



Obesity Health Alliance Secretariat
Wells Lawrence House
126 Back Church Lane
London
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The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AA

12th September 2024

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of leading health charities, campaign groups, medical royal colleges and the thousands of healthcare professionals, patients, parents, and citizens that we represent, the Obesity Health Alliance is writing to express its full support for the development of new policy reforms, allowing the planning system to better support the creation of healthy, active local communities and reduce health inequalities.

The direction laid out in the National Planning Policy Framework which references addressing obesity and, in particular, preventing new hot food takeaways from opening near schools, is greatly appreciated and will tangibly improve the environments in which children grow up. To deliver on your most welcome ambition to create the healthiest generation of children ever, this announcement must be the first step: empowering local communities to make the places they live in healthier.

Across the country, especially for those living in more deprived areas, local leaders are eager to make their communities healthier, but often lack the powers and resources to do so. This potential can be realised by moving to a cross-Government, cross-society focus on preventing ill health developing in the first place.

Today, we are launching our new position statement calling for the following¹:

- Ensuring that the prevention of ill health and the reduction of health inequalities is established as a primary purpose of the national planning guidance
- Only healthier food and drink to be advertised in outdoor spaces
- Local authorities to be protected against powerful commercial influences
- The restoration of the Public Health Grant with a £1.5 billion uplift
- Supporting the creation of Local Food Partnerships
- Ensuring that the National Child Measurement Programme is fully delivered, and families are supported when excess weight is identified

Every child should grow up having access to affordable and tasty food - but our environment is saturated with unhealthy food, overloaded with sugar and salt. High streets are flooded with unhealthy foods and

¹ [OHA Local Government Position Statement](#)

drinks, which are aggressively and often manipulatively marketed, restricting free choice. Consequently, since 2016, the number of children and young adults living with type 2 diabetes has risen by almost 40%, fuelled by soaring levels of excess weight from a young age.

Action on reducing obesity rates is crucial to delivering your government's missions to kickstart economic growth and to build an NHS fit for the future. The costs of obesity to the NHS alone are over £6.5 billion per year and predicted to rise. The wider economic cost is currently placed at £98 billion². As you will be aware, the impact of obesity is particularly severe and leads to people exiting the workforce for health-related reasons.

Delivering on the ambitions laid out in your Child Health Action Plan would be a monumental achievement and, without doubt, the necessary first step must be to create healthier local communities for our babies and children.

Yours Sincerely,



Katharine Jenner, Director, Obesity Health Alliance

Colette Marshall, Chief Executive, Diabetes UK

Dr Charmaine Griffiths, Chief Executive, British Heart Foundation

Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive, Sustain the alliance for better food and farming

Professor David Strain, Chair, BMA Board of Science Committee

Dr Fiona Donald, President, Royal College of Anaesthetists

Dr John Chisholm CBE, Chair, Men's Health Forum

Pamela Healy OBE, Chief Executive, British Liver Trust

Dr Katherine McCullogh's, Special adviser on obesity, Royal College of Physicians

Jonathan Pauling, Chief Executive, Alexandra Rose Charity

Greg Fell, President, Association of Directors of Public Health

Liz Stockley, Chief Executive, British Dietetics Association

Dr Lindsey MacDonald, Chief Executive, Magic Breakfast

Eddie Crouch, Chair, British Dental Association

Peter Babudu, Executive Director, Impact on Urban Health

Dr Matthew Davies, President, Association of Anaesthetists

Phil Pyatt, Chief Executive, Blood Pressure UK

Dr Beckie Lang, Chief Executive, HENRY

Professor Nicola Ranger, Chief Executive and General Secretary, Royal College of Nursing

Dr Helen Stewart, Officer for Health Improvement, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Dr Ranee Thakar, President, Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Matthew Philpott, Executive Director, Health Equalities Group

Professor Graham MacGregor, Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine, Chair of Action on Salt and Sugar

William Roberts, Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health

² <https://www.institute.global/insights/public-services/unhealthy-numbers-the-rising-cost-of-obesity-in-the-uk>

Michael Baber, Director, Health Action Research Group
Nilushka Perera, Chief Operating Officer, Best Beginnings
Vicky Gilroy, Director of Innovation and Research, Institute of Health Visiting
Maria Bryant, Professor of Public Health Nutrition, University of York
Fran Bernhardt, Commercial Determinants Coordinator, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming
Professor Louisa Ells, Co-Director of the Obesity Institute, Leeds Beckett University
Oyinlola Oyeboode, Professor of Public Health, Wolfson Institute of Population Health, Queen Mary University of London
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John Gregg, Alzheimers Research UK, Obesity Empowerment Network
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Professor Scarlett McNally, Deputy Director, Centre for Perioperative Care
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Helen Starr-Kedde, Deputy Director, Food Matters
Professor Nicola Heslehurst, President, Association for the Study of Obesity
Anna Taylor, Executive Director, The Food Foundation
Thomas Abrams, Co-Head of Health, ShareAction
Leon Ballin, Sustainable Food Places Programme Manager, Soil Association
Dr Vicky Sibson, Director, First Steps Nutrition Trust
Anna Route, Development Officer, Hull Food Partnership / Hull Food Inequality Alliance
Lauren Bowes Byatt, Deputy Director of A Healthy Life, Nesta
Vic Borrill, Director, Brighton & Hove Food Partnership
Heloise Balme, General Manager & Director, Bristol Food Network
Carlos Yescas, Coordinator, Food Newcastle
Claire Judd, Coordinator, Sustainable Food Cornwall
Sandra Currie, Chief Executive, Kidney Research UK
Dr William Baker, Associate Professor, University of Bristol
Sarah Le Brocq, Founder & Director, All About Obesity CIC
James Toop, Chief Executive of Bite Back
Becky Fry, Director, Sustainable Food Cornwall
Professor Amelia Lake, Professor of Public Health Nutrition Teesside University and Associate Director Fuse, The Centre for Translational Research in Public Health
Sue Pritchard, Chief Executive, Food, Farming and Countryside Commission
John P Cowman, Chief Executive, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Cllr John Carley, Chacewater Parish Council, Cornwall
Dr Patrick Holmes, General Practitioner on behalf of CVRMUK
Professor Mat Jones, Professor of Public Health and Community Development, University of the West of England
Zoe Nixon, Strategic Manager Newquay Foodbank.
Kristin Bash, Food SIG Chair, Faculty of Public Health
Professor Indranil Dasgupta, Chair, Research Standing Committee, British and Irish, Hypertension Society (BIHS)

Sharlene A Greenwood, Professor of Exercise and Lifestyle Therapy, King's College Hospital, London
Charmian Larke, Sustainable Food Cornwall member
Dr Tim Cross, President, The British Association for the Study of the Liver (BASL)
Professor Louise Goff, Professor of Nutrition Science, Diabetes Research Centre, University of Leicester
Annette Eatock, Primary Care Climate Resilience Officer, Volunteer Cornwall
Prof Angelina Sanderson Bellamy, Professor of Food Systems, University of the West of England
Julia Kirby-Smith, Executive Director, Better Food Traders
Rachael Gormley, Chief Executive Officer, World Cancer Research Fund
Dr Penelope Toff, Chair, BMA Public Health Medicine Committee
Darren Squires Cert. Ed. Projects and Campaigns Officer, Hull Food Partnership
Dr Kristin Veighey, Chair, Kidney Special Interest Group, Society for Academic Primary Care
Amber Alferoff, Gary Mitchell and Patricia Wallace, Social Farms & Gardens Executive
Julie Lewis, Co-Vice Chair, Primary Care Diabetes Society
Professor Emma Frew, NIHR Research Professor in Health Economics, University of Birmingham
Christine Hancock, Founder and Director, C3 Collaborating for Health
Ron Cullen, Chief Executive, UK Kidney Association
Katie Kirk, Chair & CDO, Bosavern Community Farm
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Lois Gallimore, Regional Coordinator, Better Food Traders
Charlotte Hill, Chief Executive, Urban Biodiversity CIC
Luke Berkeley, Managing Director, Fentenfenna Farm CIC
Dr Lisa Anderson, Chair, The British Society for Heart Failure
Kiran Patel, South Asian Health Foundation
Sarah Tutton, Chief Executive Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation (DRWF)