

Corporate Priorities: Delivering better services; Caring for the vulnerable;

Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight

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Executive Summary

Unhealthy weight is a significant issue within Lancashire. The Healthy Weight Declaration outlines sixteen commitments which tackle a range of issues influencing unhealthy weight.

Recommendations

Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board is as to to sign the refreshed Healthy Weight Declaration, re-stating the commitment to tackle unhealthy weight in Lancashire.

Background

Being overweight or obese can affect both a person's physical health, increasing their risk of developing many life-threatening conditions such as cancer, Type 2 diabetes, and heart disease; and their mental health, being linked to high rates of depression and anxiety.

As such, it has been estimated that cost to society for obesity related conditions is £27 billion per year. This is an issue across all age groups within Lancashire, with 24% of four-year-olds, 35% of 11-year-olds and 67% of adults being classified as overweight or obese.

The Local Authority Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD) has been developed by [Food Active](#), a healthy weight programme commissioned by local authority public health teams, NHS organisations, and government teams at both regional and national level. It works to address the social, environmental, economic and legislative factors which influence people's lifestyle choices and behaviours, with a specific focus on healthy weight.

Lancashire County Council initially signed the Healthy Weight Declaration in 2017. However, during 2020 the commitments were reviewed and refreshed:

Strategic / System Leadership

1. Implement the Local Authority HWD as part of a long-term, 'systems-wide approach to obesity
2. Advocate plans that promote a preventative approach to encouraging a healthier weight with local partners, identified as part of a 'place-based system' (e.g. Integrated Care System)

3. Support action at national level to help local authorities promote healthy weight and reduce health inequalities in our communities (this includes preventing weight stigma and weight bias)
4. Invest in the health literacy of local citizens to make informed healthier choices; ensuring clear and comprehensive healthy eating and physical activity messages are consistent with government guidelines
5. Local authorities who have completed adoption of the HWD are encouraged to review and strengthen the initial action plans they have developed by consulting Public Health England's Whole System Approach to Obesity, including its tools, techniques, and materials
Commercial Determinants
6. Engage with the local food and drink sector (retailers, manufacturers, caterers, out of home settings) where appropriate to consider responsible retailing such as offering and promoting healthier food and drink options, and reformulating and reducing the portion sizes of high fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) products
7. Consider how commercial partnerships with the food and drink industry may impact on the messages communicated around healthy weight to our local communities. Such funding may be offered to support research, discretionary services (such as sport and recreation and tourism events) and town centre promotions
8. Protect our children from inappropriate marketing by the food and drink industry such as advertising and marketing in close proximity to schools; 'giveaways' and promotions at schools; at events on local authority controlled sites
Health Promoting Infrastructures / Environments
9. Consider supplementary guidance for hot food takeaways, specifically in areas around schools, parks and where access to healthier alternatives are limited
10. Review how strategies, plans and infrastructures for regeneration and town planning positively impact on physical activity, active travel, the food environment, and food security (consider an agreed process for local plan development between public health and planning authorities)
11. Where Climate Emergency Declarations are in place, consider how the HWD can support carbon reduction plans and strategies, address land use policy, transport policy, circular economy waste policies, food procurement, air quality etc
Organisational Change / Cultural Shift
12. Review contracts and provision at public events, in all public buildings, facilities and 'via' providers to make healthier food and drinks more available, convenient, and affordable and limit access to high-calorie, low-nutrient foods and drinks (this should be applied to public institutions & scrutiny given to any new contracts for food & drink provision, where possible)
13. Increase public access to fresh drinking water on local authority controlled sites; (keeping single use plastics to a minimum) and encouraging re-usable bottle refills
14. Develop an organisational approach to enable and promote active travel for staff, patients & visitors, whilst providing staff with opportunities to be physically active where possible (e.g. promoting stair use, standing desk, cycle to work/school schemes)
15. Promote the health and wellbeing of local authority staff by creating a culture and ethos that promotes understanding of healthy weight, supporting staff to each well and move more

Monitoring and Evaluation

16. Monitor the progress of our action plan against commitments, report on and publish the results annually

Since the initial commitment, progress has been made across a number of areas, including school catering standards, the Food4Life in schools' pilot, and gaining traction with the Hot Food Takeaway Advisory Note. However progress has recently stalled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a consequence the Health and Wellbeing Board is requested to sign the refreshed Healthy Weight Declaration, re-stating the commitment to tackle unhealthy weight in Lancashire.