



An Roinn Sláinte  
Department of Health



# National Obesity Policy and Action Plan Implementation Progress Report 2016-2019



# Executive Summary

## Introduction

*“A Healthy Weight for Ireland”, the Obesity Policy and Action Plan, was launched in September 2016 under the auspices of the overall Healthy Ireland Framework (‘Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025’). It was developed in recognition of the growing need for a co-ordinated policy response to the increasing problem of obesity in Ireland and the increasing burden placed on individuals and society.*

The Policy covers a 10-year period up to 2025 and aims to reverse obesity trends, prevent health complications and reduce the overall burden for individuals, families, the health system, and the wider society and economy. The Plan recognises that obesity is a complex, multi-faceted problem and needs a multi-pronged solution, with every sector of society playing its part. Childhood obesity is a key priority under the Policy, as is reducing the inequalities seen in obesity rates, where children (and adults) from lower socioeconomic groups have higher levels of obesity.

Implementation of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan is overseen by a cross-sectoral and cross-Departmental group, the Obesity Policy Implementation Oversight Group, chaired by the Department of Health and established in October 2017. Two sub-groups have been established to date, one on Healthy Eating and one on Reformulation.

This first Progress Report under the Obesity Policy and Action Plan provides an outline of progress in the 60 actions identified in the Plan, over the periods 2016-2017 and 2018-2019.

## Action Areas - ‘Ten Steps Forward’

The actions under the Obesity Policy and Action Plan are grouped under ‘Ten Steps Forward’ that would be taken to prevent overweight and obesity. Some of the main developments under these ‘Ten Steps’ are outlined below:

*Step 1: Embed multi-sectoral actions on obesity prevention with the support of government departments and public sector agencies*

Successfully achieving the aims of the OPAP requires active engagement from many sectors, and co-ordinated action across sectors is vital.

An Obesity Policy Implementation Oversight Group (OPIOG) was established under the chair of the Department of Health. It is comprised of representatives from the following Departments and Agencies: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Children and Youth Affairs; Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection; Department of Education and Skills; Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government; University College Cork (Centre for Diet and Health Research); the Food Safety Authority of Ireland; the Health Service Executive (HSE) - including the National Clinical Lead for Obesity; and *safefood*. The OPIOG held its inaugural meeting in October 2017.

New Nutrition Standards for School Food, with an initial focus on school meal programmes funded by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, were developed and published in September 2017. New Healthy Eating Guidelines, Healthy Ireland Food Pyramid and supporting Healthy Food for Life resources were published in 2016 and disseminated and communicated in 2017, including to all primary and post-primary schools.

A Sugar-Sweetened Drinks Tax was introduced on 1st May 2018. The aim of the tax was to reduce consumption of added sugar in drinks, and to encourage reformulation of products by the drinks industry. An evaluation of the impact of the tax is currently under way. Indications are that the tax has already had an impact in terms of encouraging companies to reduce the sugar content in their products.

*First 5- A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028* was published in November 2018 by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

A Healthy Eating, Active Living Programme was established as a Policy Priority Programme within the HSE and a three-year National Implementation Framework for the programme was finalised.

### *Step 2: Regulate for a healthier environment*

In November 2018 a Healthy Ireland Stakeholder Forum on the Built Environment was held, planned in partnership with the Departments of Health, Transport, Tourism and Sport, and Housing, Planning and Local Government, together with Sport Ireland.

A behavioural study on how best to make the posting of calories meaningful to customers and more likely to impact on their behaviours was published by the ESRI. Calorie posting legislation was in preparation in the Department of Health.

### *Step 3: Secure appropriate support from the commercial sector to play its part in obesity prevention*

A Reformulation sub-group of the OPIOG was established in January 2018. The work of the sub-group is primarily to set targets on reformulation of food and drink. Workshops between the Reformulation sub-group and food sector stakeholders took place in 2018 and 2019. Following this, a draft Reformulation Roadmap was considered by the OPIOG, and a consultation with stakeholders was held on the draft Roadmap in November/December 2019. Behavioural research on portion sizes was carried out by the ESRI on behalf of the Department in 2019.

Codes of Practice for food and beverages promotion, marketing and sponsorship have been developed involving representatives from the food industry, advertising sector, statutory agencies, and various Government Departments. The Codes of Practice were published in 2018 and monitoring and implementation has posed a challenge, particularly in the digital environment. Participation in a forthcoming EU Joint Action is expected to assist with Ireland's approach to this.

### *Step 4: Implement a strategic and sustained communications strategy that empowers individuals, communities and service providers to become obesity aware and equipped to change, with a particular focus on families with children in the early years*

A five-year child obesity communications campaign – START – from *safe food*, the HSE and Healthy Ireland was launched in 2017. It aims to inspire, empower and support parents to start building and persist with healthy lifestyle habits in the family to prevent childhood obesity. The Healthy Ireland communications and citizens engagement campaign was launched in January 2018, and continues to seek to encourage people to make small, healthy changes under the themes of Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Mental Wellbeing.

### *Step 5: The Department of Health, through Healthy Ireland, will provide leadership, engage and co-ordinate multi-sectoral action and implement best practice in the governance of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan*

The OPIOG met on a regular basis from its formation in 2017. The Healthy Eating and Reformulation Sub-Groups met regularly to develop Healthy Eating Guidelines for the 1-5 year-olds and a reformulation Roadmap. Both of these were well advanced by the end of 2019.

### *Step 6: Mobilise the health services to better prevent and address overweight and obesity through effective community-based health promotion programmes, training and skills development and through enhanced systems for detection and referrals of overweight and obese patients at primary care level*

The HSE is implementing the Making Every Contact Count brief intervention framework, which aims to capitalise on the opportunities that occur every day within the health service to support people to make healthy lifestyle choices.

The 2015 GP contract for the provision of free care to children under 6 years provides for “health and wellness” checks at ages 2 and 5 which include weight and height monitoring. Also, as part of the 2019 GP GMS Agreement, GPs will avail of Making Every Contact Count with their GMS/GP Visit Card patients.

The Obesity Programme Clinical Advisory Group was established in the HSE. The HSE Breastfeeding Action Plan 2016-2021 is being implemented, and the HSE Food, Nutrition and Hydration Policy for Adults in Acute Settings was launched in 2019.

*Step 7: Develop a service model for specialist care for children and adults*

Professor Donal O’Shea was appointed the National Clinical Lead for Obesity in September 2017, and a Clinical Advisory Group and National Obesity Management Clinical Programme were established. Work advanced over the ensuing period in relation to the development of a Model of Care for the management of overweight and obesity.

*Step 8: Acknowledge the key role of physical activity in the prevention of overweight and obesity*

‘Get Ireland Active! The National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland’ (NPAP) is one of the key developments arising from Healthy Ireland, and implementation of that Plan is well underway in collaboration with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and a range of other stakeholders. Summary and Implementation Reports have been published for 2017 and 2018.

*Step 9: Allocate resources according to need, in particular to those population groups most in need of support in the prevention and management of obesity, with particular emphasis on families and children during the first 1,000 days of life*

The Healthy Ireland Fund was established in 2017 with an annual budget of €5 million, subsequently increasing to €6 million, and has supported a number of actions focused on determinants and factors associated with obesity. Access to the standardised HSE Community Cooking Programme, Healthy Food Made Easy, was expanded.

A new HSE pregnancy and child health website, [www.mychild.ie](http://www.mychild.ie), was launched in December 2018, along with a set of three books for parents and parents-to-be.

*Step 10: Develop a multi-annual research programme that is closely allied to policy actions, invest in surveillance and evaluate progress on an annual basis.*

While the development of a multi-annual obesity research plan has not yet been progressed, there have been a number of research initiatives in this area, including the IUNA (Irish Universities’ Nutrition Alliance) surveys. The IUNA National Children’s Food Survey II (for 5-12 year-olds) was published in September 2019. The Healthy Ireland and COSI (Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative) surveys provide periodic research information on obesity. The 2019 Healthy Ireland Survey found that 37% of those surveyed were overweight and 23% were obese, which showed continued stabilisation. The COSI survey published in 2020 (based on findings from 2018/2019) found an overall level of overweight and obesity of 19% for primary schoolchildren, but with greater prevalence among girls and significantly greater for children in DEIS schools. The Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework, published in 2018, has developed a set of performance indicators to monitor future progress with the Healthy Ireland agenda, including on overweight and obesity.

Additionally, an evaluation of the OPAP, including an Implementation Evidence Paper, is in preparation, as is the development of a Food-Environment Policy Index (Food-EPI) for Ireland based upon an international assessment framework. The Food-EPI will assess and compare the extent of implementation of government policies for creating healthy food environments against international best practice.

## Conclusion

The above examples illustrate that progress has been made in a number of areas since the introduction of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan, and they emphasise the value and importance of a multi-disciplinary and whole-of-government approach to tackling the problem of obesity. However, it is also clear that there is a lot more to be done over the lifetime of the Plan. The evidence of the Healthy Ireland Surveys in recent years indicates that while the rates of overweight and obesity in Ireland have stabilised in recent years, they remain at too high a level. Combatting overweight and obesity is a long-term challenge without quick or easy solutions. While this Progress Report covers the period to the end of 2019, the events of 2020 have made clear to us all the importance of protecting health and wellbeing in general, and of addressing the risk factors of chronic diseases such as obesity. It is clearly the case that implementation of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan will continue to be a high priority in the years to come.



## National Obesity Policy and Action Plan

### Implementation Progress Table

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 1: Embed multi-sectoral actions on obesity prevention with the support of government departments and public sector agencies</b>		
<p><b>Action 1.1</b></p> <p>As an integral part of the 'healthy school' concept, develop and implement a 'whole of school' healthy lifestyle programme (including, but not limited to, the curriculum, on nutrition, physical activity, smoking, alcohol and mental wellbeing), incorporating knowledge, skills and greater understanding of environmental factors that influence children and young people. National food standards for primary schools will be developed.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DES, DOH, SSP, safefood, HSE, schools</p>	<p>With effect from September 2017 all post primary schools offer a Junior Cycle Wellbeing area of learning. This area of learning makes the school's culture and ethos and commitment to wellbeing visible to students. It includes learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It emphasises that wellbeing is a multi-faceted concept and that efforts to promote student wellbeing require a whole-school approach. The Statements of Learning (SOLs) in the new Junior Cycle Framework include SOLs relating to physical activity and the role of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices. The Wellbeing programme began with 300 hours of timetabled engagement in 2017 and builds up to 400 hours by 2020 as the new junior cycle is implemented fully in schools. Schools can include elements relating to healthy lifestyles in their Wellbeing Programme.</p> <p>New Nutrition Standards for School Food, with an initial focus on school meal programmes funded by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, were developed and published in September 2017.</p> <p>New Healthy Eating Guidelines, Healthy Ireland Food Pyramid and supporting Healthy Food for Life resources were published in 2016 and disseminated and communicated in 2017, including dissemination of the new Guidelines to all primary and post-primary schools.</p>	<p>The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023 was launched by the Minister for Education and Skills in July 2018. The policy statement provides an overarching structure encompassing existing, ongoing and developing work in the area of wellbeing for primary and post primary schools.</p> <p>The policy outlines a multicomponent, whole school preventative approach to the promotion of wellbeing with interventions at both universal and targeted levels. This policy requires that a Wellbeing Promotion Process is developed and implemented, through the use of the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process, in all schools by 2023. The whole school approach encompasses four key areas of wellbeing promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture and Environment</li> <li>• Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)</li> <li>• Policy &amp; Planning</li> <li>• Relationships &amp; Partnerships.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action 1.2</b></p> <p>Develop and implement an integrated and holistic health and wellbeing model for early childhood services (Outcome 1 in <i>Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures</i>).</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DCYA, Childcare committees in LCDCs, HSE, DES, TUSLA, DSP</p>	<p>The Healthy Ireland Smart Start (HISS) Programme seeks to build the capacity of staff in the Early Learning and Care (ELC) sector to encourage the adoption of positive health behaviours in children from as early an age as possible. The HISS Programme is specifically designed for children over three and encompasses all aspects of a healthy lifestyle: nutrition and healthy eating, oral health, physical activity, emotional well-being and literacy as well as health and safety. To date, the HISS Programme has been delivered to over 15% of ELC services nationally and continues to reach a further 5% of ELC services in the country each year.</p>	<p><i>First 5- A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028</i> was published in November 2018. It commits to review and enhance the delivery of the HISS Programme by revising content to address gaps, extending the Programme to children under 3 and expanding the Programme to all ELC Services. The timeline to deliver on this was set out in the First 5 Implementation Plan (2019-2021). Under the Implementation Plan, the Review of HISS was to commence in 2019 and conclude in 2020, with recommendations for an enhanced programme in ELC settings.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 1: Embed multi-sectoral actions on obesity prevention with the support of government departments and public sector agencies</b>		
<b>Action 1.3</b> Develop and implement training programmes, including brief interventions, and courses on overweight and obesity, including anti-stigma, for and by teachers.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DES, Teacher colleges, HSE		Action not planned to be commenced during the first half of the Plan.
<b>Action 1.4</b> Provide potable water in all learning centres (from preschool and crèches to universities and adult learning centres) and ensure all new builds provide potable water on opening.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DES, pre-schools, schools, colleges, universities	<p>In relation to new school buildings and extensions (primary and post-primary) the Department of Education and Skills (DES) provides a tap drinking water system as a matter of routine.</p> <p>In existing buildings if a school has concerns about the quality of its drinking water, the matter can be addressed by the relevant local authority and Irish Water. If any quality issues are identified as a result of a test, the Department of Education and Skills provides funding to address the issue.</p> <p>If a school does not have a tap drinking water supply, the Department of Education and Skills will provide funding to address.</p> <p>Regulations for Early Learning and Care providers are provided for in legislation (Childcare (Early Years Services) Regulations, 2016) and inspections are carried out by Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate. Regulation 22 (Food and Drink) provides that <i>'a registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.'</i></p>	<p>A Quality and Regulatory Framework to accompany the Childcare (Early Years Services) Regulations was published in 2018. This sets out the requirements for statutory compliance with the regulations. This Framework stipulates that <i>'clean and safe drinking water is available and accessible to children at all times'</i>.</p>
<b>Action 1.5</b> Expand parenting programmes that incorporate healthy lifestyle and behavioural change.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE	<p>A Healthy Eating, Active Living Programme was established as a Policy Priority Programme within the HSE and a three-year National Implementation Framework for the programme was finalised. The Programme supports parents, families and communities in supporting a more coordinated approach to prevention and early intervention in child obesity.</p>	<p>At a community level, via the LCDCs parenting programmes on healthy lifestyles are funded by the Healthy Ireland Fund.</p> <p>Under "First 5, a Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028", a new Parenting Support Policy Unit has been established in the DCYA, which will lead the development of a new model of parenting supports.</p> <p>At community level there are many parenting programmes funded, including by the HSE.</p>

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<b>Step 1: Embed multi-sectoral actions on obesity prevention with the support of government departments and public sector agencies</b>		
<p><b>Action 1.6</b></p> <p>Examine expansion of current effective programmes, such as Food Dudes and The Incredible Edibles and develop further opportunities for collaboration with other government departments and state agencies in the promotion of fresh produce and its role in a healthy, balanced diet (Foodwise, 2025; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2015).</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DAFM, DOH, DSP, DF, DES</p>	<p>The aim of the Incredible Edibles programme (co-funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), Department of Education and Skills (DES) and Healthy Ireland) is to educate students about growing fruit and vegetables and to increase their knowledge of food origin and quality.</p> <p>The programme was expanded in 2017 with a 40% increase in the budget.</p> <p>The Food Dudes Programme has operated in Ireland through the EU School Fruit &amp; Vegetables Scheme since 2009. Food Dudes reached c. 825 schools &amp; 130,000 pupils in 2016/2017.</p> <p>In 2017, DAFM submitted to the EU a revised strategy for the implementation of the school scheme in Ireland for the 2017/18 to 2022/23 school years.</p>	<p>In 2019, over 1,300 schools and 48,000 students participated in Incredible Edibles.</p> <p>Food Dudes reached c125,000 children in 2017/2018 through its Food Dude Boost Programme (which has a stronger focus on the junior cycle in primary schools).</p> <p>In 2017/18, the first year of the revised strategy, the traditional Food Dudes Boost programme completed a full cycle and a variance on the traditional programme model (to further fine-tune the Food Dudes Boost programme in line with children's developmental stages) was piloted in 2018 and successfully implemented in the 2018/19 programme year.</p> <p>The key principle underpinning the implementation model of this new programme strategy is sustainability – i.e. sustaining the increases in consumption gained during the intervention period in year 1 through to maintenance years 2 and 3 (as part of a 3-year cycle) with accompanying measures adapted to appeal even more strongly to particular age groups.</p> <p>In the last two years, 1,400 schools and over 200,000 pupils have participated in the healthy eating programme.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bordbia.ie/primary-school/food-dudes/">https://www.bordbia.ie/primary-school/food-dudes/</a></p>
<p><b>Action 1.7</b></p> <p>Monitor compliance with the WHO Code of Practice on the Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (WHO, 1981).</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, FSAI</p>	<p>The Food Unit, DOH working with the FSAI and the HSE oversee this policy action.</p>	<p>The principles of the WHO Code of Practice are reflected in EU Delegated Regulation 2016/127, which came into force in February 2020. In advance of this, the FSAI established a working group in relation to the advertising and marketing practices of infant formula in Ireland. The FSAI has also drafted a guidance document to assist health professionals and industry and prepared an assessment tool to assist the checking of marketing materials for compliance. The FSAI also routinely follows up on any incidences of non-compliance identified.</p>

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<b>Step 1: Embed multi-sectoral actions on obesity prevention with the support of government departments and public sector agencies</b>		
<b>Action 1.8</b> Develop proposals on the rollout of evidence-based fiscal measures to support healthy eating and lifestyles.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, DF		Action not yet progressed.
<b>Action 1.9</b> Develop proposals for a levy on sugar sweetened drinks.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, DF	In 2016, the Department of Health published an internal working paper to inform consideration of a sugar sweetened drinks levy from a health perspective. The planned introduction of the tax was announced in Budget 2017 and a comprehensive public consultation was held. Following this, the tax was implemented in the Finance Act 2017.	The Sugar-Sweetened Drinks Tax commenced on the 1st of May 2018.
<b>Action 1.10</b> Review the evidence, including the effectiveness of implementation, for fiscal measures on products that are high in fat, sugar and salt to reduce their consumption.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HRB, IPH, DF, academic institutions		A framework for a proposal to evaluate the impact of the Sugar-Sweetened Drinks Tax was progressed by the Department of Health.  <i>safefood</i> conducted a review of the sugar and caffeine content of energy drinks, one type of sugar sweetened beverage: <a href="https://www.safefood.net/research-reports/energy-drinks-survey">https://www.safefood.net/research-reports/energy-drinks-survey</a>
<b>Action 1.11</b> Develop joint proposals with relevant departments such as, but not limited to, DAFM, DES, DF, DELG, DJEI and HSE, on measures to incentivise healthier behaviours.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, As appropriate	The Accelerated Capital Allowances scheme introduced in the Finance Bill 2017 provides a benefit to employers who incur capital costs on equipment and/or buildings used for the purposes of providing fitness facilities to employees.	



OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 2: Regulate for a Healthier Environment</b>		
<p><b>Action 2.1</b></p> <p>Develop guidelines and support materials for those working in developing the built environment for urban development and planning in relation to reducing the obesogenic environment.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE, County/City Councils, DHPLG</p>		<p>To explore the progression of this Action, together with the Implementation group of the National Physical Activity Plan which contains an overlapping action, a Stakeholder Forum was held on November 21st, 2018.</p> <p>This Forum, entitled <i>Connect, Collaborate, Create; Co-Designing Healthier Communities, A Healthy Ireland Stakeholder Forum on the Built Environment</i>, was attended by a wide range of stakeholders involved in planning and developing public spaces, as well as those concerned with the impacts of the built and natural environment on health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Physical Activity Group and OPIOG are considering the next steps in this process.</p>
<p><b>Action 2.2</b></p> <p>Develop, implement and evaluate calorie posting legislation.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, Public sector organisations</p>		<p>A behaviour study on how best to make the posting of calories meaningful to customers and more likely to impact on their behaviours was published by the ESRI.</p> <p>HRB SpHERE research project '<i>Factors influencing the implementation of calorie menu labelling policy in Irish public hospitals</i>' is underway within the HSE.</p> <p>Calorie posting legislation was in preparation in the Department of Health in 2019.</p>
<p><b>Action 2.3</b></p> <p>Review EU consumer information labelling of food products with a view to its application in the Irish market.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, FSAI, DAFM</p>		<p>Front of Pack (FOP) labelling was the subject of a Joint meeting in October 2018 between the Working Group of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed - Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (FIC) &amp; Advisory Group on the Food Chain, Animal and Plant Health. Member States and industry representatives shared experiences of FOP schemes.</p>
<p><b>Action 2.4</b></p> <p>Provide a submission to the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland's Review of the Children's Communication Code on advertising of energy dense food and drinks.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH</p>		<p>The BAI commenced a review of the effectiveness of the Children's Commercial Communications Code in 2019. This will be followed by a public consultation on a revised Code, and a submission will be made to that process.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 3: Secure appropriate support from the commercial sector to play its part in obesity prevention.</b>		
<b>Action 3.1</b> Agree food industry reformulation targets and review progress.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, IBEC, FDII, FSAI, DAFM	An Obesity Policy and Implementation Oversight Group was set up and held its first meeting on 19th October 2017. The group agreed that a Reformulation sub-group be established.	A Reformulation sub-group of the OPIOG was established in January 2018. The work of the sub-group is primarily to set targets on reformulation of food and drink. It will also make recommendations on addressing reduction of portion sizes and on monitoring and validation procedures.  Workshops between the Reformulation sub-group and food sector stakeholders took place in 2018 and 2019.  Following this, a draft Reformulation Roadmap was considered by the OPIOG, and a consultation with stakeholders was held on the draft Roadmap in November/December 2019.
<b>Action 3.2</b> Develop, implement and evaluate a code of practice for food and beverages promotion, marketing and sponsorship.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, Food industry, HSE, DCYA, <i>safe</i> food, FSAI, advertiser organisations	A code of practice for food and beverages promotion, marketing and sponsorship was developed involving representatives from the food industry, advertising sector, statutory agencies, and various Government Departments.  The Codes seek to ensure that children are not exposed to inappropriate marketing, advertising or sponsorship associated with these kinds of food and drink products, and that healthier food choices are actively promoted.	The Codes of Practice were published in February 2018.  The development of an implementation and monitoring framework for the Codes has taken longer than expected with respect to determining the most robust monitoring mechanism to preserve the integrity of the implementation of the Codes for the public nutritional health. This work will now also be progressed under the EU Joint Action "Best ReMaP" (see under Action 5.1).
<b>Action 3.3</b> Establish a forum with industry to review and implement best practice initiatives towards a healthy food environment.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, Food Industry		Workshops have taken place with the food industry in 2018 and 2019 under Action 3.1.
<b>Action 3.4</b> Develop proposals on the scope of corporate social responsibility relating to obesity prevention promoting overall health and well-being in the workplace.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, DJEI, CSR forum		A National Healthy Workplace Framework is in development and will include measures relating to obesity prevention.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 3: Secure appropriate support from the commercial sector to play its part in obesity prevention.</b>		
<p><b>Action 3.5</b></p> <p>Consider measures to introduce maximum portion sizes for relevant foods and drinks, on a voluntary basis initially. The effects of measures implemented should be regularly monitored.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, Food Industry</p>		<p>Measures around reducing portion sizes have been considered under the remit of the Reformulation subgroup of the OPIOG and the preparation of the Draft Roadmap.</p> <p>Behavioural research on portion sizes was carried out by the ESRI on behalf of the Department in 2019 and it is expected that the results will be published in 2020.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 4: Implement a strategic and sustained communications strategy that empowers individuals, communities and service providers to become obesity aware and equipped to change, with a particular focus on families with children in the early years.</b>		
<p><b>Action 4.1</b></p> <p>Develop consecutive five year evidence-based communication strategies aimed at creating behaviour change, including the development of print, online and social media resources. The strategies should place a special emphasis on reducing inequalities. The strategy will bring a consistent approach with regards to information and messages across a number of sectors, including schools</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE, <i>safe food</i></p>	<p>A new child obesity campaign – START – from <i>safe food</i>, the HSE and Healthy Ireland was launched in 2017, called the START campaign. It aims to inspire, empower and support parents to start building and persist with healthy lifestyle habits in the family to prevent childhood obesity. The first phase of the campaign advertising featured on TV, radio, video on demand, outdoor and digital platforms.</p> <p><a href="https://www.safe food.net/start">https://www.safe food.net/start</a></p>	<p>Two mass-media phases of the START campaign were delivered in 2018 supported by other activity throughout the year. These focused on encouraging a higher spend on fruit and vegetables by parents and on reducing screen time for children by encouraging play.</p> <p>Both phases of the START campaign in 2019 focused on encouraging parents to reduce the amount of treat foods given to children.</p> <p>A new Healthy Ireland communications and citizens engagement campaign, was launched in January 2018. This campaign will provide the overall strategic framework for progressing this Action.</p> <p>The Healthy Ireland campaign continued in 2019.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/healthy-ireland/">https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/healthy-ireland/</a></p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 5: The Department of Health, through Healthy Ireland, will provide leadership, engage and co-ordinate multi-sectoral action and implement best practice in the governance of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan.</b>		
<p><b>Action 5.1</b></p> <p>The Department of Health will provide overall stewardship for the Policy and continue to work collaboratively with international organisations including the WHO and the EU, as well as on a North-South basis.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH</p>	<p>Obesity Policy Implementation Oversight Group (OPIOG) established under the Chair of the Department of Health. It is comprised of representatives from various Government Departments and agencies. OPIOG inaugural meeting held on the 19th of October 2017.</p> <p>The Healthy Eating and Reformulation sub groups were also established.</p>	<p>The OPIOG continued to meet on a regular basis during 2018 and 2019.</p> <p>The Healthy Eating and Reformulation sub groups met regularly to develop Healthy Eating Guidelines for the 1-5 year olds and a reformulation Roadmap.</p> <p>Healthy Ireland continues to be represented on the EU HLG on Nutrition and Physical Activity; the Steering Group on Prevention and Promotion and collaborates with the WHO on the Marketing to Children Network as well as implementing the WHO European Food and Nutrition Action Plan (2013-2020). The FSAI represent Ireland on the WHO Salt Network.</p> <p>The Department was also involved, commencing in 2018, in preparation for a new Joint Action under the 3rd EU Health Programme called Best ReMaP (standing for Best practice in Reformulation, Marketing and Public Procurement) to commence in 2020, co-leading on a Work Package on “Best Practices in reducing marketing of unhealthy food products to children and adolescents”.</p>
<p><b>Action 5.2</b></p> <p>Develop and implement a nutrition policy and action plan.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, All stakeholders</p>		<p>Scoping work was underway in 2018-2019 with the Institute of Public Health and WHO.</p>
<p><b>Action 5.3</b></p> <p>Develop a suite of healthy eating guidelines for the general population as well as for one to five year olds, and a weight loss food guide.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, All stakeholders</p>	<p>At the request of the Minister, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) Scientific Committee are developing Scientific Recommendations for Healthy Eating for 1-5 year olds.</p>	<p>Work commenced on developing Healthy Eating Guidelines for the 1-5 year old age group, under the aegis of the Healthy Eating Sub-Group of the OPIOG. This work is being undertaken in tandem with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) Scientific Recommendations. Arising from this, National Food Standards for Early Learning Centre Settings, including a toolkit for implementation will be developed.</p>
<p><b>Action 5.4</b></p> <p>Establish a multi-stakeholder partnership to share knowledge and experience on healthy weight initiatives.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, safe food, NGOs, HSE, TUSLA</p>		<p>Existing partnerships, such as the All-Island Obesity Forum, will be used to collaborate and share knowledge.</p> <p>The All-island Obesity Action Forum met and hosted two annual workshops in June and November of each year.</p> <p>The All-island Food Poverty Network met three times and hosted a workshop on an annual basis to discuss inequality in access to healthy food. The network published two newsletters on a yearly basis.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 5: The Department of Health, through Healthy Ireland, will provide leadership, engage and co-ordinate multi-sectoral action and implement best practice in the governance of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan.</b>		
<b>Action 5.5</b> Continue to develop, implement and review the healthy lifestyles programme in schools.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DES, DOH, HSE schools, children and young people, teachers, parents	This action is linked to action 1.1 – healthy school concept.  Wellbeing promotion which includes healthy lifestyles in schools continues to be a priority for the Department of Education and Skills.  DES issued a Circular in 2016 on Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Primary Schools.  The Department of Health, <i>safefood</i> and HSE provide support to DES in order to promote healthy lifestyles. This includes support on the topics of nutrition and physical activity.	Wellbeing Programmes implemented in all post primary schools with effect from September 2017 for Junior Cycle students.  The Department of Health, <i>safefood</i> and HSE provide support to DES in order to promote healthy lifestyles. This includes support on the topics of nutrition and physical activity.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 6: Mobilise the health services to better prevent and address overweight and obesity through effective community-based health promotion programmes, training and skills development and through enhanced systems for detection and referrals of overweight and obese patients at primary care level.</b>		
<b>Action 6.1</b> Include obesity prevention and care as part of the GP contract. This will build on the previous developments for the under six years of age GP contract.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE, GPs, allied healthcare professionals	Under the 2015 GP contract for the provision of care to children under 6 years of age, medical practitioners are required to take an active approach toward promoting health and preventing disease through the provision of periodic assessments to child patients. Assessments involve the recording of age, gender, weight and height, and plotting on a centile chart at ages two and five, and taking appropriate follow-up action, including where appropriate, provision of health promotion advice, brief intervention and support, or referral to specialist services.	As part of the 2019 GP GMS Agreement, GPs will avail of Making Every Contact Count with their GMS/GP Visit Card patients, providing an opportunity for GPs to reinforce healthy lifestyle messages including healthy eating and physical activity. In addition, physical examinations form part of the scheduled care reviews in the treatment of chronic disease under the Chronic Disease Management (CDM) Programme including calculation of BMI. The CDM Programme is part of the 2019 GP GMS Agreement and commenced on a phased basis in January 2020.
<b>Action 6.2</b> Strengthen the capacity of primary care teams to support obesity prevention and evidence based weight management services.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, GPs, allied healthcare professionals	HSE National Clinical Lead for Obesity appointed (see under Action 7.1)	Obesity Programme Clinical Advisory Group established. Work commenced with Clinical Advisory Group and stakeholders to review and align the current HSE/ICGP Weight Management Algorithm with strengthened process for identification and assessment of weight in primary care, supported by an agreed risk stratification model and patient care pathway.



OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 6: Mobilise the health services to better prevent and address overweight and obesity through effective community-based health promotion programmes, training and skills development and through enhanced systems for detection and referrals of overweight and obese patients at primary care level.</b>		
<p><b>Action 6.3</b></p> <p>Develop and implement appropriate child development and growth monitoring system with appropriate recording and response programmes. This will build on the work on the under six years of age GP contract, the development of the Child Health Information System and the National Healthy Childhood Programme – a universal child health framework.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE</p>		See under Action 6.1
<p><b>Action 6.4</b></p> <p>Implement the brief intervention model (outlined in <i>Making Every Contact Count</i>) as per <i>Healthy Ireland</i> in the Health Services Implementation Plan. A training programme is in development with a target to begin delivery to the first cohort early in 2017 (this will include a focus on physical activity, healthy eating and weight management).</p> <p>A programme of work has commenced with universities and training institutions to integrate chronic disease prevention into undergraduate training programmes for all healthcare staff.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, GPs, allied healthcare professionals</p>	<p>The HSE is implementing the Making Every Contact Count brief intervention framework which aims to capitalise on the opportunities that occur every day within the health service to support people to make healthy lifestyle choices.</p>	<p>Making Every Contact Count e-learning training programme available on <a href="http://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/making-every-contact-count/">www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/making-every-contact-count/</a> . Annual targets for training uptake agreed.</p> <p>Nationally agreed suite of Making Every Contact Count actions included in Healthy Ireland implementation plans of each CHO and Hospital Group. Making Every Contact Count national implementation group established to provide structured support and coordination to local implementation.</p> <p>Chronic Disease Prevention Module (which incorporates Making Every Contact Count e-learning) to be integrated into all undergraduate programmes for health professionals developed with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Module launched and delivery in HEIs commenced.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 6: Mobilise the health services to better prevent and address overweight and obesity through effective community-based health promotion programmes, training and skills development and through enhanced systems for detection and referrals of overweight and obese patients at primary care level.</b>		
<b>Action 6.5</b> Integrate obesity prevention, early detection and self-care into integrated care programmes.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE	HSE National Clinical Lead for Obesity appointed (see under Action 7.1)	Work in progress with Adult Elective Care Team and National Clinical Advisor and Group Lead (NCAGL) Primary Care to begin integration of weight management into new electronic care pathways directing referrals from primary care to elective care.  Work in progress to establish links with Mental Health Division – Physical Health of Service Users, Adult Scheduled Care, Primary Care & Chronic Disease Leads, National Cancer Control Programme to begin exploring how to integrate weight management into existing pathways of care.
<b>Action 6.6</b> Review and implement the HSE-ICGP weight management algorithms for children and adults and their healthy weight management guidelines before, during and after pregnancy.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, GPs		Work in progress with National Children's Hospital Group; National Clinical Programme for Paediatrics; Integrated Care Programme for Paediatrics; NCAGL Primary Care (GP Contract); Women & Children's Programme; NURTURE Programme to agree proposed Patient Flow and learn how weight management can be integrated into existing care pathways / models of care with Women & Infants Programme.
<b>Action 6.7</b> Develop and integrate evidence based, effective, community-based health promotion programmes targeted at high-risk groups within all community health organisations.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, All stakeholders		Continued expansion of access to a standardised HSE Community Cooking Programme – Healthy Food Made Easy. In 2018 the programme was delivered to 6,285 participants.  Expansion of access to Men on the Move – community based 12-week health promotion programme.  Ongoing collaboration with Sport Ireland and Local Sports Partnership network to increase opportunities for and participation in physical activity in communities.
<b>Action 6.8</b> Include services users (including children and young people) in the development and implementation of programmes in which they are involved.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, DCYA, HSE, All stakeholders	Findings from DCYA consultation with children & young people - Healthy Lifestyles: Your Say used to inform development of START campaign.	There are two Comhairle na nÓg members on the National Physical Activity Plan Sub-Committee for Children and Young People led by the Department for Transport, Tourism and Sport.  The development process for First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028 included a consultation with young children involving 113 children across 12 ELC and primary school settings.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 6: Mobilise the health services to better prevent and address overweight and obesity through effective community-based health promotion programmes, training and skills development and through enhanced systems for detection and referrals of overweight and obese patients at primary care level.</b>		
<b>Action 6.9</b>  Develop quality assurance guidance for the commercial weight loss sector.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, Weight loss organisations, HSE		Action not yet progressed.
<b>Action 6.10</b>  Investigate the role of new drug therapies in reducing over weight and obesity.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE (NCPE)		Work in progress in the HSE to have Liraglutide 3mg included in MMU Reimbursement list.
<b>Action 6.11</b>  Implement and monitor the forthcoming breastfeeding action plan. Implementation will require investment in whole-time equivalents across acute and primary care settings in addition to enhanced training, provision of supports to mothers and social marketing.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE	The HSE is implementing the Breastfeeding Action Plan 2016-2021.	Continued implementation of Breastfeeding Action Plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of training and CPD to enable staff promote breastfeeding and support initiation and continuation of breastfeeding as appropriate to their role.</li> <li>• Implementation of HSE policies to support breastfeeding in Maternity and Neonatal Units and in Primary Care services</li> <li>• Coordination of quality improvement initiatives to increase breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates</li> <li>• National oversight, target setting and monitoring of breastfeeding rates in hospital and community settings.</li> <li>• Provision of information and support to mothers via <a href="http://www.breastfeeding.ie">www.breastfeeding.ie</a> – Ask the Expert service.</li> <li>• Provision of Section 39 funding to national organisations (ALCI, La Leche, CIUDI, Friends of Breastfeeding) to build capacity to support and promote breastfeeding through training and CPD for peer-to-peer Breastfeeding Counsellors and Lactation Consultants.</li> <li>• Public awareness through coordination and delivery of <i>Every Breastfeed Makes a Difference</i> campaign and activity to promote National Breastfeeding Week.</li> </ul> In September 2018, Limerick City and County, supported by Healthy Ireland, launched “We’re Breastfeeding Friendly”; a campaign that helps to improve the health and wellbeing of breastfeeding mothers, babies and their families by encouraging businesses, organisations and communities to become “Breastfeeding Friendly”. In order to join, participants must fulfil certain criteria, including that breastfeeding must be acceptable in all areas of their premises open to the public.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 6: Mobilise the health services to better prevent and address overweight and obesity through effective community-based health promotion programmes, training and skills development and through enhanced systems for detection and referrals of overweight and obese patients at primary care level.</b>		
<b>Action 6.12</b> Develop and implement training programmes and courses on overweight and obesity, including anti-stigma, for staff of all functions and disciplines in health services.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DES, HSE, Training Colleges		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Weight for Children e-learning module included in NURTURE training suite – target audience Public Health Nurses, Area Medical Officers, Practice Nurses.</li> <li>• Engagement with ICGP via Clinical Advisory Group and <i>safe food</i> to revise and update existing e-learning module – target audience GPs.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 6.13</b> Review and improve the quality of food in hospitals; develop a food and nutrition policy for hospitals.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE	The HSE is developing a Food, Nutrition and Hydration Policy for Adult Patients, Staff and Visitors in Acute Hospitals.	HSE <i>Food, Nutrition and Hydration Policy for Adults in Acute Settings</i> completed, with associated Toolkit to support implementation. The policy was formally launched by Minister Harris in April 2019.  The policy applies to care of all adult patients in Acute Hospitals including Inpatients, Emergency Departments, and Day Procedure Units.  The Healthy Eating, Active Living Programme established the Healthier Food Environment Advisory Group in January 2018 to progress work to improve the food environment across the health services.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 7: Develop a service model for specialist care for children and adults</b>		
<b>Action 7.1</b> Appoint a clinical lead on obesity to provide a model of care for children and adults and oversee its implementation.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, RCPI, relevant stakeholders	Professor Donal O'Shea was appointed the National Clinical Lead for Obesity in September 2017.	Clinical Advisory Group (CAG) established. Programme initiation document and work-plan approved by CAG and HSE.
<b>Action 7.2</b> Develop standards, clinical guidelines and quality assurance programmes for obesity and weight management services in the health sector.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE, HIQA, NCEC		Action not yet progressed.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 7: Develop a service model for specialist care for children and adults</b>		
<p><b>Action 7.3</b></p> <p>Plan for and support the development of specialist, consultant-led multidisciplinary care, based on the chosen model of care and the RCPI report, for adults on an equitable geographic basis (one within each hospital group) and one for children at national level.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, DOH, RCPI, relevant stakeholders</p>		<p>Investment Proposal for a 3-Year period to uplift existing surgical units (SUVH &amp; GUH) to meet baseline of 400 Bariatric surgeries per year prepared.</p> <p>Work in progress with National Diabetes Programme to complete a Health Technology Assessment for Metabolic Surgery.</p>
<p><b>Action 7.4</b></p> <p>Develop and implement integrated clinical care models for adults and children (including chronic diseases and services for people with disabilities) with appropriate clinical care pathways for all patients.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE</p>		See under Action 6.5.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 8: Acknowledge the key role of physical activity in the prevention of overweight and obesity.</b>		
<p><b>Action 8.1</b></p> <p>Implement the National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland.</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> DOH, DTTS, All stakeholders</p>	<p>'Get Ireland Active! The National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland' (NPAP) is one of the key developments arising from Healthy Ireland, and an implementation group was set up under the co-chair of the Department of Health and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.</p> <p>Both a summary Progress Report and a full Implementation Report were published in 2017.</p>	<p>Summary and Implementation Report for 2018 published in 2019. Report for 2019 in development.</p>



OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 8: Acknowledge the key role of physical activity in the prevention of overweight and obesity.</b>		
<b>Action 8.2</b>  Develop guidelines to reduce sedentary levels in the population.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, Relevant stakeholders		<p><i>Under First 5- A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028, Guidelines on Sedentary Behaviour, including Guidelines on Screen Time for Early Childhood will be developed.</i></p> <p>Under Action 28 of the National Physical Activity Plan, a scoping exercise for national guidelines on sedentary behaviour has been commenced; discussions with Research Services in the Department of Health commenced with regard to further progression in 2019-2020.</p> <p>An Evidence Base Hub with responsibility for the development of guidelines is in development; it is envisaged that it may consider development of the proposed national guidelines.</p>
<b>Action 8.3</b>  Develop a specific physical activity plan to address the needs of severely overweight and obese individuals.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE, Relevant stakeholders		Action not yet progressed.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 9: Allocate resources according to need, in particular to those population groups most in need of support in the prevention and management of obesity, with particular emphasis on families and children during the first 1,000 days of life.</b>		
<b>Action 9.1</b>  Review progress in achieving the inequalities target, with a view to assessing the need for additional targeted actions for disadvantaged groups.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH		<p>Coordination of Ireland's participation in WHO-COSI supported through Section 39 funding for operations of National Nutrition Surveillance Centre. Data collection in participating schools completed in Q3/4 2018.</p> <p>The annual Healthy Ireland Survey collects data to measure progress towards the various policy initiatives under the Healthy Ireland Framework.</p> <p>The 2015 Healthy Ireland Survey found that 26% of those living in the most deprived decile were obese compared with 16% for those living in the least deprived decile.</p> <p>The 2019 Healthy Ireland Survey found that 65% of those living in deprived areas were overweight or obese compared with 55% of those living in affluent areas.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 9: Allocate resources according to need, in particular to those population groups most in need of support in the prevention and management of obesity, with particular emphasis on families and children during the first 1,000 days of life.</b>		
<p><b>Action 9.2</b></p> <p>Scale up effective community based programmes with a focus on disadvantaged areas to enhance knowledge and skills with regard to healthy eating and active living. Special emphasis should be placed on providing guidance, advice and training to parents on healthy food and healthy eating.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE, TUSLA, LCDC, DCYA, DSP</p>	<p>In 2017/18 the Healthy Ireland Fund supported 18 separate actions focused on Nutrition in disadvantaged areas and with various target groups in 13 different counties, via both Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) and Children and Young Persons Services Committees (CYPSC). The total investment amounted to €153,000. These actions were around various areas of interest, for example: young traveller women, children under 5, community cooking programmes, healthy pregnancy, homeless families and young people.</p>	<p>The second round of the Healthy Ireland Fund for 2018/19 has allocated €166,000 to LCDCs and CYPSCs for nutrition related actions in 14 different counties. The actions supported in the second round continue to focus on the areas identified in round 1, new initiatives that have been funded are for the development of a local area food policy and a DEIS school initiative.</p> <p>Continued expansion of access to a standardised HSE Community Cooking Programme – Healthy Food Made Easy. In 2018 the programme was delivered to 6,285 participants.</p> <p>Expansion of access to Men on the Move – community based 12-week health promotion programme.</p> <p>Ongoing collaboration with Sport Ireland and Local Sports Partnership network to increase opportunities for and participation in physical activity in communities.</p> <p>In 2018, <i>safefood</i>, in partnership with the HSE, reviewed and updated 101 Square Meals, which supports various cooking and healthy eating initiatives with the community.</p> <p>In June 2019 the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs launched “What Works”, an initiative which aims to maximise the impact of evidence informed prevention and early intervention to improve the lives of children and young people. A dedicated website and data hub were launched as part of the initiative.</p> <p><i>safefood</i> funded 13 projects from 2016-18 through the Community Food Initiatives Programme on the island of Ireland. As well as increasing awareness and knowledge around healthy eating, these projects promoted enhanced food skills including: healthy shopping, improved meal-planning and budgeting. A new programme was established for 2019-2021 that included 14 projects and a greater emphasis on networking with other community groups. Nine of those projects are being delivered in the Republic of Ireland.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 9: Allocate resources according to need, in particular to those population groups most in need of support in the prevention and management of obesity, with particular emphasis on families and children during the first 1,000 days of life.</b>		
<p><b>Action 9.3</b></p> <p>Develop programmes to improve healthy eating for mothers, pre-conception, and for infants and children up to two years.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> HSE</p>	<p>Regulations for Early Learning and Care providers are provided for in legislation (Childcare (Early Years Services) Regulations, 2016) and inspections are carried out by Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate.</p> <p>Under these Regulations, ELC services are required to develop a Policy on Healthy Eating in line with resources developed by Department of Health, the HSE and <i>safefood</i>, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food and Nutrition Guidelines</li> <li>• Serving Size Guidelines</li> <li>• Sample 3 Week Menu Plan</li> </ul>	<p>HSE NURTURE programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and CPD to upskill health professionals working with parents and children from pre-conception up to 3 years incorporates healthy eating and physical activity components, to improve their capacity to provide advice and guidance to service users.</li> <li>• Breastfeeding.ie – Ask the Expert service provides information and support for breastfeeding mothers to continue breastfeeding</li> </ul> <p>Mychild.ie, launched in December 2018, is a new HSE pregnancy and child health website and set of three books for parents and parents-to-be. Mychild.ie is designed to be a one-stop-shop where parents can access accurate and trusted information and advice on pregnancy and all the way through the first three years of their child's life. It provides evidence-based information across a range of topics including healthy eating and physical activity, to improve parenting knowledge and skills.</p> <p>HI SMART Start (HISS) programme:</p> <p>Health promotion training for staff working in Early Childhood Education Care services.</p> <p>A commitment was made in <i>First 5, A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028</i>, to review and enhance the delivery of the HISS Programme by revising content to address gaps, extending the Programme to children under 3 and expanding the Programme to all ELC Services. The First 5 Implementation Plan (2019-2021), published in 2019, aims for an enhanced programme to be in place by 2021.</p>

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 10: Develop a multi-annual research programme that is closely allied to policy actions, invest in surveillance and evaluate progress on an annual basis.</b>		
<p><b>Action 10.1</b></p> <p>Develop a multi-annual obesity research plan within the context of the overall research plans of the Department of Health in particular those elements that focus on population health.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HRB</p>		Action not yet progressed.

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 10: Develop a multi-annual research programme that is closely allied to policy actions, invest in surveillance and evaluate progress on an annual basis.</b>		
<b>Action 10.2</b> Develop proposals for implementation of a nutrition health surveillance system.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, safe food, DAFM	There are a number of research instruments looking at food consumption surveys IUNA surveys – 1-4yr olds; 5-12yr olds, 13-17 yr olds; 18-64yrs and 65yrs + (2003-2011)	<p>In 2018, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine made an award of €1,343,013 to a research consortium consisting of UCD, TU Dublin and CIT to conduct a (second) National Teen's Consumption Survey. The national dietary survey will be conducted with 500 teenagers (13-18 years) in Ireland. Data will be collected on intake and composition of foods, body weight, lifestyle, food choice, and blood and urine. The database will be an important resource for government agencies concerned with developing healthy eating guidelines and obesity prevention and with food safety risk assessment.</p> <p>The Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA) National Children's Food Survey II (5-12 yr olds) was published in September 2019.</p> <p>In DAFM's 2019 research call, a call topic for a National Adult Nutrition Survey was included, which would assist with obtaining and updating representative data on food consumption, lifestyle and the health status of adults in Ireland. Funding of €1.2 m was awarded to IUNA for this research and has been underway since 1 March 2020. <a href="https://www.iuna.net/">https://www.iuna.net/</a></p>
<b>Action 10.3</b> Investigate the effectiveness (including cost effectiveness) of obesity interventions and programmes.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HRB, IPH		Action not yet progressed.
<b>Action 10.4</b> Develop and implement a national physical activity surveillance system.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH		The NPAP implementation group has decided that the development of a single national surveillance system capable of covering a sufficiently large cohort of the population and all age ranges may not be feasible. There are already a wide range of surveys in existence, managed by a number of bodies ranging from the Dept of Health (HI Survey, HBSC), Sport Ireland, Department of Transport Tourism And Sport (Irish Sport Monitor, CSPPA), the University sector (TILDA, COSI) and the CSO (Census, Men and Women in Ireland), to European bodies compiling EU wide data (EHIS, completed in Ireland by the CSO). Work has been completed on compiling comprehensive baselines from the results available from these surveys. The RSG has also overseen submissions to the WHO (Physical Activity Factsheet, 2018 and the HEPA PAT (Health-enhancing physical activity policy audit tool) for Ireland).

OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 10: Develop a multi-annual research programme that is closely allied to policy actions, invest in surveillance and evaluate progress on an annual basis.</b>		
<b>Action 10.5</b> Sustain ongoing obesity surveillance through Healthy Ireland and COSI as a means of monitoring progress.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE	The 2017 Healthy Ireland Survey found that 39% of those surveyed were overweight and 23% were obese. The survey also asked questions on weight management and on other health behaviours classified by weight category.	Coordination of Ireland's participation in WHO-COSI supported through Section 39 funding for operations of National Nutrition Surveillance Centre. Data collection in participating schools completed in Q3/4 2018.  The 2019 Healthy Ireland Survey found that 37% of those surveyed were overweight and 23% were obese. The survey also asked questions on weight management and on other health behaviours classified by weight category.
<b>Action 10.6</b> Develop an obesity database for surveillance and planning purposes within the dataset arising from the GP contract.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HSE	HSE-PCRS collate returns from GP practices that identify the number of children who receive services under the GP under-6 contract. Contract stipulates that children should receive a Health and WellBeing check, including height and weight monitoring at age 2 and 5. At the end of 2017 254,578 children under 6 held a GP Visit Card.	Database not yet available in relation to the health and wellbeing assessment.  The numbers of children under 6 holding a GP visit card were 259,261 at the end of 2018 and 261,056 at the end of 2019.
<b>Action 10.7</b> Enhance the research capabilities, training and capacity to provide for knowledge translation.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HRB, IPH, HSE, <i>safefood</i> , academia		Action not yet progressed.
<b>Action 10.8</b> Develop an obesity 'knowledge translation' programme to inform the Action Plan.  <b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, HRB, IPH, HSE		Action not yet progressed.



OPAP Action and Roles	2016-2017	2018-2019
<b>Step 10: Develop a multi-annual research programme that is closely allied to policy actions, invest in surveillance and evaluate progress on an annual basis.</b>		
<p><b>Action 10.9</b></p> <p>Align targets with outcome indicators in the Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework. Develop a suite of performance indicators to monitor progress on the implementation of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, All stakeholders</p>		<p>The Outcomes Framework was published in 2018. As part of the Indicator Set, under “Health Status – Lifestyle and Behaviour Risks” it includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overweight and Obesity – measuring the proportion of adults who are overweight or obese</li> <li>• Physical Activity Levels – measuring the percentage of adults and children meeting physical activity guidelines</li> <li>• Breastfeeding Rates – measuring breastfeeding percentage rates (exclusively and non-exclusively) at first Public Health Nurse visit and at the Public Health Nurse follow-up visit at three months.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action 10.10</b></p> <p>Develop an annual bulletin or score card on progress in relation to the Obesity Policy and Action Plan and disseminate results.</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, CHDR</p>		<p>The Department has requested the Health Research Board Centre for Diet and Research at University College Cork (CHDR) to develop an evaluation for the Obesity Policy and Action Plan. This evaluation will primarily consider progress made with implementing the various actions in the national Plan. On this basis, an Implementation Evidence Paper was in preparation by CHDR in 2019, together with a score card of the short term goals of the OPAP.</p> <p>In 2019 CHDR was also at an advanced stage of completion of a Food-Environment Policy Index (Food-EPI) for Ireland. The Food-EPI is an assessment of national implementation of policies and actions for creating healthy food environments (and thus implementing obesity and other NCD prevention) against international best practice, to identify gaps and prioritise actions to address these gaps. It is based on an international assessment framework developed by INFORMAS (International Network for Food and Obesity/NCDs Research, Monitoring and Action Support).</p>
<p><b>Action 10.11</b></p> <p>Conduct a mid-term review of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan</p> <p><b>Lead/Partners:</b> DOH, CHDR</p>		<p>Mid-term review to be carried out in 2021.</p>

## Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronyms	Definition
ALCI	Association of Lactation Consultants of Ireland
BAI	Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
Best ReMaP	Best practice in Reformulation, Marketing and Public Procurement
BMI	Body Mass Index
CAG	Clinical Advisory Group
CDM	Chronic Disease Management
CHDR	Centre for Health and Diet Research
CHO	Community Healthcare Organisation
CIT	Cork Institute of Technology
COSI	Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSPPA	Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DELG	Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DF	Department of Finance
DHPLG	Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
DJEI	Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
DOH	Department of Health
DSP	Department of Social Protection
DTTS	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
EHIS	European Health Interview Survey
ELC	Early Learning and Care
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU HLG	European Union High Level Group
FDII	Food Drink Industry Ireland
FIC	Food Information to Customers
FOOD EPI	Food-Environment Policy Index
FOP	Front of Pack
FSAI	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
GMS	General Medical Services
GP	General Practitioner

Acronyms	Definition
GUH	Galway University Hospital
HBSC	Health Behaviour in School Aged Children
HEI	Higher Education Institute
HEPA PAT	Health-enhancing physical activity policy audit tool
HI	Healthy Ireland
HIQA	Health Information and Quality Authority
HISS	Healthy Ireland Smart Start
HRB	Health Research Board
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICGP	Irish College of General Practitioners
HTA	Health Technology Assessment
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers' Confederation
INFORMAS	International Network for Food and Obesity/NCDs Research, Monitoring and Action Support
IPH	Institute of Public Health
IUNA	Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
NCAGL	National Clinical Advisor and Group Lead
NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
NCEC	National Clinical Effectiveness Committee
NCPE	National Centre for Pharmacoconomics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPAP	National Physical Activity Plan
OPAP	Obesity Policy and Action Plan
OPIOG	Obesity Policy Implementation Oversight Group
PCRS	Primary Care Reimbursement Service
RCPI	Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
SOL	Statement of Learning
SPHeRE	Structured Population and Health-services Research Education
SSE	School Self-Evaluation
TILDA	The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing
TU DUBLIN	Technical University Dublin
TUSLA	The Child and Family Agency
UCD	University College Dublin
WHO	World Health Organization

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