

## Invited Speaker Abstract

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### Title

Public health approaches to weight management in the UK: current and future directions.

### 1. Abstract

The environment is recognized as a key influencer of lifestyle behaviours. Nonetheless much public health discourse relates to the changes that individuals must make, in order to improve their health. Currently in the UK a range of public health approaches are used, some of which are aimed at individuals and others at altering the environment. The context is the high prevalence of overweight and obesity affecting the population especially children, so many of the current approaches are aimed at children and families. These include voluntary as well as mandatory approaches such as the recent tax on drinks containing added sugar. Several consultations have been carried out to ascertain healthcare professional and public views on proposed future measures and a Prevention green paper is currently in consultation.

Using specific examples from the green paper, the pros and cons of different approaches will be described and discussed. In addition the outcomes of ongoing national public health interventions will illustrate some of the complexities involved.

### 2. key references

HM Government (2019) Advancing our health: prevention in the 2020s.

Available

from:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/819766/advancing-our-health-prevention-in-the-2020s-accessible.pdf?\\_ga=2.30126393.74990491.1566507824-2140417715.1502556169](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819766/advancing-our-health-prevention-in-the-2020s-accessible.pdf?_ga=2.30126393.74990491.1566507824-2140417715.1502556169)

HM Government (2018) Childhood Obesity: a plan for action, Chapter 2. Available from: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf)

HM Government (2016) Childhood obesity: a plan for action. Available from: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/546588/Childhood\\_obesity\\_2016\\_2\\_acc.pdf?\\_ga=2.96206490.74990491.1566507824-2140417715.1502556169](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/546588/Childhood_obesity_2016_2_acc.pdf?_ga=2.96206490.74990491.1566507824-2140417715.1502556169)

### 3. key messages

- A range of public health approaches are needed to support individuals with attaining and maintaining a healthy weight.
- A 'health in all policies' approach should be taken to ensure that potential impacts on health, weight and the wider determinants of health are considered in all actions.
- Evaluations of public health approaches need to be robust and specific.

### 4. three questions

- What impact might the political situation have on approaches to public health?
- Which approaches is the Obesity Group of the BDA supportive of and why?