



Fact Sheet

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

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Community food initiatives contributing to the Scottish Government Obesity Route Map for Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland

What is this fact sheet about?

Through improved access to healthy food, communities are improving the health of vulnerable individuals and families. This factsheet explores how community food and health activities are contributing towards national priorities around overweight and obesity that are described within the Obesity Route Map for Scotland.

The Obesity Route Map

In common with most of the developed world, Scotland is experiencing an obesity epidemic. In 2008, 26.8% of adults in Scotland were obese and 65.1% were overweight; for children the corresponding rates were 15.1% and 31.7%. It is estimated that the total cost of obesity in 2007/8, for Scottish society, was in excess of £457 million. It is also estimated that by 2030 adult obesity in Scotland could reach over 40% even with current health improvement efforts¹. In February 2010 the Scottish Government published its long-term obesity strategy, *Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight*. This strategy set out a 20-30 year aim 'for the majority of Scotland's population to be in a normal weight range throughout adult life, thus avoiding the adverse consequences of overweight/obesity'.

"Working together across all the public sector, the third sector, and business, we can make the necessary changes that can impact on the way we lead our lives."

An Outcomes Focused Approach

In 2007, the Scottish Government launched *Scotland Performs*, a national performance framework designed to capture change and progress against priority issues for Scotland. This outcomes-focused approach to managing performance encourages us to focus on outcomes (the changes) and not just outputs (the activities).

To support this, NHS Health Scotland, with partners, is developing a range of tools to help describe the contribution of different sectors in achieving health improvement outcomes. Within this range of tools a *Healthy Weight Outcomes Framework* (HWOFF) has been developed.

In March 2011 the Scottish Government launched the *Obesity Route Map Action Plan* and *indicators* that will measure the progress of these actions.

In May 2010 the Scottish Public Health Network (ScotPHN), at the request of the Scottish Government, convened a series of meetings to allow stakeholders from all sectors to discuss the Obesity Route Map. At these meetings stakeholders were invited to 'sort' the actions in terms of the degree of effort required to implement them and the potential impact they may have. A report of the meetings convened by ScotPHN was produced.

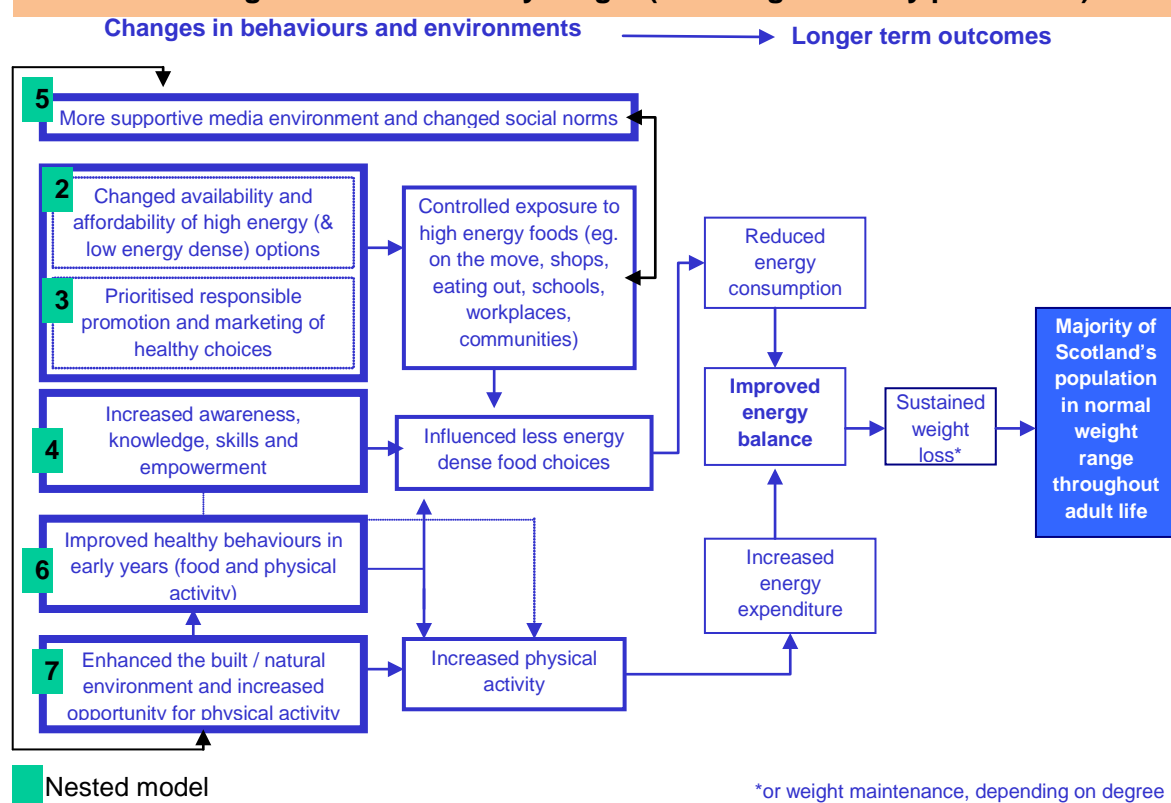
This report, along with NHS Health Scotland's *Healthy Weight Outcomes Framework* (more information below), has informed the Action Plan and the Indicator Framework.

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In March 2010, CFHS hosted an event with NHS Health Scotland that explored the draft HWOFF. This event captured the views and experiences of community food initiatives and informed further development of the framework. Those at the event welcomed the framework and viewed it as a tool which would help them to highlight their contribution locally.

The framework is made up of a *strategic* logic model² and nine *nested* logic models³. Logic models were used, as this approach aims to provide a 'roadmap' that shows how certain actions are anticipated to lead to short, medium and long term outcomes. Each model has been developed using high-level UK and international evidence. More details can be found at www.healthscotland.com/scotlands-health/evaluation/planning/index.aspx. The HWOFF will also be available from the above link shortly.

Model 1: Strategic model for healthy weight (overweight/obesity prevention)



This fact sheet focuses on two of the 'nested models':

Model 2b: Increased availability and affordability of low energy options

Model 4: Increased awareness/knowledge/skills and empowerment

The activities and outcomes described within the **Healthy Weight Outcomes Framework** are aligned to those identified within the **Obesity Route Map**.

Using case studies we have highlighted how some community food initiatives are contributing to achieving outcomes associated with reducing overweight and obesity. We have interpreted the models and shown how community food and health activities fit within the framework. For the purposes of this fact sheet we have used text colours that correspond to the text used in these models, to highlight this.

Increased availability and affordability of low energy options (nested model 2b)

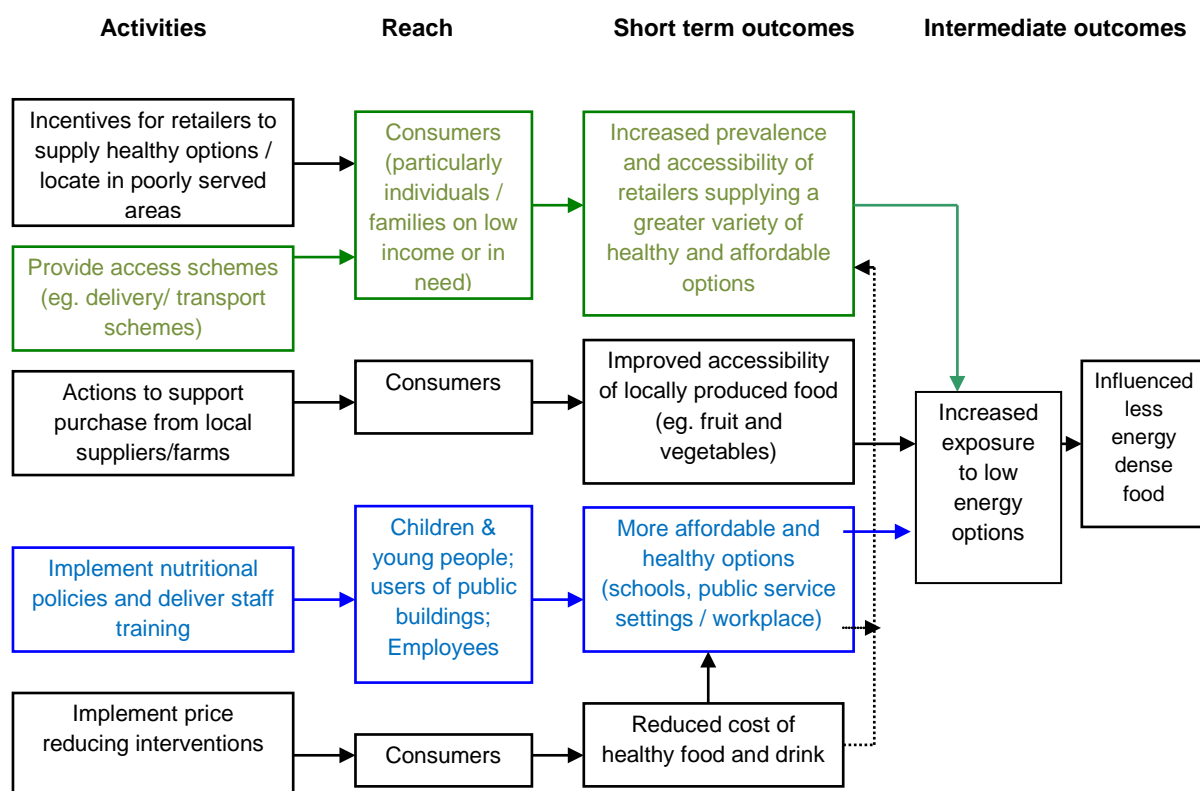
Availability and affordability of healthy, fresh produce can be a barrier for vulnerable communities to access and take up healthy diets.

Food co-ops can address this barrier by **making fresh, healthy, produce available at affordable prices.**

Model 2b: Increased availability & affordability of low energy options

Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership (LCFHP) supports food co-ops in deprived areas of Lanarkshire. In 2010 an evaluation was carried out of a food co-op they support in a deprived area of Airdrie, North Lanarkshire. The evaluation⁴ found that parents reported significant **increases in their children's fruit and vegetable consumption** after the co-op started operating (36% reported four or more portions/day before, compared to 53% after).

Primary 5 children (who were involved in helping with the co-op) were found to have significantly increased their liking for fruit and vegetables, were able to name more varieties and asked their parents to buy more.



Organisations can also make healthy options available by **introducing policies that support healthy environments and training for staff.** In 2009 Loretto Care in Grangemouth received a grant through the CFHS youth funding scheme. Loretto Care works with young people, aged 16-25, in supported accommodation, many of whom have experienced homelessness. The funding was used to run accredited REHIS⁵ food and health (basic nutrition) sessions for the staff and young people, alongside cooking classes. It now runs weekly food groups where the young people are involved in choosing menus and recipes, budgeting, shopping and cooking. As a result of these activities, Loretto Care has **changed the way it assesses the young people's ability to live independently.** Previously, they were considered able to live independently if they could use kitchen equipment safely and heat a ready-made meal. Now, the assessment of food skills has much more **emphasis on being able to cook a meal using basic ingredients** and knowledge around choosing a **healthy balanced diet.**

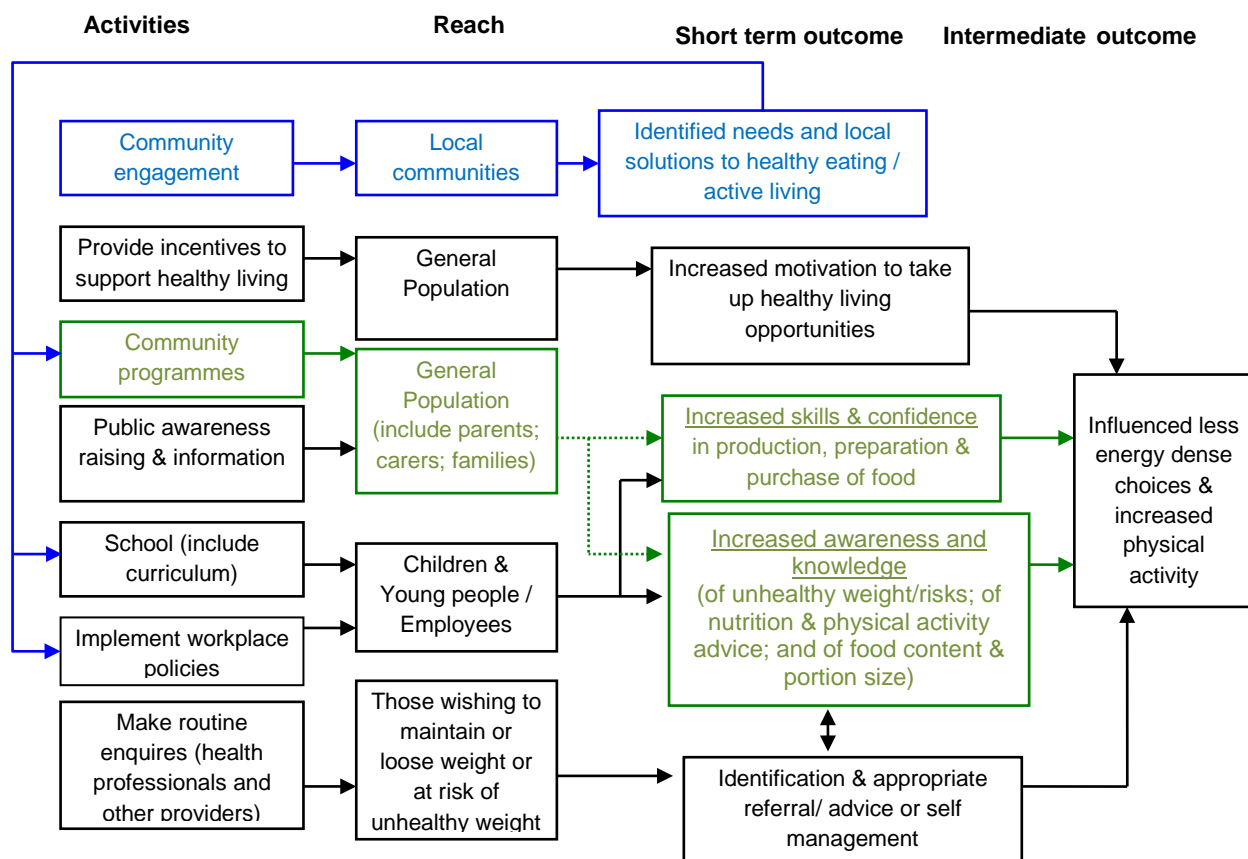
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Increased awareness/knowledge /skills and empowerment (nested model 4)

Raising awareness and knowledge of the importance of healthy eating is crucial for supporting people to make healthy choices. In addition to this people also need improved skills and more confidence to purchase, prepare and cook healthy meals.

Model 4: Increased awareness/knowledge /skills and empowerment

Across Scotland community food initiatives deliver cookery sessions to improve health and tackle inequalities by supporting people to improve their cooking skills. CFHS ran a survey (43 respondents) and hosted a roundtable discussion (21 participants) in February 2011 to explore the experiences of groups or tutors who run cookery sessions. The survey found that community food initiatives are regularly running cookery skills sessions in low-income and vulnerable communities. In the survey community groups reported that they believe the following differences are made through their sessions: participants have **improved confidence** to try new foods (100%); participants have **increased their skills** to prepare healthy meals (98%); participants have increased their confidence to use recipes (98%); participants have improved their cookery skills (96%); participants **eat more fruit and vegetables** (91%); and participants' self-esteem/confidence has improved (91%). The survey informed the roundtable discussion⁶, where this was reinforced by community groups with a wealth of experience in delivering cookery skills sessions. It was also reflected that cookery skills have an impact on increasing cookery session participants' awareness of food and health messages and how to cook healthy meals on a budget.



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Healthy Valleys in South Lanarkshire delivers a range of community food and health initiatives. Through its Grassroots project, which is an infant and maternal health project, Healthy Valleys engages and trains local people to become volunteers. These volunteers are also trained in participatory appraisal, to enable **meaningful engagement and dialogue with disadvantaged communities** to identify what is needed to provide the best outcomes and opportunities for children and families in the rural area.

Advice and guidance on healthy weaning was identified by new parents. The Healthy Weaning Initiative aims to encourage parents to wean their baby by using and preparing fresh foods by **increasing their knowledge, awareness, confidence and skills**. This is done through discussing food and health; cookery demonstrations, tasting sessions; developing budgeting skills; and encouraging parents to network. Peer support is also a key focus. The Healthy Weaning Initiative is part of a continuum of support available for vulnerable families. Healthy Valleys also delivers a Ready Steady, Get Cooking course for primary aged children, Healthy Eating and Teenagers, and a Feeding the Family course that aims to increase the cookery skills and knowledge of food and nutrition for parents, grandparents and carers.



More information

Obesity Route Map: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/17140721/0

Obesity Route Map Action Plan: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/17104457/0

Obesity Route Map Indicators Framework:
www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/17104639/0

Celebrating Outcomes:
www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/fileuploads/cfhscelebratingoutcomes-8255.pdf

References

- ¹ Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight, Scottish Government, 2010
- ² Strategic logic model: this overarching model illustrates behavioural and environmental changes (the intermediate outcomes) that evidence suggests should lead to the Obesity Route Map's main aim (the long-term outcome).
- ³ Nested logic model: these models map how specific actions and activities will lead to certain changes (short-term outcomes).
- ⁴ This evaluation was carried out by Human Nutrition, Glasgow University. More information about the evaluation can be accessed from Dr Alison Parrett, Glasgow University
- ⁵ Royal Environmental Health Institute for Scotland.
- ⁶ A report from the round table discussion and analysis of the survey findings is available from CFHS.