

POLICY SCREENING FORM FOR EQUALITY IMPACT

Name of Policy/Procedure/Decision: Weight Loss Management App 'Weight Mate'		Date of Screening: 17.9.2015
In which directorate does this policy sit and who is responsible for it: Marketing and Communications – Dr Aileen McGloin, Manager Digital Health Communications		
Name and roles of staff completing the screening. Indicate who is the lead: The lead is Aileen McGloin. The three other staff members involved in the screening were: Angela Cahill, Corporate Operations Manager; Patricia Fitzgerald, Director Corporate Operations; Patricia McCarthy, HR and Administration Executive.		
Describe the aims, objectives and context for this policy (include whether it is linked to other policies and whether new/existing/revised): The App is linked to the safefood Obesity and Sleep campaigns. It is a new concept for safefood and is a free tool designed to help people track and monitor weight loss through tips, advice, feedback and food plans. It is a user friendly app that provides real time support. Its aim is to influence behavioural change and create a sense of partnership through personalised, informative support.		
Does the policy relate to functions carried out in Northern Ireland? (If not, go to Page 9) YES		
Are there any particular equality categories which might be expected to benefit from the policy? (Explain how) safefood research has indicated that men are more prone to obesity than women. However, safefood considers that obesity can affect all groups.		
Are there any factors which could contribute/detract from intended aim/outcome of policy/decision? If yes, are they: <input type="checkbox"/> Financial, please specify: Cost of supporting App <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative, please specify: Data Protection Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government, please specify <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: the role of clinical/medical practitioners could influence or detract from use of app	Who are the main stakeholders? <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Public sector organisations/Sponsoring Departments/NSMC <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/Community Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify:	

AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Is there any relevant equality data/information (both qualitative and quantitative) available to inform impact of this policy? Please provide a note of any consultations/meetings that have taken place with any equality groups. Using this information, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the equality categories in relation to this particular policy?

Section 75 Category	Details of Evidence and Information	Details of Groups Needs/Experiences and Priorities
Religion/Belief	<p>Current studies show that almost one in four children and two in three adults are carrying excess weight. The public health consequences of obesity range from premature death to several debilitating illnesses that have an adverse effect on the quality of life. safefood has developed a weight loss management tool (Weight Mate) which will be available free to all members of the communities on the island of Ireland through the Apple App Store.</p> <p>safefood has engaged with its audience using various forms of media. The digital engagement is proving very proactive and the App evolved from this using feedback from focus groups and its own research. Weight Mate has been developed using Data Protection guidelines and best practice weight loss techniques.</p> <p>Terms and conditions of use and privacy are written in Plain English and form part of the voluntary enrolment process.</p> <p>Dietary plans have been formulated to give people options to pick between pork and beef enabling them to practice any religious beliefs. A vegetarian option is also incorporated.</p>	<p>Whilst research has shown that children are in a particularly affected group, safefood has purposely excluded children from the App. It is felt that weight loss in children should be supported through medical supervision and parental care. It would be unethical and unsafe for safefood to advise children.</p> <p>safefood has identified that parents play a very important role in the formation of food habits and preferences in young children. The evidence has shown that people prefer to engage in weight loss programmes that are supportive and provide practical and realistic advice. Parents can be in any of the equality groups.</p> <p>Through its digital engagement, safefood has established that on-line and interactive self-help tools are becoming the best media channel with which to engage consumers. Within the settings on the App, users can contact safefood directly for support.</p>
Political Opinion		
Race		
Age		
Marital Status		
Sexual Orientation		
Gender		
Disability		
Dependency Status		

SCREENING QUESTIONS.

Taking into account the information presented above, consider the likely impact on promoting equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy.

Section 75 Category	1. What is the likely impact (Major, Minor or None) on equality of opportunity giving details?	2. Are there better opportunities to promote equality of opportunity – Yes/No giving reasons
Religious Belief	<p>Weight Mate is considered unlikely to have an adverse impact on individuals or groups associated with the nine areas of protected characteristics as individuals will be using the app through choice. It is also seen as a tool that will benefit people.</p> <p>Plain English and graphics have been used insofar as possible. It is felt that there will be minor impact on those whose first language is not English, people with learning difficulties or those who are visually impaired. If Weight Mate is successful, features to enhance use will be considered in later developments.</p> <p>Weight Mate addresses the needs of certain groups of people e.g. adults who engage in mobile technology and who wish to lose weight. safefood is aware that the App may not address the specific needs of other groups e.g. children (who will not be eligible to use the App) and older adults (who may not use modern mobile technology). However, through its current educational programme, safefood considers that children are not excluded from information regarding healthier eating and nutrition. There are also different advertising campaigns and information leaflets targeting the older generation.</p> <p>It is felt that the overall impact is None.</p>	Yes.
Political Opinion		There may be merit, as the App is developed and further phases introduced, in considering a Web version for those who are uncomfortable with or cannot use mobile devices.
Racial Group		There may also be an opportunity to introduce a different application for different audiences and in different languages.
Age		
Marital Status		
Sexual Orientation		
Gender		
Disability		
Dependency Status		

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between different equality groups in society?

4. Are there opportunities to better foster good relations between different groups in society?

Given **safefood's** remit to actively promote good health, nutrition and food safety, it is not considered likely that there will be an adverse impact on good relations.

Additional considerations

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration are there any potential impacts on people with multiple identities? Provide details of the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities and specify the relevant categories:

As **safefood** considers obesity to be a general concern for all categories, it is felt that impacts for people with multiple identities has already been considered and addressed.

Also, consider if the policy can help to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to promote participation in public life?

No.



Screening Decision for EQIA - Does a fuller equality analysis through an EQIA need to be conducted on this policy?:

No	Specify reasons: N/A
No provided minor mitigations adopted	Specify reasons and mitigations: It is hoped that this initiative will contribute to the promotion of effective weight loss across the island of Ireland. It is considered that safefood have recognised the groups who may not be able to use the app and have different programmes in place to assist them. It is also planned to review use of the App at each new phase.
Yes	Specify reasons: N/A

Screening Report Final Recommendation: No EQIA required

Signed: <u></u>	Name: <u>PATRICIA O'CARROLL</u>	Date: <u>5.11.15</u>
Signed: <u>Angela Cahill</u>	Name: <u>Angela Cahill</u>	Date: <u>5.11.15</u>
Signed: <u>Aileen McGloin</u>	Name: <u>AILEEN MCGLOIN</u>	Date: <u>5.11.15</u>
Signed: <u>Patricia Fitzgerald</u>	Name: <u>Patricia Fitzgerald</u>	Date: <u>5.11.2015</u>

At least two members of the Policy Screening Group and the appropriate decision maker/policy lead officer must sign above.

Final approval Signature: **CEO/Director Corporate Operations** **Date:** 5 Nov 2015

