

Minutes of OPIOG Meeting 24 March 2021, 3.30pm

Held remotely

Present

Laura Magahy	Department of Health (Chair)
Angela Robinson	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Prof Ivan Perry	University College Cork
Anne-Marie Brooks	Department of Children, Equality, Integration, Disability and Youth
Martin Colreavy	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Prof. Donal O'Shea	HSE
Sarah O'Brien	HSE
Dr Wayne Anderson	FSAI
Joana Caldeira Fernandes da Silva	<i>safefood</i>
Frank McGeough	Department of Social Protection

Apologies

Dr. Pamela Byrne	FSAI
Dr. Catherine Conlon	<i>safefood</i>
Ronan Kielt	Department of Education

Department of Health officials

Ciara Mellett
Ursula O'Dwyer
Seamus O'Reilly
Caitríona Connolly
Ashley Lowry

1. Welcome/introductions

The Chair introduced herself as this was her first meeting as Chair. Each person present also introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 24th September 2020 were approved. It was agreed that the minutes of this and subsequent meetings would be made available online once approved.

3. Department update

Developments since previous meeting

SOR updated the meeting on some of the important developments since the last meeting, including:

- The launch of the Healthy Eating Guidelines resources and Children's Food Pyramid for 1-4 Year-Olds on 1st October
- The publication of the OPAP Progress Report in February
- World Obesity Day Press Release on 4th March and the launch of the HSE Model of Care
- The consultation on Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling, Nutrient Profiling, Origin Labelling and Date Marking, launched by the FSAI in collaboration with Food Unit and DAFM and closing on March 25th
- In the Department of Health, the appointment of a new interim Secretary General, Robert Watt, in January

Update on "Ten Steps" of OPAP

UOD updated the meeting on the progress to date and gaps under the "Ten Steps" under which the 60 actions of the OPAP are grouped. Gaps identified included:

- Nutrition education in schools
- Regulating for a better environment
- The Voluntary Codes for non-broadcast media- industry have asked for a guidance document to be prepared – this is being worked on through the Best-ReMaP Joint Action
- Communications on adult obesity
- Possible prioritisation of calorie posting legislation
- Healthy Workplaces Strategy – currently being finalised
- Childhood obesity services and breastfeeding
- Food Poverty – develop a scoping paper for the next meeting

In comments, AMB stressed the great collaboration between her Department and DoH, and referenced the current work being carried out, including the development of Nutrition Standards for ELCs and the pilot meals programme. The Aistear Curriculum Framework was under review, and there may be an opportunity to strengthen it for healthy eating for under-6s. AR stated in relation to Food Dudes that after engaging with the European Commission, it was agreed to pilot delivery to DEIS schools only, and this has been happening since January and will continue over the Easter period – over 71,000 packs have been delivered. A lot of work was also being done under the School Milk Scheme. FMcG stated that the School Meals Scheme was running as normal, and the Hot Meals scheme was to be expanded to another 189 schools. WA referred to Farm To Fork and said that 240 submissions had been received to date on the FSAI labelling consultation. JC advised that *safefood* were preparing for the next phase of the START campaign, with a focus on small changes and reduction in treats, and were also preparing to launch the website "Weigh To Live" which would have meal plans over

12 weeks to lose weight. Today, a *safefood* report was being launched on Vegetarian Meat Substitutes, and Catherine Conlon was participating in media interviews on this today.

The Chair summed up the actions that were now needed:

- Breastfeeding Position Paper
- Food Poverty Scoping Paper (DCEIDY/HSE/*safefood*)
- Paper to be scoped on Communications campaign for adult obesity (DOH/HSE/*safefood*)
- Healthcare Sub Group (see below)
- Nutrition Policy Actions
- Proposed Food in Schools Forum (see below)

4. Update on HSE Model of Care

DOS presented on the Model of Care. For the first time it is now a priority in the HSE Corporate Plan, in Sláintecare, and in the Obesity Policy and Action Plan. It aims for integrated delivery of early intervention, weight management and obesity treatment across the lifespan. It sets out how the healthcare for children, young people and adults living with overweight and obesity in Ireland should be organised and resourced now and in the future. It takes a population health approach to managing obesity, recognising the wider drivers of obesity such as genetics, environment and socioeconomic status. The obesity MOC is aligned with the Adult Chronic Disease Model of Care. The levels of the model for adults and children were outlined, the main services currently available under each and also the key gaps, which were a priority for 2021-24, and funding to address those gaps is being reviewed. DOS stressed that the MOC would not work if people were put back after treatment into the same obesogenic environment; the cross-sectional action that is discussed at OPIOG is crucial in terms of addressing this.

5. Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme

Due to time pressure presentation and detailed discussion was postponed until the next meeting. The Chair stated that the focus would be on putting in extra supports in areas of deprivation. It is expected to be rolled out in the second half of the year and would be managed by local authorities and Local Community Development Committees.

6. Proposed Food In Schools Forum

Again, due to time pressure, detailed discussion was postponed until the next meeting. UOD stated that nominations would be sought for the proposed forum.

7. Update on Sub-Groups

Reformulation Sub-Group

IP stated that the draft Reformulation Roadmap was virtually complete. It was intended to be a living document. It was coming to the point where some hard decisions would have to be made on what was feasible and realistic and on identifying priorities. He felt that salt should be prioritised, building on the work carried out by the FSAI. It was agreed to convene a meeting of the Sub-Group to assess priority actions and funding requirements and bring it back to the next OPIOG meeting.

Healthy Eating Sub-Group

Update postponed due to time pressure. A meeting of the sub group was held on 8th March.

8. Membership of OPIOG and Sub Groups

Draft Terms of Reference for a Healthcare Sub Group were circulated. The aim of the group would be to facilitate cross-agency collaboration to bring a coordinated approach to the management and treatment of obesity, including the implementation of the HSE Model of Care in the context of the OPAP.

It was also proposed to expand the membership of the OPIOG to include service user/patient representation. It was noted that this would be a departure from what has been a public sector based group. It has also been proposed to invite the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (from the Sport side) to send a representative to OPIOG.

It was agreed to consider further and take soundings on these issues in advance of the next meeting.

9. AOB/Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the OPIOG would meet again in May, on a date to be decided.