

Catherine Hunt
Clerk
National Assembly for Wales
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Ein cyf / Our ref: AJ/MH/KP

☎:

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Margaret Hanson

Ebost / email

Dyddiad / Date: 17th August 2015

Dear Ms Hunt

Re: Health and Social Care Consultation on the Public Health (Wales) Bill

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has considered the draft Public Health (Wales) Bill at the meeting of its Strategy, Planning and Partnership Sub Committee meeting on 27th July 2015.

We are broadly supportive of the Public Health (Wales) draft Bill and wish to endorse the views of the Directors of Public Health (attached), which have previously been sent to you. In particular, we would like to echo their disappointment, along with other bodies, that the regulation of food standards in settings such as pre-school and care homes are not included in the Public Health (Wales) draft Bill.

Poor nutrition is one of the leading causes of avoidable ill health and premature death in Wales currently. The risk of many chronic conditions, in particular coronary heart disease, obesity, diabetes and some cancers, is increased by poor diet. Diet-related disease has been estimated to cost the NHS around £6 billion a year and the cost of obesity alone has been predicted to reach £49.9 billion per year by 2050. Wales faces some of the biggest challenges in the UK, with the Child Measurement Programme reporting prevalence of overweight or obese children to be 26% in reception year.

Good nutrition in very young children is essential for future growth development and health, while poor nutrition in care homes is likely to undermine the residents' health and well-being and increase the need for health services intervention. Therefore, food standards can make an important impact on public health.

The public sector caters for some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in society. Maintaining food standards, particularly in health settings such as hospitals which seek to keep people well, can inform and influence the public's perception of what foods are considered acceptable and healthy. We believe that this aspect could be strengthened so that there is no missed opportunity to place mandatory food standards on all food or drink supplied by or procured for settings directly controlled, commissioned or inspected by public sector organisations. In addition, over 300,000 people are currently employed in the public sector in Wales. Offering healthy choices as the norm to them, and the public they serve, could make a significant contribution to the obesity problem.



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Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

We would recommend that this particular issue is reconsidered as progress of the Bill moves forward.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Margaret Hanson

Vice Chair of BCU Health Board

Chair of Strategy, Planning & Partnership Sub-committee

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