and the opportunity to network and share good practice that such an event affords – particularly in these austere times.

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

Continuing activities outlined at the last meeting and also:

- Work ongoing in schools and workplaces
- The evaluation of the [Happy Heart Eat Out Campaign](#) is being signed off and will be shared over the coming weeks
- [Irish Heart Month](#) 'Women and Heart Disease' was very successful and is currently being evaluated
- The [Mulcahy Lecture](#) takes place in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin on 01 December. The focus is the marketing of food to children and Sue Davies is the key note speaker
- IHF and partners publishing research on front-of-pack labeling and consumer perceptions in preparation for Council of Ministers vote in early December.
- Working with **safefood** and the HSE to roll out [Happy Heart Catering Award](#) nationally.

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

Activities previously outlined are ongoing, e.g. Weigh2Live and Little Steps campaigns.

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

- Catering award – pilot underway in some council areas
- Food in Schools – [lunchbox leaflet](#) launched in September
  - A dietitian has been employed for six months to develop recipes for use in schools and to create a standardised resource for NI
  - Breaktime snacking scheme – different schemes operate in different areas so developing a standardised approach. Developed by oral health initially – agreed pre-school criteria, failed to agree primary school criteria (oral health specialists and dietitians meeting today to establish way forward). Went with two options to schools – want a wider set
- BMI measures taken in Year 8 – pilot schemes being developed in each area to support those identified as overweight (focusing on families)
- Implementation of 'A Fitter Future' once agreed

- EPODE workshop in June was very successful and look to conduct pilot work with councils in 2011/12.

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

- Arising from the OPSF consultation, investigating how they will engage with their industry stakeholders – perhaps focus groups with various sectors
- Funding evaluation of the pilot Catering Award in NI. Seventeen Councils involved and each is assessing ten premises. Key areas to be included will be burden on EHOs, sustainability of changes and ability to move through the three award tiers). The evaluation, with a 6-month follow up, will be complete by the summer with a report at the end of 2011
- Supporting District Councils in delivering food and nutrition training to caterers. Investigating potential of getting this training into colleges
- Working with SportNI – 6 week programme delivered by coaches and teachers. Also trying to get this programme into teacher training colleges
- Reviewing five-year policy. NI and Scotland still delivering nutrition-based programmes. On 01 October, nutrition staff in FSA London moved to the Department of Health. Meeting in January to see how all can work together.

#### **Institute of Public Health (IPH)/Centre for Diet and Health Research (CDHR)**

- [Obesity Hub website](#) will go live at the end of November. Over 400 obesity-related information resources are described
- CDHR work on the burden of chronic disease through PhD student is about to re-commence
- Procurement process for the CAWT Obesity Project is almost complete
- Working with Northern Ireland Food Poverty Network on headline food poverty indicators.

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

- Conference on 22 October – 300 delegates, various agencies from NI and ROI. Very positive feedback
- [New research into children's participation in sport and physical activity](#) launched. 19% primary school children and 12% secondary school children meet physical activity recommendations. One in four are either unfit or overweight/obese
- Latest version of Sports Monitor (2009) to be released over the coming months. Will then have three years of data to compare
- [Economic report on sport and physical activity](#) will be available shortly.

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

- The DOHC is currently reviewing the Intersectoral Group on Obesity. It is likely to be reconvened, not as an Intersectoral Group focusing solely on obesity but as an Intersectoral Group focusing on lifestyle issues of which obesity will be just one
- Currently conducting a mid-term review of actions in the HSE Framework for Action on Obesity 2008–2012. This framework has translated the recommendations of the Taskforce on Obesity into a set of tangible actions for which the HSE has lead responsibility
- Following a review (for the Joint Oireachtas Committee for Health and Children) of the Taskforce recommendations in August 2010, it was found that 11 of the 24 actions (relevant to the Health Sector) have been fully implemented, four have significant progress, seven are progressing, one is partially implemented while one which concerns - data collection and staff training - has not yet been actioned due to its complexity
- Agreed with DOHC to take Cardiovascular Strategy and translate it into an action plan
- A Physical Activity Policy for Ireland is expected by April/May next year. A seminar "Moving Towards a Physical Activity Policy for Ireland: The Scottish

Experience" will be held on 03 Dec. in Dublin City University and will be facilitated by Prof. Nanette Mutrie, University of Strathclyde & Health Scotland

- Nutrition – The National Healthy Eating Guidelines and re-modeled food pyramid are expected by year-end
- The Weight Management Group of the Intersectoral Group have submitted (25 Nov.) the Weight Management Treatment Algorithm for both adults and children to the Quality in Practice Committee of the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) for uptake and use by GPs and primary care staff
- In October a national policy decision was made to adopt the WHO Child Growth Standards (2006) and integrate them into child health programming in ROI
- 29 November – launch of second Centre of Excellence for bariatric medicine in Galway University Hospitals (St. Colmcille's, Loughlinstown was the first). In February the third centre will be launched (Connolly and Beaumont) and a fourth is planned for the Cork University – Mercy Hospitals. This will complete the full complement of a weight management hospital treatment service in each of the four HSE areas. There are plans for a Centre of Excellence for pediatrics on the site of the new children's hospital once location is decided
- 23 November - celebrated 12<sup>th</sup> year of the Happy Heart Catering Award in the HSE North East Area
- University College Dublin (UCD) Psychology Department is currently researching the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) element of obesity treatment. It is delivered by multi-disciplinary team in the primary care setting using RCT methodology in one geographical area. Year One results are very promising
- Farmers Have Hearts – this project was evaluated by the National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG). It has proved extremely popular in targeting this hard to reach segment of the population
- Ongoing Work with the Irish Sports Council on enhancing participation in physical activity
- Funding the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative; Ireland (COSI). Measurements are carried out every two years to monitor trends in overweight and obesity among 7 year old children
- Anthropometric measurements are being carried out in primary schools Oct. – Dec. 2010. Preliminary results will be available in April/May 2011. Round One results have just been published showing that 18% of 7 year old boys and 27% of girls were either overweight or obese in 2008
- [Get Ireland Active](#) – multi-agency group. The [www.getirelandactive](http://www.getirelandactive) website will be re-launched soon. Work is being done to develop it into a more interactive, user friendly website. There will be a facility for promoting local events.

### **safefood**

- [Weigh2Live](#) - Launched social media element to the campaign with a [Facebook page](#). Politicians who participated in Operation Transformation in ROI are supporting the campaign
- [Little Steps](#) – nearing end of three-year campaign. External evaluation being conducted to inform future development
- Catering Award - as mentioned by PHA, FSA, IHF and HSE, **safefood** is supporting and facilitating the development of an All-island award
- Food Poverty - [Healthy Food for All](#) (HFfA) launched its all-island [Good Practice Guide for Community Food Initiatives](#) on 18 October
- Bi-annual nutrition update will be circulated in December.

### **Diabetes UK Northern Ireland**

- New Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) figures published in October 2010 for diagnosed Diabetes in the UK. 2.8 million, 300,000 approx. with Type 1 and 2.5 million Type 2. 25,000 children and young people with Type 1 in UK. In NI, 69,000 adults with Diabetes, approx. 1,000 children with Type 1

- Diabetes UK NI involved in a range of initiatives including: CAWT Projects in Diabetes and Health Impact Assessment on Obesity Project; Involved in development of Regional Obesity Strategy by DHSSPS which is now out for public consultation. Campaign around lack of Insulin pumps met with success as Children's Waiting List being cleared during 2010/11 as part of Service Improvements; Mapping of Children with Type 1 and Schools provision for the administration of Insulin at lunchtimes, Primary school provisions in particular; Engaged with Local Commissioning Groups and in the development of new Primary Care Partnerships
- Diabetes UK will launch a major report on Diabetes and Residential Care around World Diabetes Day and in NI will be promoting Structured Diabetes Education programmes as a key instrument to prevent complications of Diabetes. October Professional Development Conference drew over 100 people but becoming harder for health staff to get release.

Mr Higgins thanked members for their contributions and highlighted the value of the preceding updates.

## **6. 2011 meetings and workshop topics**

It was agreed that meetings during 2011 will take place in Belfast in June and Dublin in November. Potential workshop topics were discussed including the economic cost of obesity. Ms Jennings noted that statisticians within the FSA had undertaken some work in this area and agreed to link with **safefood** on this. Other topics such as school and workplace interventions and the built environment were mentioned. It was noted that work with schools in NI was one of the big successes of Fit Futures.

Members were asked to notify the Secretariat of any events taking place in 2011 to create synergies where possible.

***Action Point 2: Members to contact Secretariat with any suggestions they may have for the next workshop and also events taking place in 2011.***

## **7. Forum evaluation**

A tender document for the appointment of an external evaluator has been drafted by the Secretariat. The Secretariat would like two representatives from the Forum (ideally one from each jurisdiction) to join them in finalising this document and recruiting the evaluator. Dr Cullen agreed to be the ROI representative. A suitable representative for NI is to be decided.

***Action Point 3: Forum members based in NI to agree on suitable representative and contact the Secretariat by 30 November***

***Action Point 4: Secretariat to progress tender process with Forum representatives***

## **8. AOB**

The Chair informed members of the 'Taking Action on Childhood Obesity' Conference taking place at Queen's University Belfast on 11 November.

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: 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 noon.