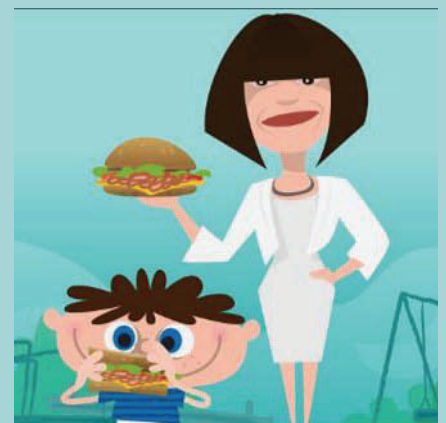




Consensus Action on Salt & Health



ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2009-JULY 2010

Charity registration 1098818

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About CASH

Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) is a group of specialists concerned with salt and its effects on health. It is successfully working to reach a consensus with the food industry and Government over the harmful effects of a high salt diet and bring about a reduction in the amount of salt in processed foods, catered foods and restaurant food, as well as salt added to cooking and at the table.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) published new evidence in July 2008 that the average adult consumes around 8.6g salt each day. This has fallen from 9.5g since 2000, a drop of about 10%. Although the recent figures show an encouraging decline in salt levels, many adults still eat around 9-12g of salt daily, up to twice the maximum amount of salt that is currently recommended (6g/day).

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 6g target of salt per day, the reduction from the current daily average level of 8.6g would mean that almost 18,000 lives would be saved each year and a further 18,000 people would be saved from the trauma and possible disability of a cardiovascular event which they survive. Salt is also linked to a number of other health conditions including stomach cancer, osteoporosis, kidney stones, kidney disease and obesity.

AIMS

The main source of salt in the UK diet is salt that is added in food processing and manufacture and in catered and restaurant/takeaway food. This accounts for around 75% of our salt intake and is hidden in commonly-consumed foods, e.g. bread, meat products and ready prepared meals. CASH works to put pressure on the food industry to reduce the amount of salt added to their foods (through media relations and meetings with the industry) and at the same time is working to educate the general public to be more salt aware.

In conjunction with the food industry, Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency, CASH will seek to ensure that the salt target of 6g per day for all adults and much less for children is achieved by 2014.

MEMBERS

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

STAFF

Katharine Jenner	CASH/WASH Campaign Manager
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Summary of the year 2009/2010

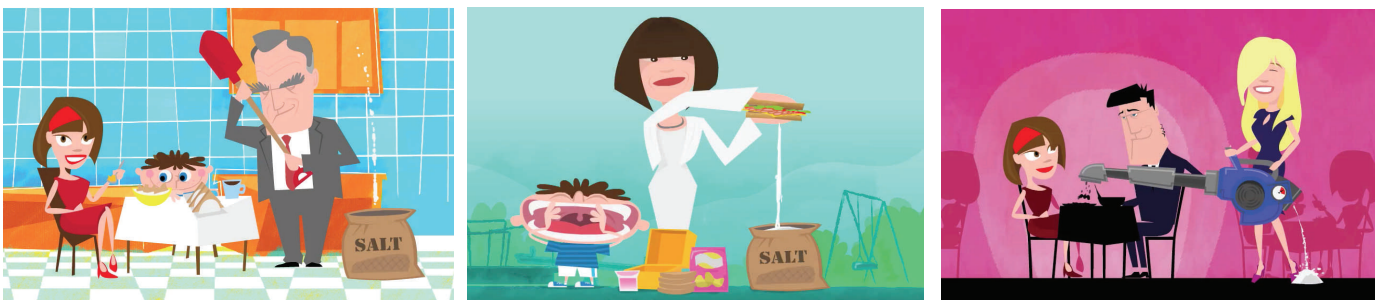
2009/2010 has been a productive year of expanding our workforce, moving offices, collaborating with other NGO stakeholders and producing numerous survey reports for the media. This Annual Report summarises the key activities and achievements that have been made during this period.

CASH staff changes

CASH was sad to say farewell to Press Officer Wendy Jarrett after 6 years at CASH, to CASH Coordinator Carrie Bolt, who had been working at CASH since 2007, and to Project Officer Charlotte Rush after one year. We are pleased to welcome Katharine Jenner (who previously held the post of WASH Coordinator) as the new Campaign Manager for CASH and WASH, Nutritionist Hannah Brinsden, Assistant Nutritionist Kay Dilley, WASH Coordinator Clare Farrand and our new part time Press Officers Amy Thorne and Emily Blewett. The expansion of the team marks a year of great progress for CASH and the work in salt reduction, both in the UK and internationally.

CASH commissioned an animation of the salt reduction journey

To celebrate the launch of the Food Standards Agency's salt campaign, CASH commissioned a short animation celebrating our journey, from the 1990s, where salt did not register as a concern due to a lack of publicised evidence and resistance from the food industry, to now, where salt reduction has come a long way due to collaborations between CASH, FSA, manufacturers, caterers and retailers to reduce salt. [Click here to view the animation in QuickTime.](#)



CASH relocated to the Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine

CASH have moved from St George's University to a new home in the Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine, Queen Mary, University of London, with CASH members Professor Sir Nicholas Wald and Professor Malcolm Law. We are thrilled to be part of such a great institution and would like to thank St George's for a great 13 years and the Wolfson Institute for their welcoming hospitality.

CASH 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. This is an ongoing process achieved through dedicated pages on our website for consumers and health care professionals and through our other resources, noted below.

In December 2009, CASH designed and printed a new poster and leaflet on Salt and Your Health to coincide with National Salt Awareness Week 2010. In conjunction with several major UK charities, we developed a series of factsheets on all of the conditions currently known to be affected by salt intake. Further details can be found under 'National Salt Awareness Week 2010'.

CASH reprinted three leaflets; *Salt and eating out*, *Salt intake and the health of your children*, and *It's never too late to reduce your salt intake*.

CASH receives a number of requests for resources throughout the year, however we recognise that the cost implications of resources are a barrier to individuals and health professionals. CASH were pleased to have the support of a grant from the Big Lottery Fund which enabled us to largely distribute the leaflets for free in 2009/2010. In the future, CASH will apply to receive further grants with the aim of providing all our resources free of charge for both health care professionals and consumers.

Other Alliances

CASH has been developing mutually beneficial alliances with other UK health charities. CASH has been able to offer space for comments on press releases, logos on leaflets and posters and links through from our website while also acting as cosignatories on campaigning materials and attending numerous meetings and conferences.

A list of organisations CASH have collaborated with in the last year include:

Asthma UK	National Osteoporosis Society
Blood Pressure Association	Netmums
Cancer Research UK	Sustain - Good Food for our Money Campaign
Diabetes UK	Sustain - The Children's Food Campaign
Environmental Health Teams	The British Heart Foundation
Kidney Research UK	The New Economics Foundation
MEND	The Stroke Association
Meniere's Society	Which?
National Obesity Forum	

Future plans

In 2010/2011 CASH intends to strengthen these relationships, as there are clear benefits to be seen from such collaborations whereby resources, learnings and ideas are shared.

Government level work

As of July 2010, the Nutrition Division, and therefore responsibility for the salt reduction policy, will be moving under the government's control at the Department of Health. CASH have urged the Health Secretary Andrew Lansley to commit to the continuation of the policy in this transitional period and in the long term. It is expected that the public awareness campaign will be dropped and that funding will be dramatically reduced in light of the severe financial cuts being made across healthcare. With the potential lack of funding and support for salt reduction at a senior government level, the work of CASH will be essential in keeping pressure on industry and awareness in the public arena.

The Food Standards Agency agreed to a flexible approach on Front of Pack labelling. CASH recommended that the criteria for salt labelled as 'Red' under the traffic light labelling should be changed from 40% of the daily recommended maximum intake of salt per portion to 30% and from a maximum of 1.50g/100g to 1.25g/100g. CASH also recommended that traffic light colours (red, amber and green) and text (high, medium or low) should be used in conjunction with percentage Guideline Daily Amounts (% GDAs), as independent research has shown that a combined approach to labelling is the most useful to UK consumers to help interpret nutritional information. The FSA's consumer survey found that a quarter of those questioned (26%) would change from their usual brand if they knew a lower salt option was available, something made easier by clear and consistent labelling.

However in what is seen as a very disappointing move, the FSA's Board decided to encourage food manufacturers to use two out of the three, rather than all three, elements of signpost labelling. [Click here for the FSA Report](#)

Surveys

CASH carries out a number of surveys on the salt content of popular food products and on foods eaten outside the home. We are conscious of over-saturation in the media with salt-related stories, we have established that certain elements still resonate strongly with the national and broadcast media, while other elements captivate the regional and online media, therefore our messages are still being communicated effectively.

CASH has had a busy year campaigning to reduce salt in our foods with strong media support for our surveys, reaching millions of people. 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 can be seen below.

June 2010. Research carried out by CASH found dangerously high levels of salt in barbecue products. The salt content of 603 typical barbecue food products including sausages, burgers, marinated meat, bread rolls, cheese slices, potato salad, coleslaw, crisps and dips were surveyed from the major supermarkets and brands. Huge variations were found; a typical barbecue meal could contain

less than 3g of salt, or as much as 12g of salt - more than double the daily maximum recommendation. The story received coverage in the regional media plus The Sun and The Telegraph.

May 2010. Research carried out by London Environmental Health Teams on behalf of CASH found shocking levels of salt and saturated fat in takeaway meals chosen by school children for lunch and as an after school snack. One kebab and chips meal was found to contain as much as 7.4g of salt, more than an adult's maximum daily salt recommendation. The campaign received wide coverage, especially in London where coverage included the BBC London Lunchtime and Evening News, encouraging some great discussion between high profile campaigners and journalists about school children and takeaways.

April 2010. Research carried out by CASH found shocking levels of salt in curries. The salt content of 784 Indian and South Asian products from the major food retailers, independent stores and Brick Lane takeaway restaurants was sampled in the biggest survey of its kind in the UK. A shop bought curry with all the extras (Rice, Naan, Sag Aloo,

Poppadom and Chutney) could provide over 22g of salt. The survey was widely supported by both UK and international media. Following the survey, CASH have been developing guidance and support materials for restaurants wanting to reduce the amount of salt in their meals.

February 2010. Research carried out by CASH showed huge variations in the salt content of soups and that 25% of the surveyed soups still fail to meet the FSA 2010 salt targets. 575 soups from the 7 major food retailers and 3 large cafes were surveyed. High street cafes were some of the worst offenders and many popular household brands were still far too high in salt. The report achieved broadcast coverage including GMTV, BBC News and most national press titles. CASH have since held positive talks with a number of the worst offenders.

December 2009. Research carried out by CASH has shown high levels of salt in products from Christmas menus. Fast food outlets and cafes had the highest salt content. 87 products from Christmas menus in cafes, fast food chains and supermarkets were surveyed, including sandwiches, salads, pastries and cakes. A whole meal from the McDonalds festive menu contained over the daily maximum recommendation for salt and one sandwich from EAT. contained 4.2g salt

November 2009. Pasta sauce survey highlights manufacturers still have a long way to go in salt reduction. CASH research has found that many pasta sauces on sale in the UK are 'full of it'. Some branded products and those fronted by celebrity chefs contain much higher amounts of salt than others. CASH demonstrated how choosing supermarket own brands or making your own sauces could significantly lower your salt intake. The story received huge media interest from various sources including Newsround and 5Live. Since the report, Jamie Oliver has reduced the amount of salt in his sauces - one of which contained as much salt as ten packets of crisps per portion.

Research showed supermarket own brand 'Free From' products can contain higher levels of salt compared to their standard counterparts. Seventy one 'Free From' products and their standard counterparts from the 5 major retailers were sampled using the product labels. One 'Free From' product contained as much as 6 times more salt than its comparison product. The story was covered comprehensively online and Sainsbury's have since reformulated their entire Free From range.

Other PR Activities

Some cinema popcorn found to contain huge amounts of salt. A CASH survey in conjunction with The Sun found that some popcorn sold to children was shockingly high in salt, with the highest levels found in Vue cinemas, containing over 7g salt per portion; over double a child's maximum daily intake. The lowest levels were found in Showcase cinemas. Cinemas have pledged to investigate the salt content and the labelling of their products.


Future Surveys

CASH have a number of plans for future surveys to expose the high levels of salt still contained within processed, catering and foods consumed out of the home. With funding from the British Heart Foundation and The Marcella Trust, we are able to expand the sphere of products surveyed from supermarket and big brand products to those previously not investigated by CASH. Using historical data from previous CASH surveys, we aim to demonstrate how far some manufacturers have come, and how much further others still have to go.

In addition to surveys, we have undertaken several initiatives resulting in media coverage for salt reduction, such as current affairs programming, investigative journalism and consumer magazine work. Full details of all our media coverage are listed on the CASH website.

NICE Public Health Programme Guidance on the 'Prevention of cardiovascular disease at population level'. This report placed salt reduction as their first recommendation of their guidance to reduce cardiovascular disease. CASH commented on the report, which endorses a reduction in the salt target from 6g a day to 3g a day by 2025, and received media coverage in the national press.

BBC's Watchdog investigates how much salt is in 'healthy' food. BBC's Watchdog broadcast an in depth look at the huge amounts of salt hidden in our food, drawing attention specifically to foods marketed as 'healthy' on sale on our high streets and supermarkets. The programme provoked a fantastic response, for example ITSU, a chain of Japanese restaurants, said "This is just what we needed - a kick up the butt is the way to get action in our company",⁹



Food Standards Agency campaign shows UK shoppers are still unaware where salt is hidden. CASH carried out a product survey looking at products still high in salt to coincide with the launch of the FSA's 4th phase of their salt advertising campaign. Additionally, a survey carried out by the Food Standards Agency showed that the majority of consumers still think most salt in their diet is from crisps, snacks and ready meals, when in fact bread, meat products and cereals are the three highest contributors.

Dispatches looks at the salt hidden in breakfast cereals. In the 26th Oct edition of Channel 4's Dispatches, which included an interview with our Chairman Professor MacGregor, reporter Jane Moore uncovered what is actually in our breakfast food. She revealed just how much sugar and salt are in children's cereals and found branded cereals such as Kellogg's and Nestle are higher in salt than supermarket own brands. Since this programme was aired, Kellogg's have announced a reduction in their salt content by a further 30%.

Future PR activity

We know that the out of home sector has not made as much progress as the supermarkets in reducing the amount of salt added to products, perhaps because there is no requirement to provide labelling or nutritional information and no voluntary salt targets for them to work towards. Our aim for 2010/2011 and coming years is to raise awareness of the fact that foods bought outside the home or in the catering sector may be very high in salt. Consumer magazines, trade press and more current affair-style investigations are being explored.

Targeting Chefs

CASH are encouraged to see many chefs and broadcasters talking about salt, however there is no dedicated campaign to get chefs to use less salt in their cooking. Their influence on home cooking is considerable and is a focus for CASH. CASH would like to see all chefs think more carefully about the salt they add to food and consider the taste preferences of the customers. We have asked all chefs to join our campaign and encourage chefs to give greater choice by adding less salt.

In 2010/2011 we hope to be able to work more closely with a number of chefs, and also directly with both independent and chain restaurants, following our learnings from the Pizza project.

Pilot study on pizza restaurants

CASH secured additional funding from the Food Standards Agency to conduct a pilot study looking at how pizza restaurants could reduce salt in their food. The study, which worked with independent and small-chain pizza restaurants to develop a toolkit to help them reduce salt levels in their pizzas, suggested that a successful reduction can be made with an intervention. Overall, the project indicated that simple practical advice targeting specific kitchen practices can help smaller businesses to produce lower salt food, particularly if an appropriate communication channel is used. CASH intend to use the learnings from this project to apply to other food outlets in the future. [Click here for the full report](#)



Working with the food industry

CASH has 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. Communications have been held thus far, or are planned, with companies including; Eat., Food and Drink Federation, Heinz, Kellogg's, Marks and Spencer's, Mars Masterfoods, Morrison's, LIDL, Sainsbury's, Rude Health, Unilever.

Wagamama's, following a Watchdog programme earlier in the year, has been working with the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) to reduce salt in their meals.

Sainsbury's has announced, since the CASH 'free from' survey, that their Free From products will be re-launched with lower salt levels from January 2010.

Jamie Oliver has made an incredible reduction in his pasta sauce following our release. The salt content has come down from 5.3g to 0.9g per portion - over 80%!

Subway has recently announced they would be reducing the average level of salt across their range by 33% with thanks to CASH.

Kellogg's finally announced a 30% reduction in the salt content of their cereal ranges including Rice Krispies, Corn Flakes, Coco Pops, Frosties and Crunchy Nut Cornflakes.

Heinz is phasing in a reformulated standard Heinz Tomato Ketchup recipe across the UK and Europe, which will match the revised FSA salt reduction target set for 2010, while still keeping all the taste. Heinz soups have been reduced in salt by 39%.

The Food and Drink Federation announced that the salt content of food bought in UK supermarkets has reduced by the equivalent of nearly 8,000 tonnes in the past two years.

The **Food Standards Agency** published the industry commitments to salt reduction, showing all the major retailers are on track to meet the 2010 salt targets with many other manufacturers making significant reductions so far.

NICE placed salt at the top of their recommendations for prevention of cardiovascular disease at population level. CASH welcomed the expert guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, NICE, on salt reduction as it endorses and strengthens the current UK campaign being carried out by the FSA and CASH. Furthermore, we welcome the reduction in the salt target from 6g a day to 3g a day by 2025 as this will prevent many thousands more deaths from stroke and heart disease. [Click here for the guidance](#)

Research demonstrates a new damaging effect of salt intake on the circulatory system. 29.06.2010 - A new study published today provides increasing evidence to suggest that our high salt intake has direct damaging effects on small blood vessels (capillaries) that may be independent and additive to the effect of salt in raising blood pressure.


Effect of modest salt reduction on skin capillary rarefaction in white, black, and Asian individuals with mild hypertension. FJ He, M Marciniak, ND Markandu, TF Antonios, and GA Macgregor. *Hypertension*. 2010; 56: 253.

A new study further confirms salt reduction as a major international public health target. A new paper by Bibbins-Domingo *et al* published in the New England Journal of Medicine makes a further compelling case for salt reduction throughout the world. The paper emphasises the enormous public health benefits, and medical cost reductions, of salt reduction on cardiovascular disease.

Dietary Salt Reductions and Cardiovascular Disease. Soldin O. P., Pearce E. N., Stagnaro-Green A., de Borst M. H., Navis G., Graudal N., Jürgens G., Bibbins-Domingo K., Goldman L. *N Engl J Med* 2010; 362:2224-2226, Jun 10, 2010.

Review of the current and planned salt reduction approaches that are being put in place around the world. He & MacGregor (2010) published this paper which also reviews the increasing evidence that a high salt intake may directly increase the risk of stroke, left ventricular hypertrophy, and renal disease; is associated with obesity, renal stones and osteoporosis; and is probably a major cause of stomach cancer.

Reducing Population Salt Intake Worldwide: From Evidence to Implementation. Feng J. He, Graham A. MacGregor. *Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases*. 52:5, 363-382, March 2010



BMJ paper further cements the case for population-wide salt reduction. A new meta-analysis of prospective studies on salt intake, stroke, and cardiovascular disease has made the case for population-wide salt reduction even stronger. The analysis, by Professor Strazzullo and Professor Cappuccio shows that a difference of 5g a day in habitual salt intake is associated with a 23% difference in the rate of stroke and a 17% difference in the rate of total cardiovascular disease. Based on these results, reducing daily salt intake by 5g at the population level could avert one and a quarter million deaths from stroke and almost three million deaths from cardiovascular disease each year.

Salt intake, stroke, and cardiovascular disease: meta-analysis of prospective studies. Pasquale Strazzullo, Lanfranco D'Elia, Ngianga-Bakwin Kandala, Francesco P Cappuccio. *BMJ*. 2009; 339: b4567.

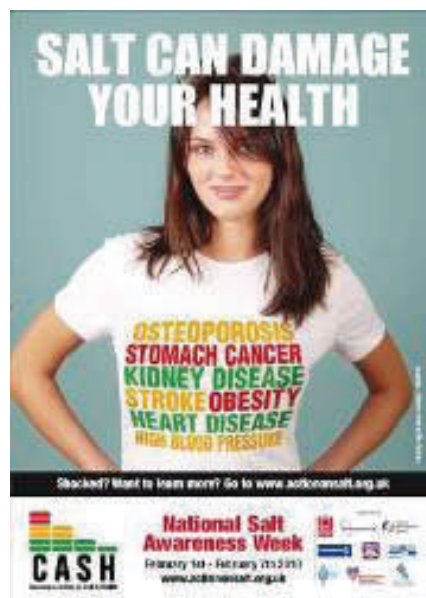
Bread is still the highest contributor of salt to our diet according to the figures for the sources of salt in our diet which have been published as part of the phase one National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) rolling programme. The second phase, to be published next year, will announce results of the 24hr urinary sodium analysis.

[Click here for the full report \(pg 46\)](#)

National Salt Awareness Week 2010

CASH organised the 11th annual National Salt Awareness Week. The focus for the Week was 'Salt and Your Health' We wished to publicise the fact that salt can contribute to a range of health conditions such as stomach cancer, osteoporosis, kidney disease and obesity and not just to blood pressure which is the most widely known health implication of salt.

We highlighted the fact that the general public were not aware of the long-term health implications of eating a high salt diet. CASH would like to thank all those who made Salt Awareness Week 2010 such a successful event.



National Salt Awareness Week received strong support around the country, with over 500 supporting events in schools, hospitals, surgeries, libraries and universities around the UK. Activities ranged from providing displays of posters and leaflets to cooking demonstrations, quizzes and low salt menu changes. Thank you to all the health care professionals that helped to organise the supporting events that took place.

CASH worked with a number of major UK charities, representing each of the conditions, to develop the leaflet and poster for the event and factsheets for health professionals. Thank you to the following UK charities for their support:



The National Salt Awareness Week Parliamentary reception, held at the Terrace Marquee in the House of Commons, was attended by 107 members of the food industry, NGO's and other relevant parties as well as by a number of MP's including Mary Creagh who hosted the event and the then Minister for Public Health, Gillian Merron. The event featured stands from our supporting health charities and industry representatives with blood pressure testing offered by the Blood Pressure Association.

Thank you to our corporate supporters of the Reception:

Lo Salt, The Co-operative Group, Marks and Spencer, Heinz, Morrison's PLC, McCain Foods, Pepsico (Walkers), Waitrose, Asda and Sainsbury's. Thank you also to the British Heart Foundation for a donation towards the Reception.

Blood pressure testing



Speaker Gillian Merron MP



Brits still don't know why salt is bad for them. A survey commissioned by CASH revealed that whilst as many as 9 out of 10 people in the UK know salt can damage their health, very few have any idea how. For instance, only 34% are aware a high salt intake can lead to stroke and 61% heart disease. Even less people are aware that salt is linked to conditions such as osteoporosis (4%), stomach cancer (6%), obesity (13%), kidney stones and kidney disease (27%), which can affect anyone over their lifetime. The release was targeted to local radio and press and achieved an estimated 12.5million opportunities to see/hear the message.

Thank you to our high-profile supporters and organisations including :

Anne Diamond (Journalist and Health Campaigner) , **Anthony Worrall Thompson** (Chef), **Annabel Karmel** (Nutritionist), **Anton Edelmann** (Chef), **The Children's Food Campaign** (Sustain), **Peter Hardens** (Editor of London Restaurant Guide), **Netmums** (Parenting website), **Nigel Denby** (Author, Dietician), **Galton Blackiston** (Chef, Morston Hall) and **The School Food Trust**.



Evaluation of Salt Awareness Week 2010 highlighted the need for the following:

- Further work to reach ethnic minorities and areas of social deprivation
- To continue to distribute the posters and leaflets via more time and cost-efficient routes, such as emailing PDFs
- Establish a monitoring and evaluation process to understand the use and effectiveness of the leaflets/posters and to share ideas between health professionals
- Incorporate a product-based survey into the press release for broadcast pick up
- Provide clarity of CASH's position on the role of Potassium-based salt and other salt replacers

Future plans

National Salt Awareness Week 2011 'Salt and Young Men'. CASH have identified that whilst young men are more at risk of developing health problems such as high blood pressure, stroke and kidney stones, they are less likely to be aware that a high salt diet is related to those conditions. According to NDNS data, young men are also more likely to have a higher salt diet and eat less fruit and vegetables.

Again we will be working with our national and international partners to ensure this is a high profile event with media coverage across the country. We will also continue to ensure that the Salt Awareness Week 2011 is coordinated globally. We will work in partnership with other non-government organisations to review the evidence surrounding salt and men's health and to raise awareness about salt and the related health implications.

Website Redevelopment

Working with the Queen Mary University team, CASH are redeveloping the 'www.actiononsalt.org.uk' website with a view to publishing a more user-friendly, functional website in the late autumn. This important and long overdue project will allow CASH to clearly archive both their own work and the wider work around salt reduction that is going on throughout the UK, as well as providing a more accessible platform for consumers, health professionals and the media to access information about CASH and salt reduction.

Consumer campaigning

Less Salt Please! We have had a great consumer response to our campaigns and are helping the public speak up and ask for *Less Salt Please!* We are encouraging the general public to write to manufacturers and local restaurants if their food is too salty, ask for less salt when eating out, and to let us know if they come across products that are high in salt. CASH are providing template letters and suggestions on how to go about this, as well as considering a number of resources such as fridge magnets and post-it notes so that the concept can be distributed beyond our reach.



You can also find CASH on social networking site [Twitter](#)



World Action on Salt and Health

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, following the success of the UK group Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH). WASH encourages and supports experts in different countries in setting up their own local campaigns. Activities range from encouraging multi-national food companies to reduce salt in their products, raising awareness amongst consumers through media activity, working with Governments and consulting on clear nutrition labelling.

[To view a list of aims click here](#)

WASH Membership

World Action on Salt and Health is now in its fourth year, and the membership has grown to 411 individuals from 82 countries. Since July 2009, members have joined from new countries including Costa Rica & Chile. New members include Dr Vanessa Garcia-Larsen, Chile; Adriana Blanco, Costa Rica; Henry Uitslag, Netherlands; Juan Manuel Ballesteros & Napoleón Pérez-Farinós, Spain; Professor A. Djazayeri, Professor R. Malekzaden & Dr M. Attar, Iran; Professor K. Narkiewicz, Poland; Mr R. Correa-Rotter, Mexico.

[To view a full list of all WASH members click here](#)

World Salt Awareness Week 2010

World Action on Salt and Health successfully held its second World Salt Awareness Week from February 1st - 7th 2010, reflecting the UK theme of Salt and Your Health. World Salt Awareness Week was observed all over the world by countries including: **Australia, Barbados, Bulgaria, Canada, Cuba, Estonia, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, UK and USA.**

International Products Survey

In July 2009, WASH surveyed over 260 food products available around the world from food manufacturers such as KFC, McDonalds, Kellogg's, Nestle, Burger King and Subway for our international products survey. Not one product surveyed had the same salt content around the world and some displayed huge differences in salt content from one country to another. The survey combined the efforts from our member countries to receive international coverage.

Country Updates

World Health Organisation Support for Salt Reduction

Following a technical meeting in Paris, stimulated by pressure from CASH, the WHO is now getting all of its regional offices to start initiating salt reduction policies including in Europe (via the European Salt Action Network), the Americas (via the Pan-American Health Organisation) and Asia-Pacific.

The WHO and The Food Standards Agency jointly hosted a meeting in the UK to examine the requirements for a successful salt reduction strategy. Discussions at the meeting covered consumer engagement, awareness campaigns and the reformulation of foods.

Various countries presented details on the actions they have taken and their achievements, failures and lessons learnt which will be published in a final report setting out recommendations to the WHO on how salt in the world population's diet could best be reduced. [Click here for further details](#)

The European Salt Action Network (ESAN)

EU Framework for National Salt Initiatives

The European Commission developed an EU Framework for National Salt Initiatives. The goal of this initiative is to contribute towards reduced salt intake at population level in order to achieve the national or WHO recommendations of no more than 5g/day. The initiative will work towards a reduction in salt intake of 16% over 4 years (4% per year) against the 2008 levels.

The framework will concentrate on 4 elements:

1. **Benchmarking/categories**
2. **Public Awareness**
3. **Reformulation**
4. **Monitoring**

At least 26 EU countries have offered their support to the initiative, which is being led by the UK's Food Standard's Agency. The FSA is due to hold the 4th ESAN meeting in September this year.

Spotlight on the United States.

The United States has made significant steps towards salt reduction in the last six months:

- 1) The Institute of Medicine has released the report '**Strategies to Reduce Sodium Intake in the United States**', recommending that the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) set mandatory national standards for the sodium content in foods.

[Click here for the IoM Report](#)

2) **New York City set a salt reduction goal** of gradually reducing the amount of salt in packaged and restaurant food by 25% over the next five years. The plan includes voluntary targets, based on those currently seen in the UK, which although will not be legislated, will require cooperation from manufacturers on a national scale.

[Click here for the targets](#)

3) **The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC,** studied salt intakes and found that 9 out of 10 Americans eat too much salt with most of them getting more than twice the maximum recommended daily amount.

[Click here for the press release](#)

Future Plans for WASH:

- Follow up the international products review with international out of home manufacturers
- Develop a survey with relevance to less affluent countries
- Promote the EU and WHO action groups to all nations
- Develop a framework for effective salt reduction strategies and toolkit for use in developed and developing countries
- Continue with membership drive and correspondence

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