



The Association of Directors of Public Health

ADPH Policy Survey 2016

Results Report

Introduction

The Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) conducts an annual policy survey, which helps us to determine policy priorities and areas of focus for the upcoming year, and ensures that we remain member-led. This summary report details the priority areas that the survey identified.

All Directors of Public Health across the UK were sent the survey, and we received 101 responses. Of these, 82% described themselves as Directors of Public Health, 5% described themselves as Acting Directors of Public Health, and 7% described themselves as Interim Directors of Public Health.

The vast majority of responses (about 90%) were from England. We received 6 responses from Scotland, 2 from Wales, 1 from Northern Ireland and 1 from Ireland (Eire).

Policy Priorities

We identified a number of areas we thought might be of interest, and asked respondents to identify their most important and least important areas, indicating where each policy area fell in terms of priority level. The following policy areas were in the highest number of either ADPH's top five priorities, or seen as a priority but not in the top 5 (the two highest options).

- 1) **Introduce a minimum unit price of 50p per alcohol for all alcohol sold in England** – 75% said this was in their top 5 priorities, 20% said important. This was also determined to be the most important priority in last year's policy survey; last year, 100% of respondents put it in their top ten.
- 2) **Amend licensing legislation to empower local authorities to control the total availability of alcohol, gambling, junk food outlets etc** – 70% said this was in their top 5 priorities, and 22% said it was important. This was the third highest priority in last year's survey, with 91% of respondents putting it in their top ten.
- 3) **Use taxation and economic development measures to reduce income inequality** – 51% said this was in their top 5 priorities, and 39% said it was important
- 4) **Introduce governmental standards for salt, saturated fat, and sugar reduction in the food supply** – 58% said this was in their top five priorities, and 30% said it was important
- 5) **Commit 10% of transport budget to walking and cycling** – 29% said this was in their top five priorities, and 53% said it was important
- 6) **Introduce compulsory PHSE lessons in all schools (including academies)** – 46% said this was in their top 5 priorities, and 36% said it was important
- 7) **Require compulsory standardised front of pack labelling for all pre-packaged food and beverages (including alcoholic drinks)** – 22% said this was in their top 5 priorities, and 60% said it was important
- 8) **Ensure the UK meets its legal duty under EU regulation to protect the population from the harmful effects of air pollution** – 32% said this was in their top 5 priorities, and 49% said it was important
- 9) **Reinstate the tax escalator on all tobacco products and alcohol (at 5% and 2% pa ahead of inflation)**

respectively) – 33% said this was in their top five priorities, and 48% said it was important

- 10) **Ban companies producing 'junk food' from sponsorship of physical activity and sport, especially those targeted at children and young people** – 25% said this was in their top five priorities, and 52% said it was important

School Nursing and Health Visiting

We asked respondents whether they had made changes to the contracts for health visiting and 5-19 school nursing in 2016/17.

For health visiting, 16% of respondents said they had made a decrease in the number of posts, and 42% said they had made other changes. 40% reported no changes, and 4% reported an increase in the number of posts.

For 5-19 school nursing, the responses were slightly more positive. 5% had made an increase in the number of posts, and 10% had made a decrease. 38% had made other changes; 48% reported no changes.

Smoking

We asked respondents to give their thoughts on the smoking ban, and areas it might be extended to. About 90% of respondents thought smoking should be banned in parks, in sports and leisure facilities and stadiums, and at public events aimed at families. 88% of respondents thought that smoking should be banned in the immediate vicinity of schools and colleges.

Just over 75% of respondents said that they thought e-cigarettes could have a role in both prisons and mental health trusts to enable them to become smoke free.

Childhood Obesity

The comment that most respondents completely agreed with was 'the loophole exempting academies and free schools from the School Food Standards should be closed', with 94% of respondents indicating that they completely agreed with this statement.

In terms of industry related actions, 85% of respondents completely agreed with the statements 'advertisements for food and drink products that are high in saturated fat, salt and sugars should be banned before the 9pm' watershed.

Conclusion & Next Steps

These results are extremely useful for the association in allowing it to determine which areas of policy are most important for DsPH, and what our key policy lines should be on various topical policy issues.

Although the survey forms a very useful basis for discussion about priorities going forward, it is not the only means of determining priorities. We intend to use the results of the survey to inform discussions about policy work going forward, with the aim of identifying 5 key overarching policy priorities to focus on in 2017/18.

Association of Directors of Public Health

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