



FORESIGHT

Tackling Obesities:
Future Choices –
Follow Up Actions

Government Office for Science

Tackling Obesity: Future Choices – Follow Up Actions

Foresight launched the findings of its Tackling Obesity: Future Choices Project on 17 October 2007.

A wide range of organisations have taken an interest in the project and its findings. Many interested parties contributed their expertise to the process of assembling and analysing the evidence. In a variety of ways the work of the project has already contributed to shaping people's thinking. For example: the National Institute for Clinical Excellence used the project's science evidence in developing its guidance on physical activity; the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council considered the project's scientific evidence papers at their nutrition and health board; The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment ran workshops on the built environment and obesity; the Department of Health's work examining the contribution to be made by social marketing was strongly informed by the Foresight evidence and emerging analysis.

Most significantly, in the final phases of the Foresight project, the emerging findings have made a significant contribution to Government thinking, informing the development of the Government's approach to tackling obesity, and the cross-cutting systems for managing its implementation.

The National Cancer Director for England has recently commissioned additional development of the project's quantitative model to examine the cancer-related consequences of overweight and obesity in more detail.

In addition to these activities undertaken through the life of the project, the organisations in the table below have undertaken to engage with and disseminate the findings in the ways specified. Progress on these commitments will be reported on when the sponsoring Minister chairs the project's One Year Review in Autumn 2008.

Foresight will sustain dialogue with key research organisations within and outside government to examine the implications of the findings for the obesity-related research agenda.

Organisation	Action
Central Government	<p>The Cross-Government Obesity Programme will incorporate the evidence and analysis from the Project as they develop and implement the Government’s approach to tackling obesity.</p> <p>In particular they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish an expert advisory group and a delivery reference group; • use the Project’s systems map to enhance the mapping of cross-government activity so as to inform the design and implementation of strategic interventions; and • develop and make use of the Project’s model to inform future projections, milestones and monitoring. <p>In addition, the Department of Health, also leading for the Office for Strategic Coordination of Health Research (OSCHR), will bring together Chief Scientific Advisers across government to look at how to take forward a research agenda on obesity using the Foresight report as a starting point.</p>
Health England	<p>Health England will engage with the Project’s findings as it develops its programme of work and drafts its report during 2007/08, and will look for opportunities to exploit the potential of the quantitative model.</p>
Office for National Statistics	<p>In the light of the quantitative modelling work developed for the Project, the Office for National Statistics will co-sponsor with Foresight the commissioning of further work to review existing health policy uses of microsimulation models in the UK and abroad, and to examine the potential contribution of micro-simulation models in the development of policy. The review will report in summer 2008.</p>

Organisation	Action
<p>Local Government Association</p>	<p>The Local Government Association (LGA) will publicise the Project's launch and findings via its newsletter in October 2007, and Foresight will brief the LGA Community Well-being Board on the Project's findings in November 2007.</p> <p>The LGA, jointly with Foresight, will run a one-day conference in Spring 2008 on the issues for local government. The conference will provide an opportunity to explore how addressing obesity can align naturally with other priority agendas, and will also be an opportunity for authorities to share approaches that have been tried successfully locally.</p>
<p>Regional Public Health</p>	<p>The Public Health Directorate of the East of England Strategic Health Authority has agreed to incorporate the findings from the Project into their work to develop a regional agenda to tackle childhood obesity. The Project findings will inform the follow up to the Region's Obesity Summit in October 2007 and will be applied to engage all stakeholders whether they work in health, local government, social services or schools. The focus will be local communities and families.</p> <p>The Regional Public Health Group in the South West will be briefed on the Project findings and Foresight will design and deliver a workshop to support the Group in using the findings to shape the design and implementation of local initiatives on physical activity and healthy eating.</p>

Organisation	Action
Royal College of Physicians	<p>The Royal College of Physicians welcomes the Project's analysis of the issues surrounding obesity and will convene a working group, with invited membership from the Faculty of Public Health and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, to respond in detail to the findings, with a particular interest in the implications for implementation, and for professional training and development.</p>
British Medical Association	<p>The British Medical Association (BMA) welcomes the breadth of the analysis in the Report. The Report offers a new way of viewing the problem of overweight and obesity and will help medical practitioners see how their particular contribution can have most impact within a much wider cultural and environmental picture. The BMA will be holding a stakeholder meeting in November to discuss food labelling in relation to diet behaviour and healthier food choices; and the BMA Board of Science is planning a new policy report on early life nutrition and its effects on adult health, including predisposition to obesity.</p>
National Heart Forum	<p>The National Heart Forum will work with Foresight to incorporate the Project's findings into the obesity toolkit - <i>Lightening the load: tackling overweight and obesity</i> - aimed at providing guidance for local multi-agency teams to support them in developing and implementing their own strategies and action plans. The revised toolkit is to be completed by January 2008.</p>

Organisation	Action
National Prevention Research Initiative	The Project's analysis of the implications for research will inform discussions among the organisations supporting the National Prevention Research Initiative which funds research into promoting healthy lifestyles and preventing chronic diseases.
National Obesity Research Alliance	The National Obesity Research Alliance will take a briefing on the research issues that arise from the Project findings at its meeting in January 2008.
European Commission Network on Nutrition and Physical Activity	The Network will take a briefing on the Project findings and discuss the implications, early in 2008.
US Centre for Disease Control & Prevention	The US Centre for Disease Control & Prevention will engage with the Project findings and relevant UK policy networks via an information sharing visit hosted by Foresight in December 2007.
Business In Sport and Leisure (the umbrella organisation for over 100 private sector companies in the sport, leisure and hospitality industry) and the CCPR (the umbrella organisation for 270 Governing Bodies of Sport and voluntary sports organisations)	<p>The Foresight Tackling Obesity Report is the subject of a keynote address by Dr Susan Jebb at the BISL Annual Conference and Exhibition on 20th November 2007.</p> <p>Business In Sport and Leisure and the CCPR will run a joint seminar for their members to examine the implications of the findings of the study.</p>

Organisation	Action
Food and Drink Federation	The Food and Drink Federation will run a seminar with Foresight to brief members on the Project findings and to explore their implications for the food and drink industries. The seminar will take place early in 2008.
Tesco	Tesco Corporate Responsibility Committee will take briefing on the Project findings in spring 2008 with a view to informing the development of Tesco health and nutrition policy.
National School of Government	The National School of Government draws upon the work of the Foresight team in its learning and development work, particularly in the fields of strategic thinking and analysis and use of evidence for the Senior Civil Service. It will be running a number of events in the coming year focusing on the development of strategy in public health, using the Project as a case study.
The Open University	The Open University, in developing its new undergraduate course <i>Challenging Obesity</i> , which is aimed at health care workers, those who work in a profession allied to medicine, patients and others with a general interest in the subject, will make reference to aspects of the evidence base generated by this Project. The first presentation of the course will be in May 2008.

