

PRESS NOTICE

18 August 2016

Childhood obesity plan fails children

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges is extremely disappointed that the Government has decided not to implement the advice it was given by doctors and its own advisors from Public Health England in the way it should tackle the obesity epidemic among children. With nearly a third of children between the ages of two to 15 being either overweight or obese, the Academy has long called for radical action, not least because poor diet and lack of exercise inevitably leads to poor health later in life, be that physical health, mental health or dental health.

While recognising that some measures announced today, such as increasing the amount of exercise children do while at school, are to be welcomed; setting voluntary targets on food and drink manufacturers to reduce the sugar content in products aimed at children falls far short of what is necessary and what was expected.

Professor Dame Sue Bailey, Chair of the Academy said,

'The Prime Minister was unequivocal in her determination to tackle health and social inequalities on the day she took office. Implementing the recommendations from the very body this Government set up to improve the public's health would have shown she was serious. It's also obvious that we need to hit this problem hard if we are to stand any chance at all of reducing the burden on the NHS. What we have instead are half-measures and vague promises that the situation will be monitored.'

'As doctors, we have a duty to work together to prevent illness whenever and wherever we can. Tackling childhood obesity will help to reduce disease today, tomorrow and for years to come. So while some of the measures being set out today are a good first step, more can and must be done. We are happy to work with the Government and others to help bring about the changes we need, because we cannot let this particular can just be continually kicked down the road.'

ENDS

Notes:

- The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges began its campaign to tackle childhood obesity in 2013, with the publication of [Measuring Up](#). This called for ten simple steps to be taken to tackle the obesity epidemic
- The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges brings together the voices of its 22 member colleges and Faculties for overarching generic issues around healthcare
- The Academy's role is to promote, facilitate and at times, co-ordinate the work of the Medical Royal Colleges and their Faculties for the benefit of patients and healthcare. The Academy comprises the Presidents of the Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties who meet regularly to agree direction
- For more information contact Max Prangnell, Communications Director on 0773 436 1055 or 02392 413000 or the Academy switchboard on 0207 490 6810