



Consensus Action on Salt, Sugar & Health

ANNUAL REPORT

May 2016 – April 2017

Charity registration 1098818

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About Consensus Action on Salt, Sugar & Health

Consensus Action on Salt, Sugar and Health (CASSH) is a group of specialists concerned with dietary salt and sugar consumption and its effects on health. Consensus Action on Salt & Health (CASH) and its international arm World Action on Salt and Health (WASH) is successfully working to reach a consensus with the food industry and Governments over the harmful effects of a high salt diet and bring about a reduction in the amount of salt in processed, catered and restaurant food, as well as salt added to cooking and at the table.

Salt is the main factor in causing high blood pressure, the consequence of which is strokes and heart attacks; these diseases are the biggest causes of death and disability in the UK. If everyone achieved the target of 6g salt per day, the 2.1g reduction from the current daily average level of 8.1g would mean that almost 17,000 lives would be saved each year. Salt is also linked to a number of other health conditions including stomach cancer, osteoporosis, kidney stones, kidney disease and obesity.

Salt intakes have fallen in the UK from 9.5g to 8.1g since 2001, a drop of 15%. This steady and continuous decline in salt intakes is extremely encouraging, as studies suggest that this reduction in average daily salt intake, through the reduction it has on blood pressure, will prevent approximately 20,000 strokes, heart attacks and heart failures, 8,500 of which are fatal in the UK every year. Nevertheless, many adults still eat up to twice the maximum amount of salt that is currently recommended (6g/day). This coherent programme is now being rolled out worldwide, and we are seeing similar actions in other countries.

The success of the salt reduction programme led CASH to launch **Action on Sugar** in January 2014. Following the model of salt reduction, Action on Sugar is working to reach a consensus with the food industry and Government over the harmful effects of a high sugar diet, and bring about a reduction in the amount of sugars in processed foods. Action on Sugar has now officially been incorporated into the charity and charity's aims, as Consensus Action on Salt, Sugar and Health.

AIMS

- I) The identification and relief of those who suffer from the effects of a high salt or sugar intake or whose health is more at risk from a high salt or sugar intake;
- II) To advance education by providing information and training on the effects of salt or sugar intake on health and to undertake and disseminate research into the effects of salt and sugar on health;
- III) To promote the benefits a reduction in salt and sugar intake would have and to increase the understanding, awareness and recognition of the effects of salt and sugar intake on health;
- IIII) Identification of those who suffer from the effects of, or whose health is more at risk from a high salt or sugar intake; to advance education of the effects of salt and sugar intake and disseminate research into the effects of salt and sugar; to promote the benefit of a reduction in salt and sugar intake and to increase the understanding, awareness and recognition of the effects of salt and sugar intake on health.

CASH MEMBERS

Chairman	Professor GA MacGregor	Member	Professor PM Dodson
Trustee	Professor PS Sever	Member	Professor T Lang
Trustee	Professor MR Law	Member	Professor KT Khaw
Member	Professor Sir Nick Wald	Member	Professor FP Cappuccio
Member	Professor P Sleight	Member	Professor GB Haycock
Member	Professor AG Shaper	Member	Professor J Winkler
Member	Professor WPT James	Member	Dr F He
Member	Professor G Beevers	Member	Dr W Sunman
Member	Professor P Elliott	Member	Mr M Kane (food technologist)
Member	Professor Sir Michael G Marmot	Member	Professor S Capewell
Member	Professor NP Poulter	Member	Professor K McPherson
Member	Professor MEJ Lean	Member	Dr J George
Member	Professor R Michell		

Action on Sugar Advisors

Chairman	Professor GA MacGregor	Advisor	Dr Y Freedhoff
Advisor	Professor A Rugg-Gunn	Advisor	Dr M Rayner
Advisor	Professor D Haslam	Advisor	Professor J Winkler
Advisor	Professor J Cuzick	Advisor	M Kane
Advisor	Professor J Wass	Advisor	N Rigby
Advisor	Professor P Sever	Advisor	T Fry
Advisor	Professor P James	Advisor	Professor P Whincup
Advisor	Professor S Capewell	Advisor	Professor RJ Johnson
Advisor	Professor Sir Nick Wald	Advisor	K Jenner
Advisor	Professor T Lang	Advisor	M Mwatsama
Advisor	Professor R Lustig	Advisor	Professor C Hawkes (until Spring 2017)

STAFF

Katharine Jenner	Campaign Director, CASH/WASH/Action on Sugar
Sonia Pombo	Campaign Manager, CASH
Saadia Noorani	International Public Health Nutritionist, WASH (Feb 2016- Feb 2017)
Jennifer Rosborough	Campaign Manager, Action on Sugar
Kawther Hashem	PhD Researcher and Nutritionist
Sarah Alderton	Assistant Nutritionist
Mhairi Brown	Assistant Nutritionist CASH and WASH (Since Jan 2017)
June Phillips	PA
David Clarke	Press Officer p/t

With thanks to all volunteers who worked May 2016 – April 2017, we are very grateful for your help.

ADDRESS

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Consensus Action on Salt & Health

Summary of the year 2016/2017

Welcome to our annual report for 2016/2017, combining our three campaigning arms; Consensus Action on Salt & Health (CASH), World Action on Salt & Health (WASH) and Action on Sugar (AoS). The last year has been somewhat challenging for salt reduction in the UK with the focus on leaving the European Union and the underfunding of the NHS, diverting attention from public health action. Unsurprisingly, it is thought companies are losing momentum in salt reduction due to a real lack of monitoring or enforcement from Government level via Public Health England. As such, CASH have been highlighting the failings of the manufacturers and have called on government to set up an independent agency responsible for nutrition in the UK, and to reset the salt reduction targets beyond 2017. We celebrated the 18th National Salt Awareness Week and 10th World Salt Awareness Week and carried out a number of food surveys focused on key contributors of salt to the diet.

Action on Sugar aims to make sugar and saturated fat reduction a priority for public health, to replicate the success of the salt reformulation programme.

Action on Sugar primarily focused on strengthening the government's Childhood Obesity Strategy, by promoting our evidenced-

based plan to tackle obesity and Type 2 Diabetes. We continue to impact all areas of the strategy, through holding key influential meetings with Public Health England, Public Health England, National Health Service, HM Treasury, Committee of Advertising Practice – whilst releasing product surveys to educate the public on sugar consumption and pressurising manufacturers to create healthier products.

Following many meetings and negotiations, Public Health England published a technical report to support the food industry in achieving a 20% sugar reduction by 2020, in the nine food categories that contribute the most amount of sugar in the diets of children. Sugar reduction targets are Action on Sugar's primary aim, and it is testament to the hard work of the team that this is now up and running.

The announcement that Parliament approved the Soft Drinks Industry Levy as part of the Finance Bill in April, nicely ended the financial year.

Staff changes

Katharine Jenner has returned from, and Sonia Pombo has begun her maternity leave. We appointed a new assistant nutritionist, Mhairi Brown, who has also assumed some of the duties of Saadia Noorani, our WASH programme lead, who left in February for personal reasons.

We also welcomed June Phillips, a new PA, after Lorraine Hamilton left after three years of service to explore her work in photography.



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

CASH

Government Level Work

2017 Salt Reduction Targets

Despite new targets for salt being announced in March 2014 and great efforts made by CASH encouraging the food and catering industry to sign up and voluntarily adhere to them, very little public support has been made by significant members of the food industry. We reiterated to both government and industry that the targets would only be successful if all companies sign up, thus creating a level playing field and resulting in further reductions at a much faster pace.

There is very little monitoring or support from Public Health England, with the targets still only hosted under the now defunct 'Responsibility Deal' website. Annual updates have again been postponed this year, resulting in a complete lack of monitoring.

We feel that PHE is underfunded and under resourced to carry out such a vital, cost-saving piece of work.

When questioned, the Public Health England CEO Duncan Selbie stated that *"As you know, we constantly remind businesses of the importance of continuing to work towards meeting the salt targets as they reduce the sugar levels in their products. This is something we remind them of in each meeting we have. It seems that many have been continuing their salt reduction work and that*

some have already achieved, or are close to achieving, the 2017 targets. We do also appreciate though that we now have responsibility to reinvigorate this important work."

Nevertheless, we made 'Salt: The forgotten killer' a key theme for 2106/2017 and have been working hard to push the obesity strategy, asking for it to include an independent agency responsible for both salt and sugar. We have also tried to lobby for the inclusion of fat in the strategy, but it's unlikely to include any work on fat until SACN have reviewed the evidence.

The EU Referendum has had a knock on effect on everything, not least the public health agenda. Next steps and challenges for CASH will be to ensure the salt reduction targets are not side lined or delayed even further.



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

Salt Product Surveys

CASH has carried out a number of surveys on the salt content of popular food products. We are working hard to strengthen our FoodSwitch database by collecting data on a broad range of products from different outlets. This has enabled us to be reactive to media and to develop a more rounded picture of who is, and who isn't meeting the 2017 targets. The surveys we have released have focused on foods that people may find surprisingly high in salt, and sugar, and perhaps do not even consider when thinking about their daily salt intake.

Following each of these campaigns, the brands that were featured negatively have been contacted and asked to explain to CASH their plans for salt reduction. A summary of this activity is as follows (oldest to newest):

Instant noodles can contain more salt than in 12 packets of crisps (May 2016)

CASH research exposes instant noodles can contain dangerously high levels of salt e.g. Ko-Lee Instant Noodles Chicken Flavour contains more salt per serving than 12 packets of salted crisps. 6 products contain 5g or more of salt per serving – that is more than the World Health Organisation recommended maximum daily intake for salt. Several supermarkets' own labels contain 10 times less salt. We also looked at the sugar content, and found over a third of products surveyed contain more than 2 teaspoons of sugar per serving.

New survey exposes 'healthy' dips as being salt and fat traps (July 2016)

CASH published a survey exposing many shop bought dips as being huge salt and fat traps loaded with excess calories. 100g of Marks & Spencer's Taramasalata contains more salt than 31 Ritz crackers! CASH called for the government's to stop dragging their feet and produce a strong and robust Obesity Strategy that will include reducing salt and fat in the nation's diet

New CASH survey reveals shocking levels of salt found in crumpets and warns of 2017 salt targets failing (December 2016)

In December 2016 CASH published a survey highlighting the wide variation in salt content of branded and supermarket own-brand crumpets. The survey highlighted that, on average, crumpets contain more salt than a bag of ready salted crisps, with the worst offender – Warburtons Giant Crumpet – containing 1.55g salt per crumpet - more than a quarter of an adult's reference intake for salt, without any topping. Almost half of the products survey exceeded the 2017 salt target for crumpets.

Salt Awareness Week 2017: CASH warns of thousands of unnecessary deaths from salt and urges Public Health England to take immediate action (March 2017)

The theme for this year's Salt Awareness Week was *Salt: The Forgotten Killer*. To launch the week, CASH surveyed products from all 28 major food categories where salt reduction targets had



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

been set in 2014 (to be met by December 2017), to measure progress in terms of meeting their respective 2017 targets. The survey found that only one category (bread rolls) had met the maximum (but not the average) 2017 target, highlighting the dire progress made by manufacturers.

The survey compared two baskets of similar everyday food items from each of the 28 main categories, with differing amounts of salt. Huge variation (a 60g difference) was found in the salt content between the two baskets (107g vs. 47g). The results highlighted the shocking variation in salt content of similar products, with all products in the 'lower salt' basket having at least 30% but up to 97% less salt per 100g than the items in the 'high salt' basket, proving the high salt levels in some products are unnecessary, unwarranted and that reducing the salt level without compromising flavour is achievable.

The survey received extensive media coverage and was a great way to commence Salt Awareness Week 2017 and call for salt reduction to be brought back up the agenda, reiterating the importance of setting mandatory targets. We hope that this becomes a high priority for the new Government rather than falling by the wayside.

We are in the process of surveying the salt content of gluten free snackfoods for an exclusive piece with The Times, which will be published in due course.

DISCUSSIONS WITH FOOD INDUSTRY

CASH have engaged in a number of discussions with industry nutritionists over the last year and intends to increase the frequency of these meetings over the coming months, and maintain regular contact with them. These meetings are providing an interesting insight into companies' attitudes to both salt and sugar reduction, and its role within wider Corporate Social Responsibility policies.

This year we have had meetings with Tesco, Jamie Oliver, SNACMA and Costa Coffee.



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

FoodSwitch UK

Whilst CASH predominantly focuses its campaigning priorities directly on the food industry and government, our venture into smartphone apps has enabled us to take a more behavioural approach to salt reduction, and is something we are extremely excited to work on.

The app is useful in a number of ways; it educates and empowers users to pay attention to the salt, fat, saturates and total sugars content of foods, and encourages them to shop around and choose a healthier option. Working on the app has also enabled us to keep an extensive database of food products, which helps when monitoring the industry and carrying out our product surveys.

Since it launched in 2014, people have become increasingly aware of the FoodSwitch UK app, with many health professionals recommending it to their patients and advocating it via social media. Due to the app's initial success and changes in software developer in Australia, CASH decided to update the app with a fresh new look and user friendly interface. Much of our work in the last year has focussed on updating the app, testing its new functionality according to nutrient profile systems and the Department of Health's front of pack guidance, as well as developing new website content, ready for relaunch. In March 2017, the updated version of the app was launched as part of Salt Awareness Week and supported by 15 other NGOs including Public Health England, UK Health Forum and Stroke

Association.

New features include three additional filters - CalorieSwitch, FatSwitch and SugarSwitch – to enable users to search specifically for products lower in calories, saturates or sugar than the item scanned, in addition to the pre-existing SaltSwitch and classic FoodSwitch filters. The app now displays colour-coded nutrition information per serving as opposed to per 100g, aligning with what is stated on pack, thus more useful and relevant to the user.

The in-built crowdsourcing function allows users to send in photos of products that aren't yet in the FoodSwitch database or products requiring an update due to reformulation, enabling us to keep a more up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive database and capture new product ranges as soon as they hit the shelves.

To support the launch of the new version of the app we produced a leaflet that was distributed to healthcare professionals, GP surgeries, hospitals, pharmacies, NHS trusts, libraries and other organisations for Salt Awareness Week; it is also available to download from the FoodSwitch UK website.

To download the current free version of the app, please visit [iTunes](#) or [Google Play](#).

We have licensed our data to Public Health England for use in their SmartSwaps (Change4Life) app, providing a new revenue stream. Also our data is being used as the basis of several research papers currently in development.



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

Salt Awareness Week 2017

Our eighteenth annual National Salt Awareness Week was held on **Monday 20th – Sunday 26th March 2017** with the theme *Salt: The Forgotten Killer*. Little action has been taken by the government on salt reduction in recent years, following the dissolution of the Responsibility Deal, and so over the week we aimed to remind people that salt still endangers our health by raising blood pressure, leading to strokes and heart attacks.

We emphasised the need for further work if we are to reach the 6g per day salt target and called on industry to continue with their reformulation efforts to meet the 2017 salt reduction targets. As the end of 2017 nears, progress towards meeting the targets has been slow, and the government have given no indication they intend to set 2020 targets. Our aim was to put pressure on the government to set mandatory targets for 2020 and make their salt reduction plans clear.

We also wanted to encourage families to choose foods with less salt, either by asking for less salt, reading front of pack labels and partaking in more home cooking. A national media campaign was used as the key method of conveying our message to families and the food industry. We issued a press release to launch the week based on our food survey.

SUPPORTERS

Every year hospitals, GP surgeries, sports centres, pharmacies, schools, libraries, universities, councils, businesses, charities and other interested parties hold their own events to support Salt Awareness Week, and this year was no different, with over 500 events taking place around the country throughout the week.

A total of 40,492 leaflets and shopping guides, and 792 posters were ordered in anticipation of Salt Awareness Week.

This year we were fortunate enough to have support from the following UK charities:



And with the support of the following companies, we were able to send all our leaflets and posters for free:



PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION

As part of Salt Awareness Week, CASH held an afternoon reception at the House of Commons on Tuesday 21st March 2017 hosted by Mr David Amess MP, a great supporter of CASH. The day was a success, with over 100 guests attending the event.

Speakers included the event sponsor David Amess MP; Anthony Whittington, Producer of the documentary 'Fixing Dad'; Andrea Martinez-Inchausti, Assitant Director of Food Policy at the British Retail Consortium; and CASH Chairman Professor Graham MacGregor.



David Amess MP highlighted the lack of progress made so far to meet the 2017 salt reduction targets and summarised the salt survey that was released at the launch of Salt Awareness Week.



Anthony Whittington gave an engaging speech from the viewpoint of an individual faced with an urgent need to cut

their salt, sugar and saturated fat intake. His documentary follows his father Geoff who was obese and suffering from Type 2 Diabetes. Anthony and his brother Ian removed processed foods from their father's diet and began an exercise regime with him, helping him to reach a healthy weight and reverse his health conditions. This reiterated the importance of reducing processed food consumption to reduce salt intake, and highlighted that the public are not able to rely on the food industry to take care of their health due to the amount of salt, sugar and



fat the industry add to their products.

Andrea Martinez-Inchausti told attendees that BRC members,

such as Tesco and Waitrose, are committed to salt reduction but following initial reductions, further reductions in salt are posing a technical challenge. As a result, they would like to have government support to create a level playing field for future reformulation. BRC members have met seven categories of the 2017 targets nine months ahead of time and are confident that more categories will be met by the end of 2017.



**Professor
MacGregor**

reminded us that the food we eat is the biggest cause of the global burden of disease. Following the collapse of the Responsibility Deal, when the food industry was responsible for themselves, Public Health England were allocated

both salt and sugar reduction. However little action has been taken with salt reduction and Professor MacGregor urged Public Health England to invest in the programme so that it is properly policed and so that manufacturers who do work hard to meet the targets are rewarded. Professor MacGregor also reminded us that for every gram reduction in salt in the population, the NHS would save £1.5 billion.

Salt Awareness Week 2018

2018 will be a challenging time for public health, with an unfocused government, and a Childhood Obesity Strategy will likely be scrapped before it's even begun. December 2017 will see the deadline for the 2017 salt targets, so 2018 should see some results from the programme, ideally with a view to set new target for 2020.

Proposed topics to focus on the week are:

1. *Salt; the forgotten killer update – beyond 2017 targets*
2. *Salt hidden in children's foods - Too young to choose*
3. *The over 55's – it's never too late*



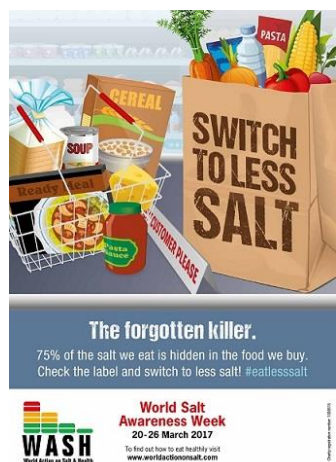
Consensus Action on Salt & Health

CASH and WASH Resources

In addition to raising public awareness about salt through our high profile media campaign, we continue to educate the general public and health professionals on the importance of salt reduction through dedicated pages on our website and resources.

This year we have provided nearly 40,500 leaflets/factsheets and 800 posters. It is estimated that 181,768 people would have seen our resources.

WASH members helped to translate the World Salt Awareness Week resources into Spanish, Italian and Arabic which allowed for greater dissemination of the WASH message worldwide.





Consensus Action on Salt & Health

CASH Alliances

CASH, WASH and Action on Sugar have continued to develop mutually beneficial alliances with other health charities and organisations. WASH has also continued to extend its networks in the international public health arena, participating at informal and formal WHO consultations, at both regional and local levels. CASH and WASH have continued to work alongside other health charities, offering comments on health related

media, acting as cosignatories on campaigning materials and attending numerous meetings, webinars and conferences around the world. WASH continues to support its international members with comments on press releases, logos on leaflets and posters and links through from our website. Organisations CASH and WASH have collaborated with in the last year include:

- Alzheimer's UK
- American Heart Association
- Blood Pressure UK
- British Dietetic Association
- Cancer Research UK
- Center for Science in the Public Interest, USA
- Consumers International
- Department of Health
- Diabetes UK
- EMRO
- Heart Research UK
- European Salt Action Network
- Faculty of Public Health
- Heart UK
- Kidney Research UK
- Ménière's Society
- UK Health Forum
- National Obesity Forum
- National Osteoporosis Society
- Pan American Health Organisation
- Polycystic Kidney Disease
- Public Health Nutrition UK
- Public Health England
- Sustain – Campaign for Better Hospital Food
- Sustain—Real Bread Campaign
- Sustain – The Children’s Food Campaign
- British Heart Foundation
- The George Institute for Global Health
- The NCD Alliance
- The Stroke Association
- The Women’s Institute
- Which?
- World Health Organisation
- World Cancer Research Fund

World Action on Salt and Health

WASH was established in October 2005 with the aim of bringing about a gradual reduction in salt intake throughout the world, by highlighting the importance of salt reduction and drawing attention to the need for countries to take action immediately. The influence of WASH has grown to impact policy at the global level – with the setting of a global target on salt reduction for all countries to achieve by 2025 to reduce the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (including cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and diabetes).

The mainstay of the WASH’s work remains to encourage and support key stakeholders in all countries around the world to setup their own salt reduction programmes, as well as acting as a global monitor, conducting surveys on food products – highlighting products high in salt with a

view to drive reformulation by the food industry.

WASH continues to raise awareness on the importance of a low salt diet during its annual World Salt Awareness Week, which is supported by many countries around the world, and via regular updates on the WASH website, social media (twitter and blog posts) and through media channels including radio and TV.

WASH has established working relationships with a number of international health charities, including The Center for Science in the Public Interest, Danish Heart Foundation, American Heart Association, and The NCD Alliance, which has facilitated opportunities for collaborative working to strengthen our messages on diet and nutrition.

WASH Membership

World Action on Salt and Health has over 585 members from 95 countries. New members include experts from São Tomé, Japan, Jamaica and Malaysia.

Updates from around the world

World Health Organisation

In September 2016 the World Health Organization and the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention launched a new 'Global Hearts' initiative to prevent heart attacks and strokes. This initiative will help scale up efforts on CVD prevention and control by promoting both population-level interventions to reduce risk factors, including through tobacco control and salt reduction, and by strengthening CVD management in primary health care.

As part of the initiative the SHAKE Technical Package for Salt reduction has been developed by WHO in collaboration with the WHO Collaborating Centre for Population Salt Reduction at the George Institute for Global Health in Sydney, Australia, with input from a global network of salt reduction experts including WASH Chairman Professor Graham MacGregor. The SHAKE Package has been designed to assist Member States with the development, implementation and monitoring of salt reduction strategies to enable them to achieve a reduction in population salt intake. It outlines the policies and interventions which have been effective in reducing population salt intake, provides evidence of the efficacy of the recommended interventions, and includes a toolkit containing resources to assist Member States to implement the interventions.

USA and Canada

The FDA issued draft voluntary salt reduction targets for processed and packaged foods in June 2016. The guidance to industry proposes levels of sodium in 150 categories of processed and restaurant foods. Once finalised, interim targets are set to be met in two years and more ambitious targets are set to be met in 10 years. The guidance proposes maximum sodium levels for each of the categories of foods, as well as sales weighted average for companies to meet. However by April 2017 the guidance was still in draft form and the FDA had not made a commitment as to when they will publish the final guidance.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention produced a study that showed almost 90% of the 827 adults participating in the 2014 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) consumed more than the recommended daily limit of sodium of 2,300mg/day. The average daily sodium intake was 3,662mg (9.3g salt), with men having a higher intake than women. This preliminary study is the first nationally-representative survey estimating U.S. sodium intake based on 24-hour urine excretions.

South Africa

In September 2016, 25 local and international participants from various sectors met in Cape Town to take stock of South Africa's progress in

salt reduction and develop a roadmap for action. South Africa is prominent in global salt reduction, being the first country to mandate salt reduction across a wide range of processed foods. Five priority areas were identified for continued action on salt reduction, including obtaining research funds for continued monitoring and compliance of salt reduction targets and determining the contribution of foods eaten out of home to total salt intake and implementing strategies to address this sector.

Australia

The George Institute for Global Health (WHO Collaborating Centre, Sydney) remains very active in salt reduction in the Western Pacific and South East Asian Regions. The Centre is working with WHO to develop a range of tools and resources to support countries to develop and implement salt reduction strategies. Throughout 2016, the Centre delivered training in the Philippines, Vanuatu, Vietnam and Indonesia among other countries.

In support of WSAW the Centre conducted a survey to look at the salt content of packaged bread sold in Australia. The study analysed 1439 products from 2010 to 2017 and showed that salt levels in bread and bread rolls had dropped by 10% but other commonly eaten bread products still contain excessive amounts of salt. The results highlight that the government targets for salt levels in bread do work but there is still progress to be made. The Centre called on manufacturers to reduce the amount of salt added to bread to the lowest possible levels.

The **Australian National Heart Foundation** has launched a ‘Salt to Sodium Converter’ which is an interactive tool that allows users to convert milligrams of sodium to grams of salt or vice versa. The tool was developed to help consumers be aware of the amount of salt that they eat and to compare the salt contents in different foods.

Indonesia

The National Institute of Health Research and Development (NIHRD), Indonesia held a meeting to establish an implementation plan for measuring baseline population salt intake in 2017, supported by the Ministry of Health-Indonesia, World Health Organization (WHO), and the WHO Collaborating Centre on Population Salt Reduction. The objective of the work is to obtain data on population salt intake using spot and 24-hour urine samples, information on knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to salt, data on the main sources of salt in the diet, and data on salt levels in foods to inform the salt reduction strategy.

Caribbean

The Caribbean SaltSmart Coalition (CSSC), an initiative coordinated by PAHO, the Healthy Caribbean Coalition, and the University of South Florida WHO Collaborating Centre on Social Marketing and Change, has recently released a salt awareness infographic and a national television health promotion campaign was launched in St. Vincent and the Grenadines focusing on the adverse effects related to excessive salt intake.

The World Hypertension League (WHL) produced a paper in March 2017 in response to studies on salt that produce findings in conflict with the evidence base. Independent systematic reviews of the totality of evidence have led governments and international agencies around the world to agree that population-wide interventions to reduce salt are beneficial for health. However studies with poor design and methodology gain a lot of publicity which confuses the general public, clinicians and program leaders, and can therefore impede program implementation. To address this, the Standards for Salt Research group will be developing a set of processes and criteria to which new research concerning salt should adhere to. This will hopefully ensure that only

robust scientific studies are used when national and international recommendations relating to salt reduction are reviewed.

The WHL continues to update on 'Science of Salt Weekly', an email newsletter that summarizes the latest evidence and research related to dietary sodium. This newsletter has received formal support from the World Hypertension League, World Action on Salt and Health, the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre on Population Sodium Reduction and the PAHO/WHO Technical Advisory Group on Cardiovascular Disease Prevention through Dietary Sodium, and is a useful tool to stay updated on emerging evidence.

WASH AS A GLOBAL MONITOR

Each year WASH conducts an international food survey, in line with its aim as a global monitor of the food supply. The aim of these surveys is to highlight those foods that are high in salt and to compare salt levels of similar foods between countries.

In 2016, WASH conducted a survey on the salt and sugar content of global breakfast cereal brands. The survey examined 19 products manufactured by Kellogg's and Nestle/General Mills from 29 countries. The results of this survey showed that over a third (34%) of all global cereals contained salt levels above the UK Government's 2017 salt target for breakfast cereals. In the UK, just 2 products were still

above the salt target; Kellogg's Rice Krispies and Kellogg's Corn Flakes at 1.13g/100g, demonstrating the success of the UK's salt reduction programme. Furthermore, over half of the cereals analysed (58%) had high levels of sugar, with 55% containing half the daily recommended intake of free sugars of a 3 year old (15g/day) in one serving.

The survey revealed not only hidden sugars and salt in breakfast cereals, but also the variation in salt and sugar contents of the same breakfast cereal sold in different countries. For example, Kellogg's Honey Smacks in Mexico (57g per 100g) had 25% more sugar than the same cereal in Belgium, Spain, Morocco, Norway, Qatar, Kuwait

and UAE (43g/100g). Kellogg's Cornflakes sold in India which contained the highest level of salt (1.93g/100g) had 46% more salt than the same product in Argentina and Brazil (1.04g/100g).

WASH called on all food manufacturers to

universally reduce the salt and sugar content of their products to help achieve the global WHO maximum target of 5g salt per adult per day and 25g free sugars per day.

World Salt Awareness Week 2017

World Action on Salt and Health held its 10th annual World Salt Awareness Week (WSAW). WASH members were invited to support the week, which focused on encouraging everyone to be aware of hidden salt found in everyday processed foods and to eat less than 5g of salt per day. WASH produced resources to draw attention to the dangers of hidden salt in processed foods and the recommendation to eat less than 5g per day. The resources were disseminated via the WASH website, and WASH members and social media.

Over 15 countries took part in World Salt Awareness Week. Details of activities can be found in the Salt Awareness Week evaluation report for 2017.

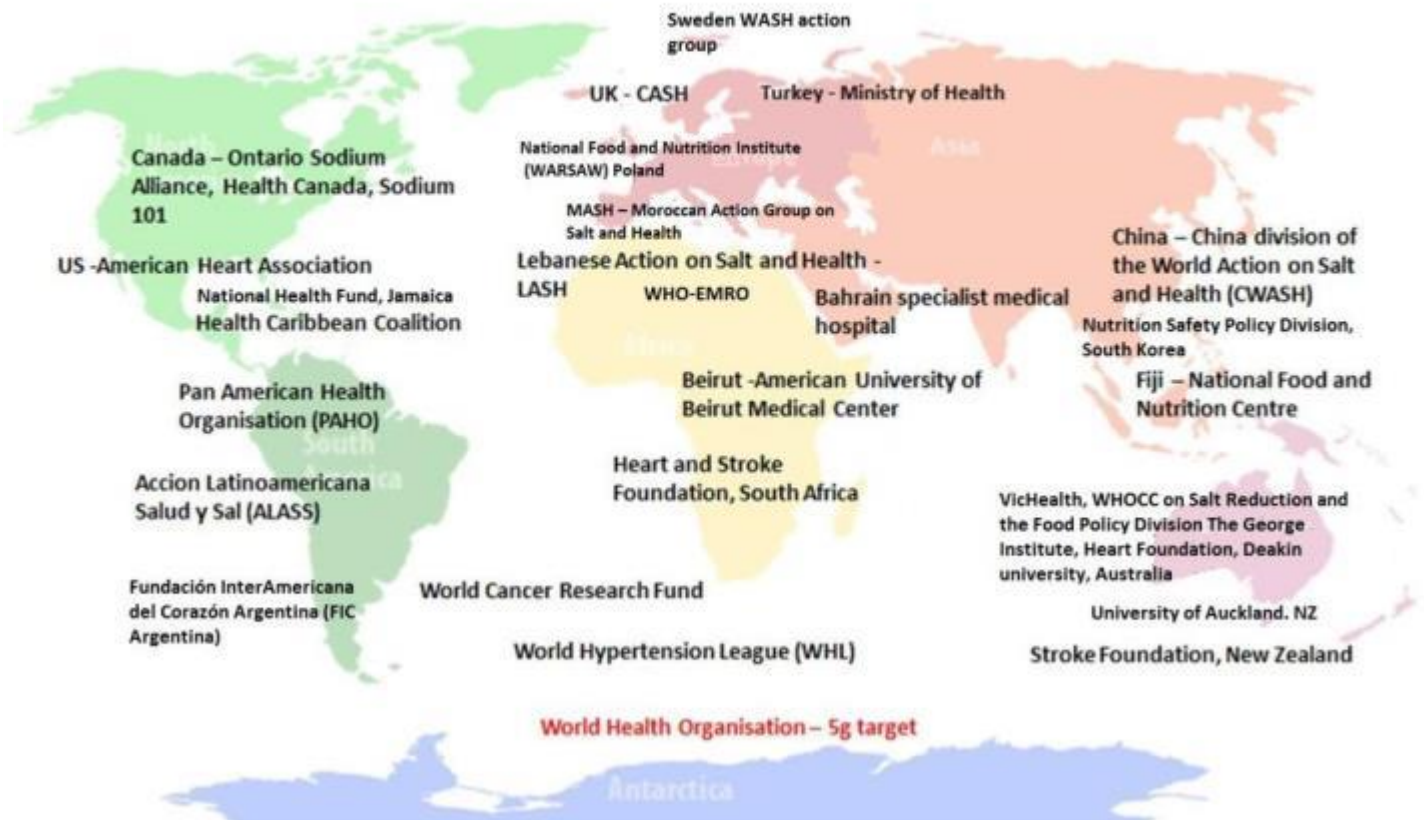
Many countries now plan their own activities, and co-ordinate activities in their own regions for example the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centres on salt reduction support countries in the Western Pacific region to establish salt reduction programs, and participate in World Salt Awareness Week.

As a result of the week:

- WSAW raised both the profile of WASH, and of those countries engaged in salt reduction activities.
- WSAW drew attention to the importance of salt reduction around the world
- WSAW provided the opportunity for countries to highlight salt reduction as an important public health intervention to reduce the global burden of disease from non-communicable diseases (life-style diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes) and bring it to the attention of both consumers and governments – to implement salt reduction programs.

WASH used twitter to engage with world groups interested in the week and took part in a twitter chat organised by American Heart Association and Centre for Disease Control. World Salt Awareness Week received media coverage through print, social media, TV and radio around the world. Examples include interviews on morning news programmes in South Africa, Youtube videos produced by the Program to Reduce Salt in Costa Rica and a salt awareness video which was broadcast on Kuwait TV.

Worldwide support



WASH members helped to translate the poster, as well as producing their own to raise awareness about the dangers of a high salt diet in their own countries:

Come considerare i valori riportati in etichetta ?	
Sodio	Salte
ALTO superiore a 0.4-0.5 g/100 g	superiore a 1-1.2 g/100 g
MEIO da 0.12 a 0.4-0.5 g/100 g	da 0.3 a 1-1.2 g/100 g
BASSO inferiore a 0.12 g/100 g	inferiore a 0.3 g/100 g

N.B. 1 grammo di sodio (riportato in etichetta) corrisponde a 2,5 grammi di sale

Action on Sugar

Government Level Work

The past 12 months have been very busy leading up to, and following, the government's publication of *Childhood Obesity: A plan for action*. Major progress has been made as the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL) has been passed through parliament and a national sugar reduction programme has been launched – both of which we have played a fundamental role in achieving. Our aim going forward is to ensure that the obesity plan is implemented as effectively as possible and to ensure that it is made robust, by including a commitment to reduce the marketing of, and promotions on, foods and drinks high in sugar, salt and fat – as well as other key missing actions.

Reformulation and Public Health England's Sugar Reduction Programme

We have been working closely with Public Health England (PHE) to advise that the guidelines set for the government's sugar reduction (reformulation) programme are ambitious, impactful and not mitigated by the food industry. We submitted an evidence-based report and letter of support to PHE to influence the guidelines set for the Sugar Reduction Programme, co-signed by approximately 20 NGOs, medical bodies and Professors. Through media campaigns and meetings, we have managed to convince the majority of the food and drink industry that they have to act and several brands and retailers are starting to announce their sugar reduction plans. Despite this, due to the voluntary nature of the sugar reduction programme there is a

risk that some companies will refuse to work towards the 20% sugar reduction target by 2020 and therefore compromise the overall success of the programme. As such, Action on Sugar aim to undertake the role of independent monitors, which will include a campaign to get the out-of-home sector to transparently provide their nutrition information which, currently, many are not doing. We have successfully ensured that reformulation is a priority for public health in the UK and have been expanding this message world-wide.

Marketing and advertising

An important action on Action on Sugar's obesity strategy is to only advertise and market 'healthy' foods and drinks. As part of our campaign, we have attended several meetings with the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) and submitted an official response to their consultation on the advertising of foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt to children. In December, CAP announced that they will extend their guidelines for broadcast – whereby the advertising of food and drink high in fat, sugar and salt are banned during children's programmes – to online. Although a step in the right direction, loopholes mean that all ages are still exposed to these types of adverts, for example during popular family talent shows. Action on Sugar were at the forefront of the media reaction (including, BBC Radio 4's The Today Programme and BBC Breakfast) responding that in the first instance, CAP must implement a 9pm watershed. We will continue to work closely with other NGOs, such as the Children's Food Campaign and Jamie

Oliver's Food Revolution, to ensure progress is made.

The Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL)

We attended several meetings with the HM Treasury, and publically rebutted campaigns by the soft drink industry attempting to get the government to abandon the SDIL, in order to ensure it is accepted by Parliament – which was officially confirmed in April. Since the announcement of the SDIL, several retailers and popular soft drinks brands have committed to reducing the sugar in their products below the SDIL threshold of 5%, including Tesco, Lucozade, Ribena, Fanta and Irn Bru.

NHS England

Action on Sugar had several meetings with NHS England, including the CEO Simon Stevens, to advise on sugar reduction policies within all NHS settings. We submitted a consultation response and subsequently the NHS have announced plans to restrict the sale of sugar sweetened drinks within all NHS settings, including hospitals, to less than 10% - with the intention of banning their sale completely if this target is not met. NHS England has also committed to other actions such as reducing promotions on, and advertising of, foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt in hospital settings.

Sugar Product Surveys

Action on Sugar has continued to successfully campaign for sugar reduction in food and drinks, through exposing high sugar products to the public with strong media support and putting pressure on manufacturers to take action.

Instant noodles can contain more salt than in 12 packets of crisps and more than 2 teaspoons of sugar per serving (May 2016)

This survey, conducted alongside CASH, showed that whilst many noodles are dangerously high in salt i.e. greater than 5g per serving, they even more surprisingly contain large amounts of hidden sugar.

Healthy Breakfast Biscuits? You Might As Well Have a Bowl of Coco Pops (June 2016)

The product survey, which analysed 39 breakfast biscuits sold in leading UK supermarkets, revealed 46% of breakfast biscuits surveyed contain the same or more sugars than a bowl (30g) of Kellogg's Coco Pops. Not one single product featured green front of pack labelling for sugars. Every single product contained at least one and some up to four teaspoons of sugars per serving.

Action on Sugar's New Research Shows Huge Differences in Sugar Levels in Similar Foods (Oct 2016)

Action on Sugar urged food manufacturers to get behind Public Health England's voluntary reformulation programme by releasing a survey of foods commonly consumed by children including breakfast cereals, yoghurts, biscuits, cakes, confectionery, pastries, ice creams and chocolate

spreads, showing that product comparisons with less sugar already exist on the market, for example; ASDA Smart Price Vanilla Flavour Ice Cream (7.9g) contains 46% less sugars compared to Waitrose Duchy Organic Vanilla Ice Cream (14.5g sugars per 100g) and Organix Goodies Gingerbread Men Biscuits (18.8g) contains 38% less sugars versus McVitie's Mini Gingerbread Men (30.4g sugars per 100g) – demonstrating that reducing sugar is possible for manufacturers.

Coffee shop cake with more sugar than 6 Krispy Kremes (Dec 2016)

Action on Sugar urged food manufacturers and cafes to participate in Public Health England's voluntary sugar reduction programme. Research revealed a popular fruity cake – Pret a Manger's Lemon Drizzle slice - contains a whopping 18 tsp of sugar per slice. That's three times a child's entire daily-recommended maximum sugar intake and more sugar than 6 Krispy Kremes. Compared to cafes, supermarkets are leading the way when it comes to offering customers lower calories and sugar per serving.

New survey reveals chocolate nut spreads contain 57 teaspoons of sugar per jar (April 2017)

Two slices of bread with chocolate spread (24g sugar) contains the entire daily maximum intake of sugar. There's over four times more sugar (57%) than hazelnuts (13%) in a jar of chocolate spread – despite being marketed as a 'hazelnut spread' Companies accused of misleading marketing aimed at children and reminded to reconsider their ethical and corporate responsibility. Action on Sugar is calling on the Government to get tougher on ensuring the 2020 sugar reduction targets are

achieved – with penalties for those companies who fail to comply.

In addition to the publications above, we are continuing to research and collect as much product data as possible and submit to our database to enable us to monitor progress made by the food and drink industry.

MANUFACTURERS & RETAILERS

Action on Sugar continues to meet with manufactures and retailers to encourage, inform and monitor sugar reduction. We have attended several meetings with the majority of retailers and brands, including out-of-home coffee shop and restaurant chains over the last few months, both independently and as part of PHE's sugar reduction programme. We continue to meet with the Food and Drink Federation, British Soft Drinks Association and British Retail Consortium to assess commitment and encourage action. Recently, sugar reduction commitments have been announced by many leading brands and retailers, including Nestle, Kellogg, Lucozade, Ribena, Irn Bru, Tesco and Waitrose all of whom have acknowledged Action on Sugar as key influencers in their decision making.

GAINING EXPERTISE IN THE FOOD TECHNOLOGY OF SUGAR REDUCTION

Action on Sugar continues to build relationships with food technologist experts, to enable us to advice on the reformulation of sugary foods and drinks in a realistic and practical way.

Raising our profile

Action on Sugar has been building influential relationships to ensure that the momentum of our campaign continues to expand. We are established as the expert voice on reformulation amongst our peers (including the 40 plus members of the Obesity Health Alliance) and government, and have garnered professional support for our campaign by facilitating round table events, speaking at conferences and providing research, evidence reports and experience based on our role in the UK's successful Salt Reduction programme.

In October, we worked with Channel 4 to record a Dispatches documentary, featuring Action on Sugar and Jamie Oliver, which exposed how David Cameron's Obesity Plan was significantly watered-down by Theresa May, to pressure her into making a public commitment to tackle obesity as a priority, and thus release a stronger strategy. In conjunction with the airing of the documentary, Action on Sugar participated in a live panel debate organised by channel 4 and Jamie Oliver, to encourage the public to ask their MPs and Theresa May for a stronger obesity plan, via social media.

Action on Sugar have become the leading media voice when it comes to sugar reduction and obesity policies – across TV, radio and written media (off-and online). We continue to expand our social media presence. Twitter (almost 10,000 followers) and Facebook (over 2,500 likes) are useful platforms to share our work and gain support from the public and professionals. Action on Sugar regularly contributes articles to national consumer and magazines and websites, such as Jamie Oliver's

Food Revolution website, healthy living and home magazines and dental websites to raise awareness of our campaign and attract public backing.

CONFERENCES

The Action on Sugar team has spoken at a number of influential national and international conferences, seminars and expert group meetings, talking about the progress made in public health policy in the UK to tackle obesity and type 2 diabetes and how this can be replicated world-wide.

In October, Kawther Hashem delivered an award-winning presentation at the QMUL William Harvey Day, on how sugar affects our health, what are the common sources of sugar in our diet, what the government and food industry can do about it.

Action on Sugar Publications

Systematic review of the literature on the effectiveness of product reformulation measures to reduce the sugar content of food and drink on the population's sugar consumption and health: a study protocol. (May 2016)

A systematic review was carried out to assess the evidence on the effectiveness of product reformulation measures to reduce the sugar content of food and drink. Electronic databases were searched for bibliographies of papers which matched the inclusion criteria. The bibliographies were then hand searched for any other relevant references. Grey literature searches were also

undertaken using keywords such as ‘sugar’ and ‘food’ or ‘drink’ and ‘reduction’. The selection of the studies and the quality appraisal were then performed independently by two reviewers. Data was initially analysed through a narrative synthesis method.

Hashem KM, He FJ, MacGregor GA. Systematic review of the literature on the effectiveness of product reformulation measures to reduce the sugar content of food and drink on the population's sugar consumption and health: a study protocol. *BMJ Open* 2016;6:e011052. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2016-011052

Energy Drinks: What's the evidence? Food Research Collaboration (July 2016).

There has been a rapid increase in the consumption of energy drinks in the last few years along with a rise in the sales of the drinks by 155% from 2006 – 2014 meaning there is an average per capita consumption of 9.4 litres. Evidence indicates teenagers who consume energy drinks are more likely to have an unhealthy diet, consume alcohol and smoke. There is limited evidence concerning young children consuming energy drinks and the long term effects on them. Examples of actions in response to these concerns include more specific labelling and limits on the caffeine and sugar content and marketing and sales. Although there are gaps in the evidence, there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that energy drinks have negative health effects and it is now vital for policy makers and civil society to correct this.

<http://foodresearch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Energy-drinks-final-19-July-2016.pdf>

Cross-sectional survey of the amount of free sugars and calories in carbonated sugar-sweetened beverages on sale in the UK. (Nov 2016)

The study published in the *BMJ Open* revealed that the sugar content in carbonated sugar-sweetened beverages (CSSB) was found to be alarmingly high – with large variation in sugar content between different flavours and within the same type of flavour ranging from 3.3 to 52.8 g/330 mL – equivalent to 12 teaspoons. The findings demonstrate that the amount of sugar added to CSSB could be reduced without technical issues, there is an urgent need to reduce sugar by either setting incremental sugar reduction targets or ensuring the soft drinks sugar levy does result in reductions in sugar levels.

Hashem KM, He FJ, Jenner KH, et al Cross-sectional survey of the amount of free sugars and calories in carbonated sugar-sweetened beverages on sale in the UK *BMJ Open* 2016;6:e010874. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2015-010874

Salt and sugars content of breakfast cereals in the UK from 1992 to 2015 (Feb 2017)

The salt content of popular breakfast cereals sold in the UK since 2004 has decreased by approximately 50% over the past 10 years owing to the successful salt reduction programme – particularly the target-based approach to gradually reduce salt added to food. However, despite this, cereals STILL remain a major contributor to salt intake.

In stark contrast, sugar content in the same breakfast cereals has been steadily high since 1992 and calls have been made for food manufacturers to adapt the successful salt reduction programme by setting sugar targets for different categories of food and drink with immediate effect. This will successfully reduce sugar intake across the whole population and help to prevent obesity, type 2 diabetes and tooth decay. This research demonstrates that the sugar content of breakfast

cereals in the UK is of major concern, particularly in children's breakfast cereals, with a typical serving (30g) containing a third of a 4–6-year-old's maximum daily recommendation (19 g/d or 5 teaspoons of sugar) for sugar intake in the UK.

S Pombo-Rodrigues, Hashem KM, He FJ, MacGregor GA Salt and sugars content of breakfast cereals in the UK from 1992 to 2015. *Public Health Nutrition* Volume 20, Issue 8 June 2017, pp. 1500-1512

Sugar Awareness Week 2017

Sugar Awareness Week 2017 will be held from 6th to 12th November. The week aims to raise awareness of the impact of sugar on health to the general public. Plus, we will hold a Parliamentary reception to celebrate the success of manufacturers and retailers who have led the way in sugar reduction and as an opportunity to speak directly to MPs to get them behind the government strategies needed to tackle obesity, type 2 diabetes and tooth decay. Initially, Sugar Awareness Week 2017 was scheduled for May, but had to be rescheduled due to the Snap Election planned for June. Instead, during this time we launched our [2017 General Election Manifesto](#) calling on all Parties to prioritise public health and, in particular, child obesity.

Proposed theme for Sugar Awareness Week:

What price would you put on your health? Price promotions by supermarkets undermine the public's will to eat less sugar.

Next Steps

As a priority, Action on Sugar aims to undertake the role of independently monitoring the government's Sugar Reduction programme, and to improve the robustness of the voluntary programme. We will continue to meet with retailers and manufacturers to encourage, and advise on, sugar reduction and conducting surveys, as well as publicising progress amongst the public, government and other NGOs. This will include a focus on the 'out-of-home' sector, to get them to be transparent with their nutritional data.

We have started to plan our next Sugar Awareness Week in November 2017, having supported Salt Awareness Week in March this year. Initially this was planned for May, but had to be rescheduled due to the Snap Election on 8 June 2017. We will hold a Parliamentary Reception to celebrate the success of manufacturers and retailers who have led the way in sugar reduction and as an opportunity to speak directly to MPs to get them behind the government strategies needed to tackle obesity, type 2 diabetes and tooth decay.

We will continue to speak to key public health representatives in other countries to discuss how to disseminate programmes similar to the UK's Soft Drinks Industry Levy and Sugar Reformulation programme internationally.

Following the successful procession of the SDIL through Parliament, we would like to test the appetite within Government, PHE and the public for the sugar reduction targets of the remaining 9 categories of food most consumed by children to be mandated.

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