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Public health nutrition policy in
England, Scotland, Northern Ireland
and Wales: An overview

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What we were asked to do

- Examine the development of of public health nutrition policy.
- Identify the changes over time.
- Positives and potential weaknesses.



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What we done

- Reviewed policy documents.
- Reviewed the reviews -Scotland, NI and Wales. Some regional reviews in England.
- Interviewed key players.
- Focused on early years (including breastfeeding), inequality and young people (schools).



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Alternative title:

**The (d)evolution of food and nutrition
policy: a success?**



Evolution to devolution

- 1991 saw the publication of the Dietary Reference Values.
- The James report and the Dietary Reference Values had a place in public health but a very small place relative to the other public health issues of the time. In summary:
 - There was no overarching food and nutrition policy or strategy
 - There was no leverage to drive change in the diet of the population
- The beginnings of food strategy began in 1991 with the publication of 'The Health of the Nation' green paper which later became a white paper and was followed up with a nutrition task force.
- However, 11 years after the publication of the Black report, there was little of a structured approach to nutrition; neither was there mention of food security or sustainability in the majority of the documents.
- Now???



Some key time lines and current state of play

- 1996 the Scottish Diet Action Plan was launched.
- Health inequalities became central to many health policies, particularly after the Acheson report 1999. But food and nutrition?????
- In the years between 1997 to 2008 there have been important and influential strategies and policies in all 4 UK administrations.
- Currently:
 - A Food and Nutrition Strategy for **Northern Ireland** (1996) – Fit Futures (2006). Also Investing in Health sets the framework.
 - **Wales** - Food and Wellbeing (2003) – Quality of Food (2008).
 - **Scottish** Diet Action Plan (1996) – Healthy Eating Active Living Plan (2008) now the The Future for Food in Scotland.
 - **England** - Choosing a Better Diet (2005) – Healthy Weight; Healthy Lives (2008)/Food Matters (2008).
- Food matters does not seem to have had much impact beyond England.



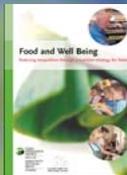
Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge



Healthy Eating, Active Living



Fit Futures



Food and Well Being



Choosing Health White Paper



Healthy Start



Promoting Healthy Diets & Physical Activity Green Paper

EC Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health

UK and international policies



Two food based interim reviews and others

- Scottish Diet Project.
- Wales.

THEN

- Food Matters.
- NI review of the Public Health Function and the Review of Public Administration (RPA).



Three points of note:

- In watching the development of these strategies over the years
 - 1. Obesity became a real public health issue around 2000 and since that time many nutrition policies have been combined with physical activity.
 - 2. Since the early 2000's sustainability (as an ecological approach) has been seen increasingly as a separate strand of policy and interwoven into nutrition policy.
 - 3. There remains very little, if any, explicit mention of 'food insecurity' or food poverty in any of these strategies.



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Also of Note

- 1998 saw a vote on devolution and powers to make decisions on health policy devolved to Wales and Scotland. Northern Ireland followed shortly after with the power sharing agreement.
- More has come from the devolution than the centralising tendency of Westminster
- FSA role varies according to administration.



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What we found +S

- Lots of action and commitment
- Focus on obesity
- Work on key areas such as Salt and Fats. Some structural as in industry reformulation and some individual as in healthy choice initiatives.
- Schools work
- Some coordinated and focused work in Wales and Scotland
- Lots of activity (un-coordinated)
- Regional dimension in England

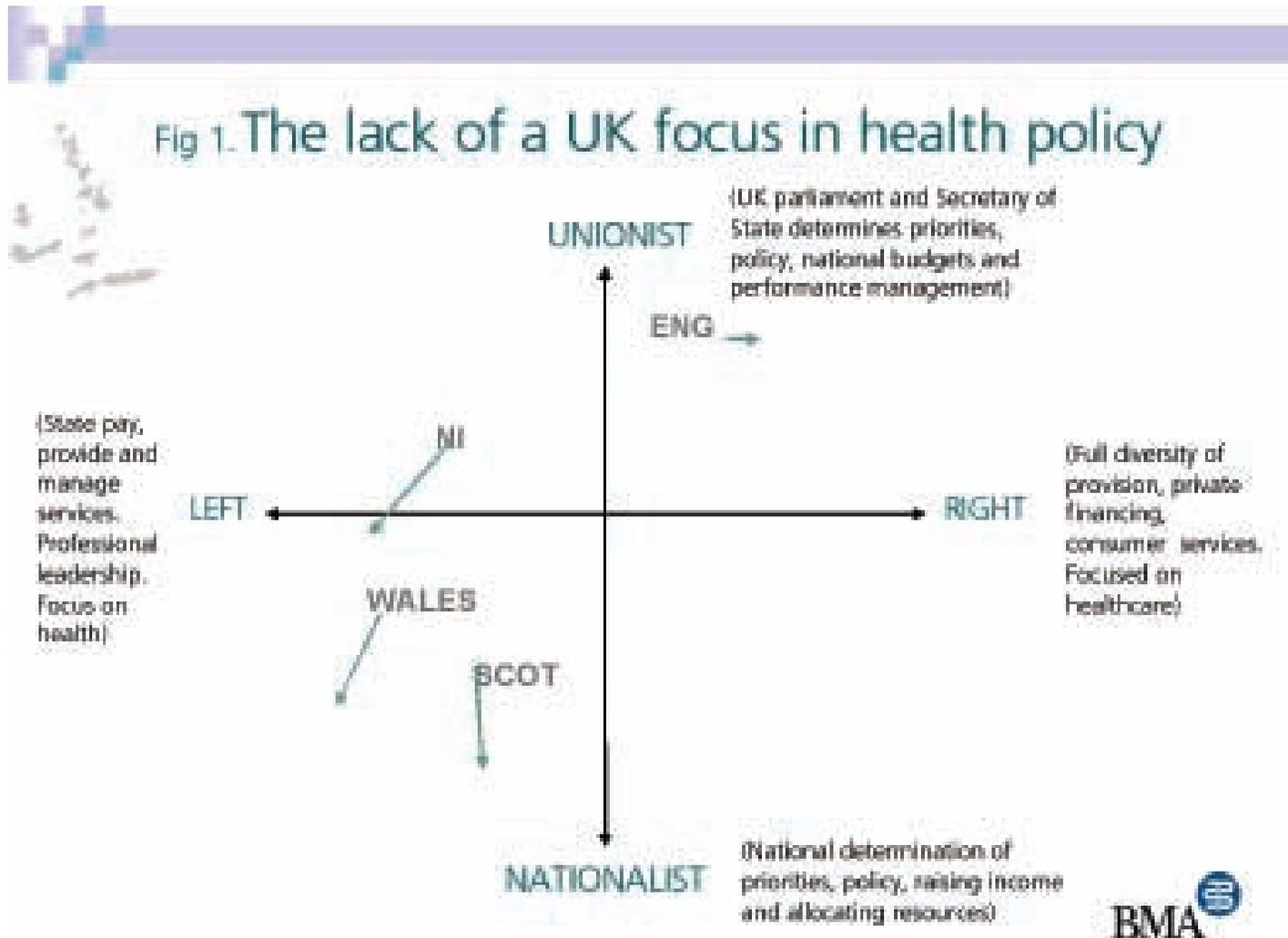


What we found -s

- Lots of policy and policy promises.
- Less on action and joined up action e.g. schools have many components and many angles and can be funded from many sources or even different funds within the same department.
- Partial solutions and poor policy analysis e.g. food is cheap therefore no problem?!?!?
- Focus on downstream solutions e.g. cooking and not centrally funded.
- Running scared from regulation.
- The reemergence of the food industry as key players aided by the sustainability agenda.
- Little work on food poverty and welfare or the setting of minimum standards with lack of policy for the changing economy and credit crunch.
- The lack of a public health (population) approach



Underpinning philosophy





Approaches to health policy -adapted from Greer

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Organisation	Market localism	Status quo	Hierarchical regionalism	Localism
New Public Health	Largely verbal (obstructed by the centre)	Largely verbal (not obstructed by the centre)	Fairly strong commitment	Strong commitment
Expansion of the welfare state	NONE	NONE	Long term care Schools on the margin	Prescriptions Schools -in a different format
Food industry	Strong presence	Not apparent	Becoming strong	Weak but growing



	Organisation/Structure	Approach/Function
NI	<p>A regional public health agency is being considered</p> <p>Delivery of public health takes place at local level.</p> <p>Public health function is sits largely within the health services structure.</p>	<p>Joint working between health and local authorities.</p> <p>Cross-cutting strategic approach to health improvement</p>
Wales	<p>Public health centralised at government level</p> <p>Local authorities and health boards are coterminous.</p> <p>Local public health delivered via Local Health Boards</p>	<p>Growing awareness of the public health functions of local authorities with local strategic partnerships.</p> <p>Wellbeing agenda.</p> <p>PH legislation enacted through Westminster</p>
Scotland	<p>Health Minister focuses on NHS.</p> <p>Deputy CMO has a public health focus.</p> <p>Dominated by doctors – all consultants have a medical background</p>	<p>Growing awareness of the public health functions of local authorities</p> <p>Increased partnerships between health and local authorise and voluntary sector at a local level</p>
England	<p>No uniform entity in health / public health terms.</p> <p>Minister for public health.</p> <p>Public health specialists and consultants come from a range of backgrounds.</p>	<p>Health protection activity has a high profile.</p> <p>Some joint working</p> <p>NHS focus.</p>



	Organisation/Structure	Regulation	Monitoring
N Ireland	<p>New nutritional standards for school lunches and other food in schools updated in February 2008</p> <p>Updated food-based standards have been implemented since September 2007</p>	<p>Will be enshrined in law by June 2009</p>	<p>Education and training inspectorate evaluates quality of meals in school and examines general approach to the promotion of healthy eating. The inspection is carried out by nutritional associates</p>
Wales	<p>Appetite for Life food-based and nutrient-based standards launched in November 2007</p> <p>The inspection is carried out by nutritional associates</p>	<p>No plans to enshrine in law</p> <p>The inspection is carried out by nutritional associates</p>	<p>From September 2007 a 2 year action research project will be in place in 4 areas to monitor the impact of the introduction of the standards</p>
Scotland	<p>Hungry for Success - food and nutrient standards were implemented in primary schools in December 2004 and in secondary schools by December 2006</p>	<p>Enshrined in law as Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) Act 2007</p>	<p>Schools Inspectorate with nutritionist associate assessors</p>
England	<p>Turning the Tables - September 2006 – interim food-based standards for school lunches</p> <p>September 2007 – food-based standards for food other than lunch</p> <p>September 2008 – primary schools to meet new nutrient-based standards for school lunches</p> <p>September 2009 - secondary schools to meet new nutrient-based standards for school</p>	<p>Enshrined in 2007 and 2008 School Food Regulations</p>	<p>Ofsted monitors the way schools approach healthier eating as part of regular inspections of schools.</p>



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The differences and implications for PHN?

- Devolution?
- State as central focus?
- Policy rebound.



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The Policy equivalent of a BOGOF

- Two policy promises and you get no action but you have to do the work.
- Example of regulation and FFOs.
- Healthy Weight; Healthy Lives' mentions fast food outlets and promises actions within planning regulations to allow local authorities to manage proliferations of fast food outlets:*
 - *Local authorities can use existing planning powers to control more carefully the number and location of fast food outlets in their local areas. The Government will promote these powers to local authorities and PCTs to highlight the impact that they can have on promoting healthy weight, for instance through managing the proliferation of fast food outlets, particularly in proximity to parks and schools (p 18).*
- At the time of writing (October 08) there was a review of the planning regulations for Policy Planning Statement 6 (PPS6) for town centres and none of the proposed changes specifically mention fast food or healthy food provision.
- * HM Government. (2008). Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A cross-government strategy for England. Department of Health and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, London.



So

- No one nutrition policy -spread among other policies. And diluted!
- NO overall public health nutrition focus based on population.
 - Measures to improve public health, relating as they do to such obvious and mundane matters as housing, smoking, and food, may lack the glamour of high-technology medicine, but what they lack in excitement they gain in their potential impact on health, precisely because they deal with the major causes of common disease and disabilities. [Geoffrey Rose, The strategy of preventive medicine. Oxford (Oxford University Press), 1992, here: 101].
- Nutrition is losing out to physical activity, obesity and sustainability -The purpose is to assess reversible risk - not risk factors [GR].
- Choice editing and reformulation is working -partnerships with industry.



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So ii

- Devolution is adding to food policies with a nutrition component albeit diluted and spread but it is more than under the centralising tendency of Westminster.
- Differences in operation and philosophy eg Co-ops and schools in Wales; FSMs in Scotland.
- Obesity and sustainability are obscuring other public health agendas.
- Food industry and food business are back at the negotiating table.
- Food welfare is not being addressed. Minimum nutrient standards and costs for healthy basket, relative poverty!
- Poor outcome research/evaluation- with missed opportunities.



Links with DH England

- Business4Life (b4L), an industry consortium spearheaded by the Advertising Association, has been named as a Government partner in an effort to encourage healthy lifestyles and tackle obesity in the UK. The industry contribution will be worth in excess of £200 million over four years and will be in addition to the Government's own £75 million, three year advertising and marketing campaign.
- Initial supporters include AMV BBDO, AOL UK, Britvic, BskyB, Cadbury, CBI, Channel 4, Coca-Cola, Discovery Networks UK, Fitness Industry Association, five, Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB), ITV, Kellogg's, Kraft, Kids Industries, Limelight sports, Mars, Munro & Forster, National Schools Partnership, Nestlé, OMD, Outdoor Advertising Association, PepsiCo, PruHealth, RadioCentre, Ryvita/Associated British Foods, Tesco, Turner Entertainment Network, Unilever, Viacom, Virgin Media Television and World Media Group.



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Re- labeled?

- The third life as in having a second life is a (virtual) world created by its residents where you can create the rules.
- Here we have a policy world created by policy makers.
- Third life as I say it is appropriate.?!?!?!?



Home

Register Interest

Coalition Members

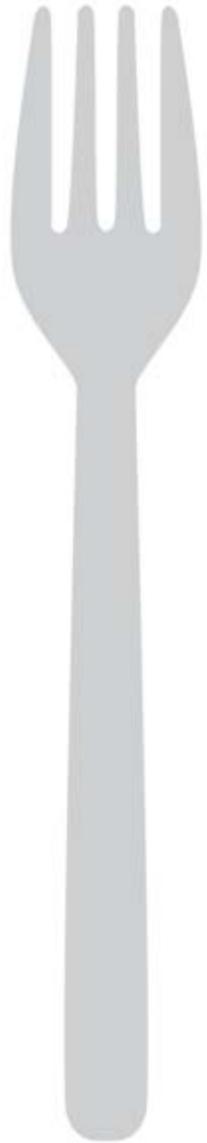
Welcome

Founded by the Advertising Association, business4Life is a coalition of companies representing the food and drink, retail, media, advertising, fitness and health industries, which are partnering with Government to support its Change4Life movement.

Details of member company activities and business4Life initiatives will follow shortly.

To find out more about the business4Life coalition and how your company might get involved, contact us here info@business4Life.co.uk.

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