



# Encouraging Healthier Catering Practices Amongst Independent Fast Food Takeaways in Deprived Areas

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**MAYOR OF LONDON**



# The Obesity problem

## UK: the 'fat man of Europe'

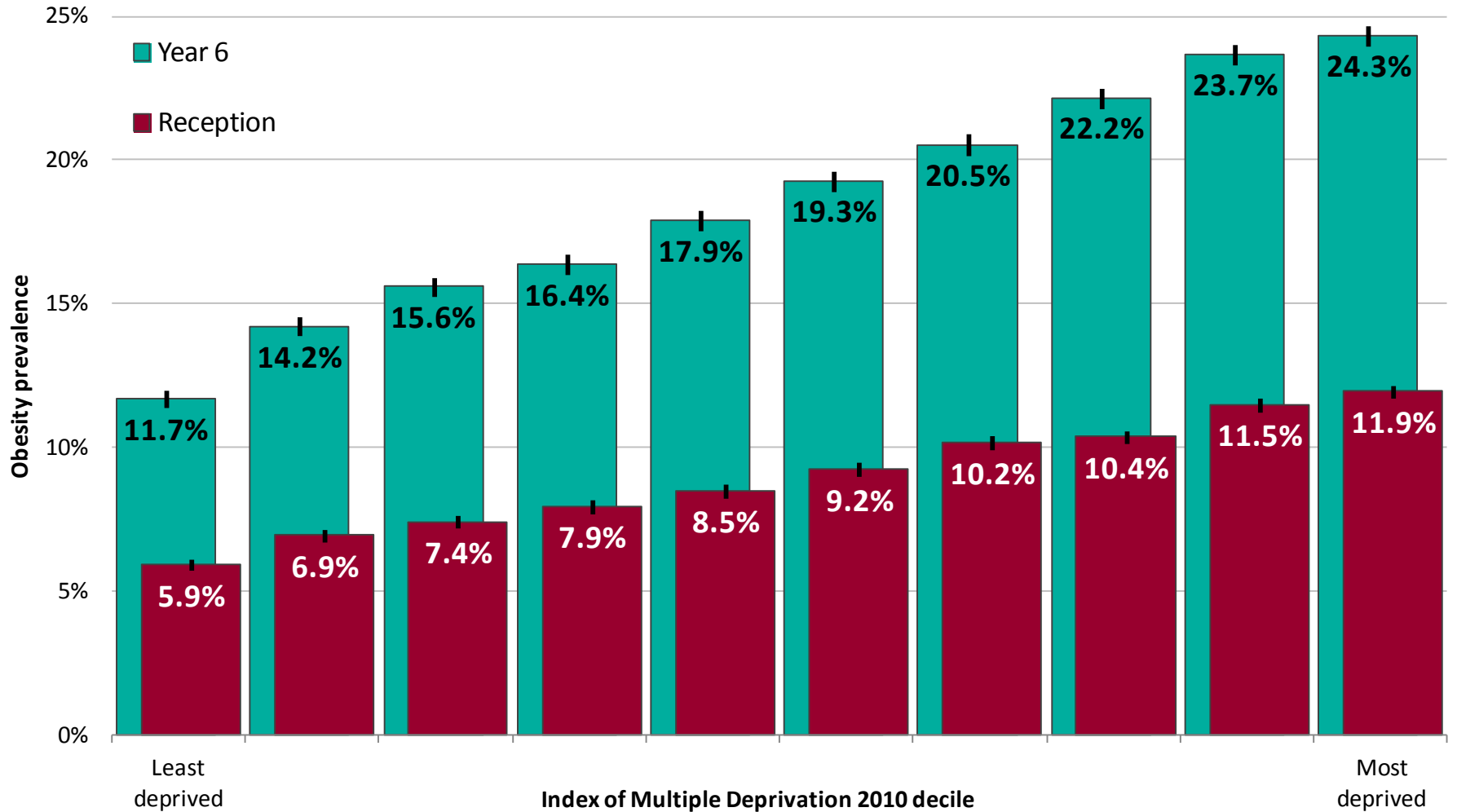
- 1/4 men and women, and 1/5th 10-11 year olds are obese
- Health risks associated with obesity estimated to cost the NHS £5.1 billion a year. (DoH, 2013)
- One of 6 key public health challenges (PHE, 2014)
- 1 in 6 meals now consumed outside the home (FSA, 2014)

**Fast food a key aspect in the obesogenic environment** (Foresight, 2007)



# Obesity prevalence by deprivation decile

National Child Measurement Programme 2012/13



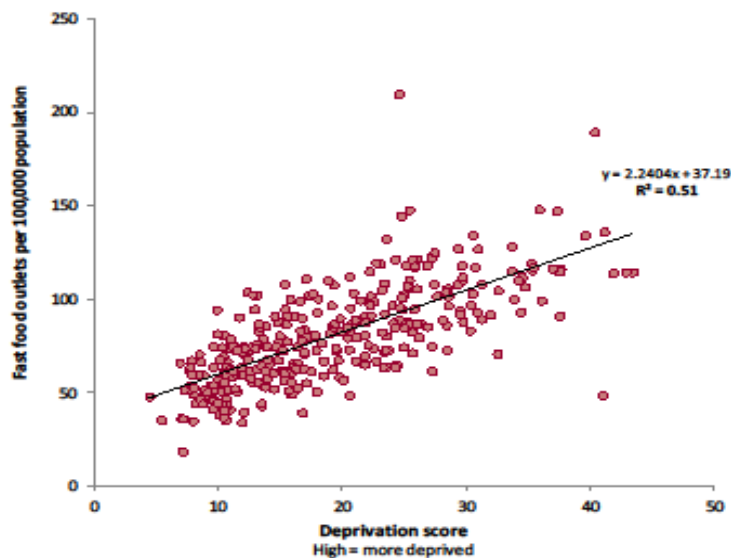
Child obesity: BMI  $\geq$  95<sup>th</sup> centile of the UK90 growth reference



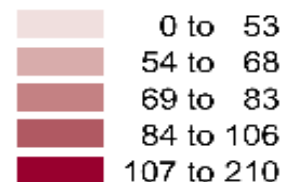
# Obesity and the environment

## Fast food outlets

Relationship between density of fast food outlets and deprivation  
by local authority



Fast food outlets  
by local authority  
per 100,000 population



England value  
per 100,000 population

86

London inset:



# Fast Food in Deprived Areas

- A feature of “Food deserts”?
- Limited menus
- Cheap, poor quality, deep fried food
- Highly competitive and price sensitive environment
- Selling cheap 'unhealthy' food seen as crucial for business survival
- Lack of equipment/resources for healthier catering practices



(Bagwell & Doff, 2009)



# But.. Fast food businesses provide an important source of employment

Low business start-up costs

Key entry level jobs for migrants and ethnic minority community

A route to better paid work?



# Meeting local community needs

In Tower Hamlets outlets provide halal food in an alcohol free environment and are thus meeting the need for affordable dining out opportunities in a culturally acceptable social space

(Bagwell, S (2011). *Environment & Planning A*)



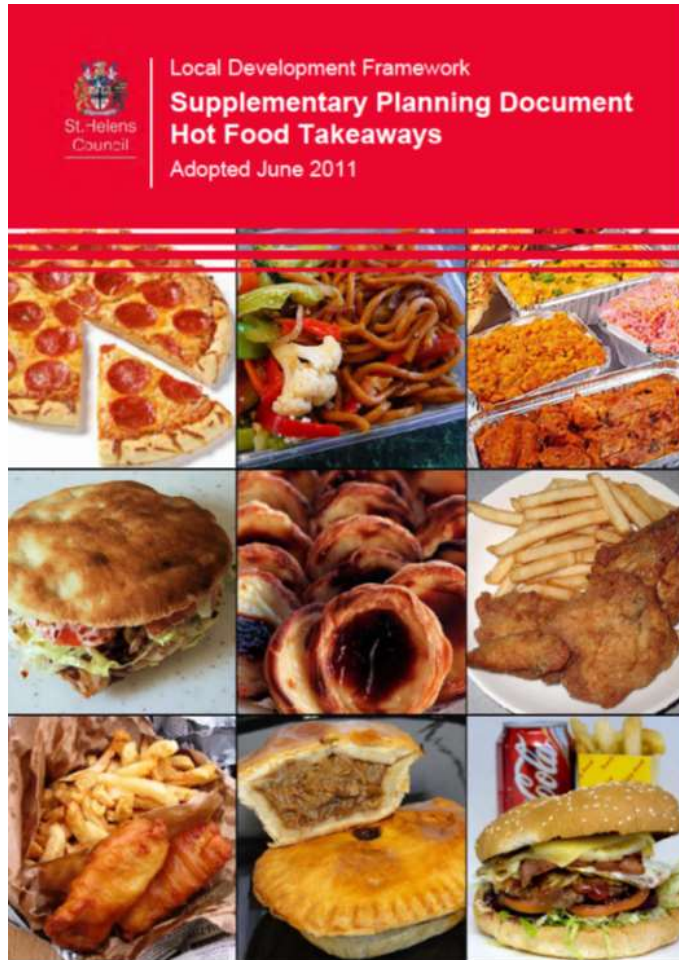
# Government Policy: Options for Intervention

	Regulation of the individual		Fiscal measures directed at the individual		Non-regulatory and non-fiscal measures with relation to the individual					
					Choice Architecture (“Nudges”)					
Interventions category	Eliminate choice	Restrict choice	Guide and enable choice							
			Fiscal disincentives	Fiscal incentives	Non-fiscal incentives and disincentives	Persuasion	Provision of information	Changes to physical environment	Changes to the default policy	Use of social norms and salience
Examples of policy interventions	Prohibiting goods or services e.g. banning certain drugs	Restricting the options available to individuals e.g. outlawing smoking in public places	Fiscal policies to make behaviours more costly e.g. taxation on cigarettes or congestion charging in towns and cities	Fiscal policies to make behaviours financially beneficial e.g. tax breaks on the purchase of bicycles or paying individuals to recycle	Policies which reward or penalise certain behaviours e.g. time off work to volunteer	Persuading individuals using argument e.g. GPs persuading people to drink less, counselling services or marketing campaigns	Providing information in e.g. leaflets showing the carbon usage of household appliances  <i>*Regulation to require businesses to use front of pack nutritional labelling, or restaurants to provide calorific information on menus</i>	Altering the environment e.g. traffic calming measures or designing buildings with fewer lifts  <i>*Regulation to require businesses to remove confectionery from checkouts, or the restriction of advertising of unhealthy products</i>	Changing the default option e.g. requiring people to opt out of rather than opt in to organ donation or providing salad as the default side dish	Providing information about what others are doing e.g. information about an individual’s energy usage compared to the rest of the street  <i>*Regulation to require energy companies to provide information about average usage</i>

Table of Interventions House of Lords (2011) *Behaviour Change*



# Policy Using the Planning system



Local authorities should, “..use existing planning powers to control more carefully the number and location of fast food outlets in their local areas”

(Cross Government Obesity Unit 2008, 18)

# Fast food outlets in LB Tower Hamlets

## Legend

### Secondary Schools

- Female
- Male
- Mixed

### FFO Density



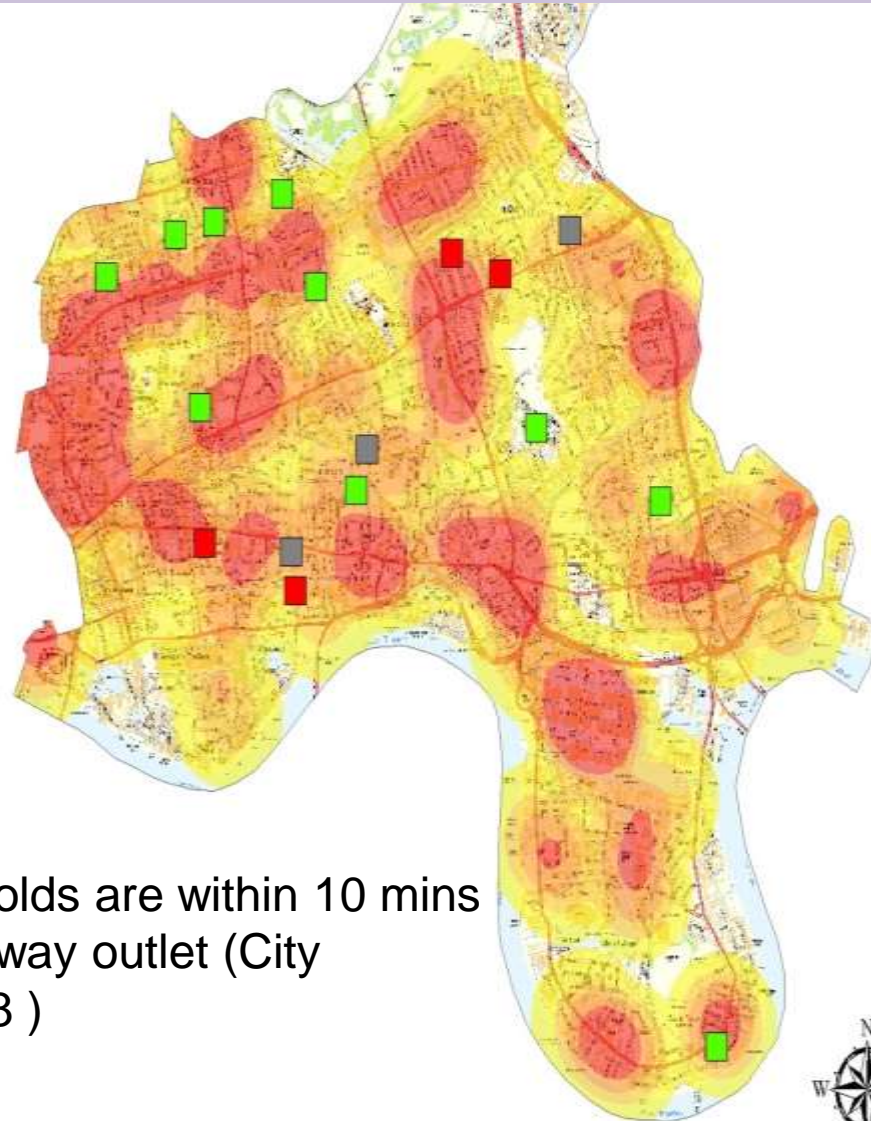
Lower



97% of households are within 10 mins walk of a takeaway outlet (City University, 2008 )



Higher



# Education and Voluntary agreements



Department of Health

## Public Health Responsibility Deal

Sign up and pledge to improve public health in England

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Case studies

Sign up

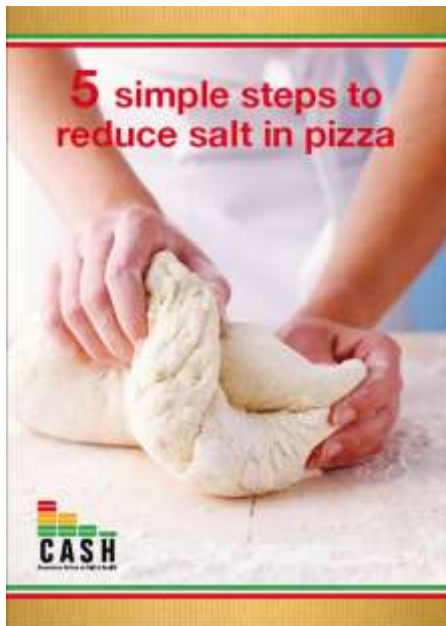
Partner lo

This is the Public Health Responsibility Deal's website where you will find all the latest news about the Deal and all you need to know about how to sign up.

### New saturated fat pledge

The food network has today announced the launch of a new pledge on saturated fat reduction. The pledge commits companies to support and enable people to consume less saturated fat through actions such as product/menu reformulation, reviewing portion sizes, education ... [Read more →](#)

Published: October 26, 2013 | [10 Comments](#)



# Limitations of Healthier Catering Initiatives


Criteria too onerous for many fast food takeaways (CIEH, 2004)

Tend to be more successful with businesses in more affluent areas. Limited take up in deprived areas

*“healthier catering schemes ... by improving the health of those that can afford to take advantage of these healthier choices are possibly unwittingly widening the gap in health inequalities”*

(Bagwell, 2013, *Critical Public Health*)



 HEALTHIER CATERING COMMITMENT for London	Criteria
1. Fat removed from meat before cooking	
2. Food is grilled or baked not fried	
3. Polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fat or oil used for cooking	
4. Polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fat or oil used for preparation	
5. Cooking oil in deep fat fryers heated to optimum temperature E*	
6. Excess fat drained from food before serving E*	
7. Oil in fryer is properly maintained E*	
8. Chips are thick cut	
9. Semi skimmed or skimmed milk is available for drinks	
10. Lower fat spreads, mayonnaise and dressings are available	
11. Where sandwiches served at least 2 lower fat fillings are available	
12. Customers can add own salt: Sachets or salt shakers with fewer holes available	
13. Salt not added to water used for cooking veg, rice & pasta	
14. If soft drinks sold, water, reduced sugar/diet drinks and /or unsweetened fruit juice are available	
15. Lower sugar snacks are available as alternative to biscuits, chocolate etc	
16. Drinking tap water is always available	
17. A portion (80g) of veg or salad is always available as an accompaniment	
18. Fresh fruit is always available and prominently displayed	
19. If chips are served there is always a healthier starchy alternative	
20. Wholegrain varieties of carbohydrates are available. Where rice is served, boiled/steamed rice is available as an alternative	
21. Smaller portions are available for children and adults	
22. Healthy eating is promoted by staff	



## ESRC project: Key Research Questions

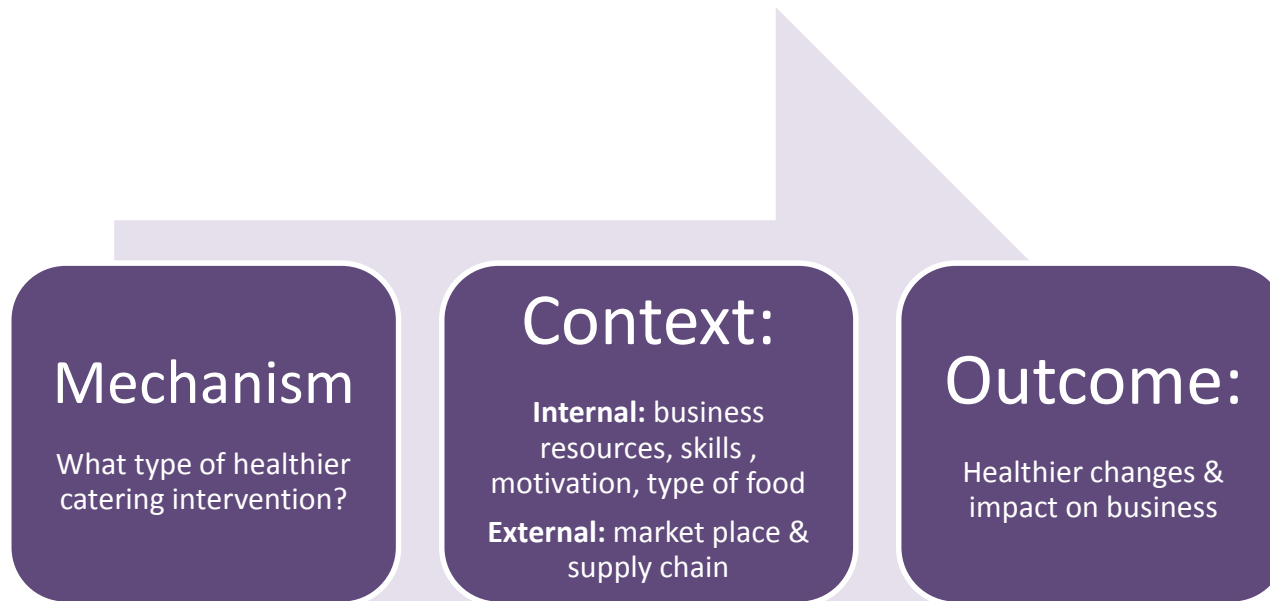
- What healthier catering initiatives work with FFOs in deprived areas?
- What healthier business models can FFOs in these areas adopt?
- Can we persuade suppliers to make it easier for FFOs to purchase healthier options?

**Outputs:** Best practice tool-kit & Policy guidance



# Research Framework

- Realistic Evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) What works for whom and in which contexts



- identify the particular combinations of these three factors which works

# Methods

## Approach

Participatory action research (Lewin, 1946) & “engaged relationship” (Van de Ven, 2007) with partners: (Practitioners (EHOs), Industry lead body (CIEH), Policy makers (GLA Food Team) to maximize relevance

## Methodology

- UK wide telephone and online survey of healthier catering initiatives (n=34)
- In-depth interviews with 30 “best practice” businesses in London operating in 20% (IMD) most deprived areas

## Analysis

What combinations of intervention mechanisms, and contexts (business realities (motivation, food type etc.) and local markets) produced the desired healthier changes?

# Types of Healthier Catering Initiatives (Mechanisms)

- Generic or specialist
- Award (tiered or not) or not
- Geographical targeting or whole area
- Involve EHOs/ TS staff with/without dietitians



# Best practice initiatives (mechanisms) in deprived areas: General principles

- Targeted & focused on small number of key changes
- Involve all the staff
- Don't necessarily offer an award
- Provide lots of publicity (if wanted) for those that do make changes
- Use economic arguments

*"We go in with a view that at worst it is cost neutral, but hopefully we are actually going to save you money.. Once you show them how it can be done they are willing to give it a go"* (Wigan Healthy Business team)
- Demonstrate and/or create consumer demand
- Understand the local context
- Involve extensive outreach work

***Changes have to be easy to do & make business sense***



**Congratulations everyone for  
achieving your Award!**

We now have over 80 award winners!

Check out our new Website: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/eatoutatwell](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/eatoutatwell)  
There is a new page that lists your business as an award winner, and links to your website if you have one. Please check this out and let us know if your details need amending in any way. Also we would be grateful if you could make a link back to our site!



# Outcomes: A Healthier Catering Marketing Mix

Product	Price
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•New healthier products</li> <li>•Healthier swaps</li> <li>•Healthier cooking practices</li> <li>•Better quality smaller portions</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits: Saves money, or is cost neutral, brings in new customers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Price healthier options cheaper than unhealthy alternatives</li> <li>•Charge extra for unhealthy alternatives</li> <li>•Use meal deals and loyalty card schemes</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits: Increases turnover – at least on healthier options</b></p>
Promotion	Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Free healthier sides</li> <li>•Healthier menus and advertising panels</li> <li>•Attractive packaging of healthier products</li> <li>•Personal selling of healthier alternatives</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits: Sales of healthier varieties likely to increase</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Place healthier options in more visible locations</li> <li>•Hide or reduce access to unhealthy options</li> <li>•Reduce the size of containers or serving implements</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits: Sales of healthier varieties likely to increase</b></p>



# Healthier Products

## Healthier cooking practices



## Healthier swaps



## New healthier products



## Smaller helpings



# Strategies to encourage healthier choices: Price



85p



60p

# Place





# Promotion



# Nudges/Health by Stealth



Less salt can improve your health

Introducing the **shake-less-salt** shaker

The shake-less-salt shaker is being used by this business, dispensing up to 50% less salt than other shakers.

 [stoke.gov.uk/food](http://stoke.gov.uk/food)



# Context is Key



# Results: Examples of Successful MCO combinations

Mechanism	Context	Outcome
Award for making healthier changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) More health conscious communities</li> <li>b) Less health conscious communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Healthier promotion seen as good for business</li> <li>b) Health by stealth preferable</li> </ul>
Encouraging healthier product swaps e.g. rice for chips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Kebab shops</li> <li>b) Chicken &amp; chip shops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Likely to be acceptable</li> <li>b) Only in Asian, African &amp; Afro-Caribbean communities</li> </ul>
Encouraging smaller portions	<p>Various food types</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) No competition</li> <li>b) Consumers prefer quality to quantity</li> <li>c) Competition offering larger portions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Likely to be acceptable</li> <li>b) Likely to be acceptable</li> <li>c) Not likely to work</li> </ul>
Persuading businesses to hide the salt shaker or use shakers with less salt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Kebab, pizza outlets</li> <li>b) Fish &amp; chip shops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Customers don't ask for salt</li> <li>b) Won't work: customers expect salt</li> </ul>

# Key variables to consider

Mechanism	Context	Feasible Outcomes	
		Beneficial to health	Business impacts
Generic or targeted?	<b>Internal to business:</b>	<b>Healthier products</b>	
If targeted – by food type/area/customer base?	Owner's motivation and interest in health	Healthier swaps e.g. rice for chips	Cost neutral + may bring in more customers
Award scheme or not?	Business resources	New healthier products	New customers = extra income
Nudging/health by stealth approach or active promotion of healthier catering	Type of food sold	Healthier cooking practices e.g. Reduction in use of oil, salt and sugar	Cost savings
Balance between health focused/business focused	<b>External</b>	Smaller portions	Cost savings or lost customers
Resources for outreach work	Socio-economic and ethnic background of customers	Healthier cooking practices e.g. Reduction in use of oil, salt and sugar	Cost savings
Business incentives offered	Nature and level of competition	<b>Pricing strategies</b>	
	Supplier constraints	Charge more for unhealthy extras	Cost savings
		Sell healthier options cheaper	Lost income or greater sales
		<b>Healthier Promotions</b>	
		Free healthier additions e.g. salad	Additional cost and/or more customers
		Promoting healthier options or health by stealth depending on market	New customers/retain customers
		<b>Placing strategies</b>	
		Placing healthier options in more visible location	Depends on profit margin on healthier products
		Hiding unhealthy options e.g. salt shakers	Cost saving or angry customers

# Barriers: Supplier's healthier products cost more



- **CHP131: AAA Grade Julienne Chips-5x2.5kg**
- **Collection £6.99**  
**Delivery £7.49**



- **McCain Alternatives 5% Fat Wedges-4x2.5kg**
- **Collection £15.59**  
**Delivery £15.99**

# Outlets tied into deals with suppliers



A free fridge but 75%+ must be stocked with suppliers branded drinks



# Suppliers Barriers to Change

- Changes to reduce portion sizes would have a direct impact on wholesalers' sales and profits. Selling 100g fewer chips could lose a wholesaler between £2,500-£5,000 of sales per outlet p.a.
- Product substitution would damage sales and profits: if water sold for 17 pence outstrips sales of carbonated drinks for 50 pence.
- Global drinks manufacturers dictate the prices of regular and diet versions of their brands to the supply chain.
- World commodity prices mean that vegetable oil made from soya beans will always be cheaper than rapeseed or sunflower oil.



# What Suppliers and Authorities Could Do



## Suppliers could:

- Select healthier lines and highlight on very long product lists.
- Provide information on best practice on frying.
- Insist that manufacturers reduce fat, salt & sugar levels.
- Publicise the calories in typical portion sizes of chicken nuggets & chips.



## Local, Regional & National Authorities could give:

- Public food procurement contracts to suppliers and takeaways that demonstrably support healthier eating.
- Recognition (press coverage, awards).



# Conclusions: Policy Implications

- Understanding the context (internal to business and external market) is key
- Can't place the burden of encouraging healthier consumption on micro fast food takeaways alone. Need a total community approach
- Work needs to take place further up the supply chain with suppliers and by government to ensure that healthier options are promoted and are affordable
- Intervention needs to be part of a whole systems approach to obesity



• Tackle the global commodities market



• Legislate



• Work with suppliers



# Toolkit

Provides advice on:

- Business barriers
- Designing interventions
- Engaging with businesses
- Healthier business models
- Case studies

Available on

[http://www.ifsip.org/Takeaways\\_in\\_Deprived\\_Areas\\_Toolkit.html](http://www.ifsip.org/Takeaways_in_Deprived_Areas_Toolkit.html)

and

<http://www.citiesinstitute.org/projects/healthy-catering-commitments-for-smes.cfm>

Interactive PDF



## Encouraging Healthier Takeaways in Low-income Communities:

Tools to support those working to encourage healthier catering amongst fast food takeaways



Click your way through the sections

Introduction How to use the toolkit Section 1 Section 2 Section 3 Section 4 Section 5 Section 6 Section 7

Based on research by the Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University, October 2014