

## Key Facts: National Approaches to Public Health

### Headlines

Of the Top 10 leading risk factors identified by WHO as having an impact on an individual's mortality 6 out of the Top 7 are related to diet, alcohol and physical exercise. Lifestyle factors also play a major role in health inequality with 30% of men and 20% of women in the most disadvantaged groups having at least 2 or 3 high risk behaviours (smoking, alcohol, poor diet) compared to <10% of men and <5% of women in the most advantaged. It is also widely acknowledged that providing information alone does not change behaviour.

### Health Costs / Factors

- In the UK, 80% of premature deaths (<75) could be prevented
  - 22% of premature deaths in men and 13% of premature deaths in women are caused by coronary heart disease.
  - A study across 15 populations showed a 27% reduction in Coronary Heart Disease mortality in 1 decade with more than three quarters coming from risk factor improvements
- There are approximately 70,000 premature deaths each year as a result of an unhealthy diet alone
- 1.5m people in the UK suffer from type II diabetes.
- 4 million suffer from cardiovascular disease.
- There are 18,000 annual deaths from chronic disease relating to alcohol, increasing at 8% per year. 85% of liver deaths are alcohol related

### Economic Costs / Factors

- Estimates suggest that preventable illness costs in the region of £187bn per year, approximately 19% of GDP for England
- In 2007/08, the Department of Health spent approximately £50m on publicity and advertising:
 

▪ Tobacco control (£19m) and legislation (£8.7m)	£27.7m
▪ Sexual health	£ 6.9m
▪ Drug prevention	£ 2.0m
▪ Alcohol	£ 1.3m
▪ 5-a-day	£ 1.3m

  - The UK spends the least per capita on prevention and public health (\$30) compared to France (\$60), the Netherlands (\$100), Germany (\$110) and the US (\$175) although this has doubled since 1999.
  - Over £500 million was spent on TV alone by for-profit organisations advertising food, soft drinks and restaurant chains.
- In the 15 years between 1980 and 2005, alcohol increased in price by 22% but disposable income increased by 97% making alcohol 62% more affordable.
- Child poverty has an ongoing cost to the economy estimated at £25bn each year (reduction in educational opportunities, lower taxes and higher service costs)

### **Social Costs / Factors**

- Inequality is apparent across ethnic groups and gender...
  - 25% of Irish women smoke *versus* 5% of Bangladeshi women, but more than 40% of Bangladeshi men
- ...as well as income
  - More than 60% of the least affluent groups smoke which is more than 4 times the most affluent
  - The most deprived Year 6 children are 50% more likely to be obese than their least deprived peers
  - Children from Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities have a 63% risk of poverty which compares to an average of 30%
- Targeting is vital
  - 7% of the population accounts for 33% of alcohol consumption

### **Behavioural Indicators**

- Self- and risk-awareness is low
  - 25% of obese and overweight individuals do not want to lose weight and are unaware of that their lifestyle presents a risk of cancer
    - Only 6% of adults recognise that obesity is a risk factor for cancer compared to (a still low) 38% for heart disease
  - Approximately 40-45% of overweight mothers and fathers believe that they weigh about right
  - Only 6% of parents with overweight or obese children in Nursery or Reception classes described their child as being overweight regardless of their sociodemographics. For parents of 4-7 year olds this rose to 14%.
- Almost 90% of people agree that individuals are responsible for their own health
- 40% believe that the Government provides too *little* advice when it comes to Public Health
  - (Although these figures could well be affected by popularity) 6% trust and act on Government advice, 37% do *not* trust their advice and 20% ignore it completely
- Based on the *Which?* report *Hungry for Change* of the 2000 respondents:
  - 75% want Government to take action on healthier eating
  - In spite of the economic downturn, only \_ of indicated that eating well was less of a priority for them
  - More than half found it difficult to eat healthily outside of the home
  - Less than 50% suggested that Manufacturers and 33% of Catering Outlets make it easy to choose healthier foods with 25% (for Manufacturers) and 39% (for Catering Outlets) saying that they made it difficult