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RESEARCH TENDER CALL

TENDER INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Project Reference No.: 01-2022


Project Title: Assessing Cost-Effectiveness of Overweight and Obesity Prevention Policies on the island of Ireland

1. Objective/Knowledge Gap

This research project aims to evaluate the economic credentials of a range of obesity prevention policies (including both regulatory and program-based interventions), across multiple sectors and multiple areas of governance (local, regional and national in both the public and the private sector) to identify the most impactful cost-effective, affordable, implementable and acceptable policy options to prevent overweight and obesity across a range of settings.

The priority assigned to overweight and obesity in public policy should be driven primarily by estimates of the incremental costs and the incremental benefits of interventions to prevent and/or manage overweight/obesity (1). Informed government action requires reliable comparative evidence on the costs and benefits of various policy options (2). This research projects sets out to generate evidence to inform future policies and interventions on the island of Ireland and to answer the question:

"What are the most impactful, cost-effective, affordable and implementable policy options to prevent overweight and obesity across a range of settings?"

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2. **Background**

The current global obesity epidemic has significant negative health and economic consequences. Research in 2012 estimated the costs associated with current levels of excess body weight in adults on the island of Ireland at (€1.64 billion) (3) while the total lifetime cost of childhood overweight and obesity on the island was estimated to cost €7.2 billion in 2017 (1). In addition to the economic burden, the health and societal burden associated with overweight and obesity is unsustainable. Addressing this problem requires a comprehensive societal response, including implementation of a suite of multi-sectoral government policies. Many effective policy options exist to scale up national policy action to deal with the rising obesity burden and a rich set of policy actions were included in the recent obesity policies on the island of Ireland¹(4, 5).

3. **Approach**


It is proposed that the aims of the project will be achieved through a mixed methods approach and it is expected that the researchers will intentionally integrate or combine these methods to draw on the strengths of each e.g. allow one method to inform the other and allow one method to provide deeper insights into the findings of another.

4. **Technical Specification**

(a) **Scope of research**

- This research will focus on obesity prevention policies that include a **nutrition** component (including both regulatory and program-based interventions), across multiple sectors and multiple areas of governance (local, regional and national in both the public and the private sector) to identify the most effective, cost-effective, affordable and implementable policy options to prevent obesity across a range of settings.
- The focus will be on the assessment of cost-effectiveness, and this will require the use of consistent, rigorous methods for the technical cost-effectiveness analyses

¹ National Obesity Policy and Action Plan (2016-2025), A Fitter Future for All (2012–2022)

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(including extensive uncertainty analyses), alongside qualitative analyses of key implementation considerations relevant to policy decisions (strength of evidence, equity, acceptability, feasibility, and sustainability).

- This approach used should consider the methods used by other studies in this area including the ACE (Assessing Cost-Effectiveness) of Obesity Prevention Policies in Australia (2018) (2) and the OECD Health Policy Studies The Heavy Burden of Obesity *THE ECONOMICS OF PREVENTION* (6) and others.
- The modelling of expected health benefits and related costs in response to an intervention should consider the advancements included in the ACE study i.e.
 - a. the integration of physical activity and fruit and vegetables intake as risk factors (in addition to body mass index);
 - b. the development of an equity-focused version of the model that allowed the quantification of the differential cost, health and cost-effectiveness outcomes across different socio-economic position (SEP) groups; and
 - c. modifications to allow better quantification of interventions targeted at children.
- The selection of interventions to be assessed should consider the potential impact on addressing obesity on the island of Ireland; the relevance to current policy decision-making; and the availability of evidence for intervention effectiveness.
- The research should be collaborative across a number of relevant disciplines including experts in health economics and modelling, health policy, public health and other relevant fields as this is an emerging, trans-disciplinary field.

It should be noted that safefood is not an active participant in the project and sole responsibility lies with the successful tenderer

(b) Literature review

The literature review should include peer reviewed publications and a full search of the grey literature including government and other organization reports, and conference proceeding etc. Detail must be provided in regard to how the literature review will be structured and completed along with quality assurance mechanisms e.g. review by more than one researcher.

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(c) Qualitative and quantitative research

A full justification and rationale for the proposed methodology and analytical approach will be required. It will be necessary to indicate for all aspects of the project how the proposed data will be collected, analysed and reported. The research should be mixed in nature.

(d) Outline of proposed data sources

For this study, different data sources will be required. The researcher must enumerate the sources they intend to use and demonstrate access and experience in the use of the proposed data sources, as well as the relevant permissions to do so.

(e) Analysis


A full and detailed methodology must be provided on how the data sources are going to be utilised, analysed and interpreted to meet the objectives of the project.

(f) Data handling and Reporting

- The contractor will submit to **safefood**, on a six-monthly basis, an interim report containing details of the progress for each deliverable of the project.
- The contractor is responsible for collating all results and a final report will be submitted to **safefood** on completion of the study.
- All forms, documentation and electronic files must be retained by the contractor for **safefood** for a period of seven years in case of issues arising after the completion of the research.

(g) Quality assurance

- Ethical approval will be an essential component where data collection from participants is involved.
- The contractor will use validated methods where applicable and will apply best practice quality controls to approaches.
- To ensure transparency and reproducibility, all data sources used in the research must be specified, and all data used must be explicitly specified and justified.

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- **safefood** may visit the contractors during the course of the research to assess how the work is being carried out.

5. Proposed Activities/Deliverables

The outcomes from this research will include:

- Recommendations on cost effective interventions that are implementable, beneficial, acceptable, scalable and effective.
- Guidance on the economics of preventing overweight and obesity through a different range of interventions.
- Guidance to inform the development of public health campaigns and the development of resources or pilot interventions on the island of Ireland.
- Submission, on a 6-monthly basis, of interim reports on progress.
- Analysis of the final dataset, collation of the results and a final report to be submitted to **safefood** at the end of the 18-month study period.

6. Evaluation of Tenders


Tender bids will be evaluated according to the quality of proposals and applicants using the following criteria:

Quality of the proposal:

- ✓ Anticipated deliverables;
- ✓ Research method and facilities;
- ✓ Value for money;
- ✓ Potential for application;
- ✓ Work plan, including the overall timeframe.

Quality of Applicants:

- ✓ Experience in subject area;
- ✓ Quality Assurance and Quality Control measures in place.

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7. **Duration of Project**

Estimated duration of the project: Total of 18 months. A detailed timescale of research should be submitted by the applicant.

8. **Tender Application Forms and Guidelines**


The Tender Application Form and associated Guidelines can be downloaded from www.safefood.net/research-tender-2022. They can also be obtained by emailing research@safefood.net, quoting the project reference number. Alternatively, please contact **safefood** as per the details below.

Ms. Gillian Fox
 Research Coordinator
safefood
 7 Eastgate Avenue
 Little Island. Cork
 Tel: +353 21-2304100

The closing date for receipt of applications by **safefood** is no later than **4pm on Thursday 14th April 2022**.

References

1. **safefood**. What are the estimated costs of childhood overweight and obesity on the island of Ireland? . 2017.
2. Ananthapavan J SG, Brown V, Moodie M, Nguyen P, Barendregt J, Veerman L, Mantilla Herrera A, Lal A, Peeters A, Carter R. . Assessing Cost-Effectiveness of Obesity Prevention Policies in Australia 2018 (ACE-Obesity Policy). Melbourne: Deakin University; 2018.
3. **safefood**. The cost of overweight and obesity on the Island of Ireland: Executive Summary. 2012.

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4. Department of Health Healthy Ireland. A healthy weight for Ireland: Obesity policy and action plan 2016-2025. 2016.
5. Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety. A Fitter Future for All. Framework for preventing and addressing overweight and obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022. Belfast; 2012.
6. OECD. The Heavy Burden of Obesity.2019.