

# Dietitians and the Food and Health Agenda-Tell them what we can do!

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# The Food and Health Agenda

- What is it?
- From Farm to Fork
- What concerns RD/BDA/CNG?
- Politics at all levels
  - National x 4
  - Regional
  - Local

# Who Should be Involved?

- 'Key Stakeholders'
- Could be anyone involved in food and/or health
- Never ending list
- Stakeholders are variable - different agendas

# Food and Health Action Plan

- Aims to be cross-government
- Joined up?
- Co-ordinated?
- Highlights good practice
- Commitment to consult 'key stakeholders'
- In fact, all the BDA approach should be

# Consultation and Policy

- Consider:
  - Science
  - Epidemiology
  - Social, cultural and economic factors

# Consultation and Policy

1. Policy Idea for intervention
2. Consultation
3. Policy/Action Plan
4. Implementation and Evaluation

Is it ever this simple?

# Registered Dietitians

- Where do we want to be involved?
  - At all stages in some projects
  - Consulted on others
  - Are we experts? In what?
  - Niche area?
  - What can we offer/add?
  - Not enough to say we must be involved

# Food & Health and RD's

- RD's - experts translating nutrition science into practical and workable policies - nationally and locally
- No vested interest
- Independent/Honest
- Good understanding of all issues - science and social
- Sandwiched - industry and activists
- But do we understand the politics???

# Consider...

- Understand key stakeholders and their position
- Understand dynamics
- Network
- Be visible
- Make ourselves recognised as important advisers/players by input/action/opinions/ability to deliver

# Food and Health

- Vast Area
- But consider:
  - **EXPERTISE** versus **OPINION**
  - BDA/RD not single issue
  - Ability to see broader picture
  - Relate nutrition/ nutrient numbers to food
  - Can find answers [chips in school]

# We have competition

BNF

FDF

CWT

Nut Soc

LACA

HCA

Faculty Public Health

Royal Colleges

Govt Depts

BRC

Sustain

Pressure Groups

Consumer Groups

Environmental Gps

Alternative 'Nuts'

Patient groups

Industry Groups

Local Govt Depts

# FSA

- Nutrient Profiling
- Food Labelling
- Front Pack Signposting
- Allergy
- Salt Campaign
- SACN
- Eat Well/Bogh/Weight Wise etc...

# BDA/CNG/RD

- Do we want to be involved?
- Who represents us?
- BDA centrally - our members = us?
- What is our position?
- All reps need to be consistent
  - Representing BDA membership

# A few examples

- School Meals Review Panel
- Nutrient profiling
- School Lunch Box & CNG
- IDG and GDA Labelling
- Better Hospital Food [and EC]
- Parliamentary Food and Health Forum

& sometimes there as independent

# How are we doing?

- Come a long way in 15-20 years
- Need to maintain presence and advance
- Guard independence and 'good name'
- Reputation - easy to demolish, hard to build
- Reps - be seen, heard and contribute
- Do not fail to deliver

# The next phase

- need to develop champions
- need to develop positions
- need to develop systems
- need to communicate among ourselves

*but hopefully not get bogged down in  
the mechanism*

# BDA Food and Health Policy Group

- Standing Sub group of Council
- Directs work of BDA re. Food/health agenda
- Has support/co-ord from the centre
- Crosses work of BDA
  - Council
  - Specialist Gps
  - PD/PR
  - Comms

# Remit

- Develop and communicate position
- Support and enable members
- Provide Forum for reps/groups/officers
- Training
- Develop CHAMPIONS

# The realities

- Outcome often not ideal
- Often unwanted compromise
- May advise but are we listened to?
- Often political agenda defines what happens
- Often political agenda defines spend, eg. £££££££££ on school fruit and 5 a day vs. other areas

# Who?

- All of us are Ambassadors - wherever we work
- All influence who we work with - positive or negative - and they influence others, sometimes for years
- Very mobile work force
- Very small world
- Develop potential Champions

# Lobbying

- 'The process of trying to influence policymakers in favour of a specific cause'
- 'Communication with elected officials or their staff, which expresses a position on a pending piece of legislation'

# Lobbying ctd...

- Do we really want to do it?
- What's the alternative?
- Same outcome - different route
- Who does it?
- Do we pay others to do it for us?
- Is it risky?
- Are we already getting there anyway???

# TheFuture

- BDA/RD well recognised 'key stakeholders'
- Seen, heard and respected
- Widespread understanding of our ability
- Add to evidence base
- Champions

Its up to us all

Good Luck!