

because prevention is better than cure

Annual Review 2016 - 2017

Why we need a campaign

'Preventative illnesses are overwhelming the NHS; illnesses caused by obesity, smoking, alcohol and lack of exercise.'

All Party Parliamentary Group on Primary Care and Public Health

The NHS is a vital resource if we fall ill – but it isn't a National HEALTH Service. Only 5% of its resources are committed to maintaining health i.e. stopping people falling ill in the first place.

This means the NHS could become financially unsustainable. The demands on it, from an ageing population, more lifestyle related illness and increasing patient expectations are rising more rapidly than the funding available.

That's why we need more focus on helping people stay healthy. That's good for them, their families and their employers. And it is good for the government too, as it keeps the NHS affordable.

We believe that everyone has a part to play here, including the government, the food and drink industry, employers, health professionals and the public.

Who we are

We're a not-for-profit organisation, launched in 2015, made up of expert volunteers from a range of backgrounds, including medical science.

Our starting point is that prevention is better than cure.

Partnership working

We are currently working in partnership with:

- King's College London, Kingston University and Goldsmiths University of London on research into Health Behaviour Change.
- Pro Bono Economics – to help take forward our health economics review of the food industry in the UK.
- The Obesity Health Alliance, to encourage the government to give higher priority to tackling obesity.

Progress Report

Over the last 12 months we have:

1. Built on our 2015 report *Healthy and Wealthy?* This identified the food industry's key role in the nation's health. It also recommended that the UK food industry become world leader in the mass production of healthier food, as this would be good for business as well as public health. For example in 2017 we helped the Food and Drink Federation recognise that developments in food technology mean more rapid progress may be achievable in sugar reduction and also encouraged the government to include the food industry in its Industrial Strategy.
2. Written up the findings of our research into Health Behaviour Change: *Triggers and other motivators – possible factors encouraging health behaviour change*. This was based on interviews with a sample of 1003 adults in 2014 – 2016. It identifies stages in people's lives when they are more likely to be open to lifestyle advice from health professionals.
3. Provided advice to Sugarwise, an initiative to encourage the reduction of sugar levels in food, through a kite mark scheme for food products and menus low in free sugars.
4. Led pilot research into student health behaviour change, in partnership with three London universities. Examples of when and how some students overcome the temptations and opportunities to pursue unhealthy options while at university could well have useful wider application.
5. Become a member of the Obesity Health Alliance and signed OHA letters published in the national press opposing the partnership between the Premier League and Cadbury and encouraging the government to act to reduce obesity in the UK.

The Next Steps

We look forward to reporting further progress in our 2017-2018 Annual Review.

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