



Obesity Project Newsletter

EU INTERREG IVA

Healthy choices make
YOU feel good



cooperation and working together
for health gain and social well being in border areas

Issue 1 June 2010

UP4IT! Healthy choices make YOU feel good

The CAWT EU INTERREG IVA funded Obesity Project aims to adopt a family focused multi-stakeholder approach to preventing and tackling obesity through the provision of obesity prevention and management programmes.

By highlighting to families the links between poor diet in today's "sedentary" lifestyles, the programmes will focus on wellbeing, diet and activity, providing healthy life skills to support them achieve a healthy family lifestyle now and for the future.

Healthy Lifestyles

This is a prevention programme, to support 250 families with children under 5 years, to reduce the risk of childhood obesity, through the provision of life skills to make positive lifestyle changes. Outcomes for families will demonstrate:

1. an increased ability to identify healthy food options and make healthier food choices
2. increased awareness/knowledge of obesity related health messages
3. increased physical activity levels

An initial family lifestyle assessment will help further define the programme and a family action plan will shape family progress over a three month period which involves regular and follow-up support.

Making a Difference

This is a weight management programme targeting 110 overweight/obese children aged 8 -11 with a family approach. This programme will manage childhood obesity through a holistic approach, incorporating healthy eating, an active lifestyle and positive mental health messages, with outcomes which demonstrate:

1. a maintenance/reduction in BMI/weight in relation to appropriate age/sex weight status;
2. a healthier lifestyle for the whole family unit;
3. an understanding of the health affects of obesity;
4. increased healthy self esteem;
5. an increased knowledge of diet/nutrition;
6. healthier food choices for the whole family unit;
7. an increased awareness of food habits;
8. increased physical activity levels, adopting national recommended levels; and,
9. a reduction in sedentary behaviour.

An initial child assessment alongside the development of personal and family goals will further define the six month programme which involves regular and follow-up support. An action plan will further help to embed changes in every day lifestyle.

1 in 4 nine year olds living in the Republic of Ireland has a raised BMI (Body Mass Index), which means that they are either overweight or obese (Growing Up In Ireland, 2009)

In Northern Ireland 1 in 4 children are overweight in their first year of school (UK Millennium Cohort Study, 2010)

Childhood obesity can lead to Type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, increased risk of colon and other cancers, Osteoarthritis and back pain, social and psychological issues i.e. bullying, low self esteem and depression

Evidence indicated that being obese can reduce life expectancy by up to 9 years (DHSSPS)



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Project Location

The project will be delivered as a pilot along the border regions of the CAWT area (Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh, Down, Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Monaghan, Cavan, Louth).

There will be four pilot sites, one located in each of the following CAWT partner areas: Western Health and Social Care Trust, Southern Health and Social Care Trust, Health Service Executive (HSE) West and HSE Dublin North East. The exact location of each pilot site will be determined through a procurement process.



Project Approach

The multi-faceted nature of obesity and the challenge it poses requires a partnership approach. Collaboration is essential if we are to work towards a vision which shapes societies where healthy lifestyles related to diet and activity are the norm, where health goals are aligned with those related to economy, society, culture and where healthy choices are made more accessible and easy for individuals.

“Obesity is a huge issue in societies here and across the world. We are consulting widely in order to gain the support of the wider community and stakeholders for this project. We plan to work with families to achieve changes with the aim of halting the rise of obesity.”

**Dr Maura O’Neill, Project Chair
Head of Health Improvement, WHSCT**

The Project has secured input and involvement from a range of stakeholders and sectors in the development of the project.

The Project will continue to harness expertise and add value to existing successful programmes within the field of obesity.

The Project will work with the four pilots to look at how we can create a sustainable model.



Project Engagement

A range of targeted local engagement events have been held to plan the project and realise the project approach.

Obesity
Planning
Event
Armagh,
June 2009

Obesity
Evaluation
Workshop
Omagh,
September
2009

Local
Information
Events in
Enniskillen,
Letterkenny,
Armagh and
Ardee, early
2010

Ongoing
promotion
in both local
and
national
press and
radio
stations



Main Achievements to Date

- Development of referral pathway for participating children.
- Development of UP4IT! delivery programme specifications.
- Engagement of over 120 stakeholders through events.



Next Steps

June 2010	Tender advertisement to procure external service provider partnerships in delivery of both programmes in each pilot site.
Summer 2010	Develop performance management framework for successful partnerships.
Autumn 2010	Successful tendering partnerships notified and pilot sites identified.
Autumn 2010	Appoint independent evaluator.



The Project Management structure below reflects the level and range of stakeholder involvement.



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Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) is a cross border partnership between the Western and Southern Health and Social Care Trusts, the Health and Social Care Board and the Public Health Agency and the Republic of Ireland's Health Service Executive Dublin North East and West. CAWT's aim is to improve the health and social wellbeing of the resident population, through practical cross border projects.