

# Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care

For staff and visitors across all catering and retail outlets and vending

Publication date: June 2017



The British Dietetic Association (BDA) and Hospital Caterer's Association (HCA) fully endorse the implementation of these new Minimum Nutritional standards for catering in health and social care.



Food is the best form of medicine

# Foreword

---

People are increasingly eating meals and snacks outside of their own homes, resulting in the consumption of an estimated quarter of their overall calories. Settings such as restaurants, coffee shops and takeaway businesses can impact on the quality of the food we eat and how much we eat through the food choices they offer.

Clearly workplace restaurants are also an important setting where staff, and visitors, can consume their main meal regularly during their working life and it is therefore vital that we make the healthier choice the easy choice. By helping staff to make healthier choices we can improve their health and wellbeing and also improve productivity and reduce staff absences.

The Obesity Prevention Strategy, "A Fitter Future for All", committed to ensuring that nutritional standards are in place for staff and visitors in health and social care settings including guidance on procurement and provision. The Public Health Agency (PHA), the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and **safe food**, alongside other delivery partners, have been tasked with delivering this outcome by 2019.

In order to achieve this, the three organisations, through the Regional Obesity Prevention Implementation Group and a targeted consultation, have jointly produced these minimum nutritional standards for implementation in catering in Health and Social Care, as well as private retail and vending machines.

These are food-based standards and have been developed around the FSA's Eatwell Guide. The Eatwell Guide was launched in Northern Ireland in March 2016 and reflects the updated dietary recommendations on sugar, fibre and starchy carbohydrates from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) report which was published in 2015.

These nutritional standards build on the already valuable work undertaken by catering staff within the Health Service to encourage healthier eating among staff and visitors, through providing healthy and sustainable food.

I believe the implementation of these nutritional standards in Health and Social Care will be an important step forward and also provides the opportunity to lead by example for others in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It is anticipated that these standards will be implemented across local Government and the wider public sector in due course and I would encourage other sectors to look at these and begin to implement them in their own settings – improving the health and wellbeing of their staff and ultimately of our population.



**Michael McBride**  
Chief Medical Officer for Northern Ireland

# Table of contents

---

Review date: June 2019

1 Executive summary	3
2 Acknowledgements	4
3 Introduction	5
4 Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care	9
5 Calories on menus	15
6 Future development	16
7 References	17
Appendix 1 – Portions of fruit and vegetables	18

# 1 Executive summary

The importance of a balanced diet in promoting good health is well known. Due to rising levels of obesity and the associated negative impacts on the health and well-being of the population in Northern Ireland, it is essential to promote and provide healthier food choices.

As part of the implementation of *A Fitter Future for All 2012–2022*<sup>1</sup> (the regional obesity prevention strategy), the issue of food provision within health and social care settings has been highlighted as an important area for development, both in terms of food provided to staff and visitors throughout healthcare facilities, and in leading system change and modelling good practice that will improve standards across Northern Ireland and help shift the norm of food offerings to become healthier. Through the Regional Obesity Prevention Implementation Group the Public Health Agency, Food Standards Agency and **safe food** together have produced minimum nutritional standards for catering for staff and visitors in Health and Social Care. These are summarised below and presented in more detail throughout the document.

Currently there is much valuable work being done within the Health and Social Care Trusts to encourage healthier eating amongst staff and visitors. These minimum nutritional standards will build on and strengthen activities at a regional level.

A key objective of the obesity prevention strategy 'A Fitter Future for All' is that '*nutritional standards are in place for staff and visitors in Health and Social Care (HSC) settings and across local government including guidance on procurement and provision.*' Therefore it is anticipated that these nutritional standards will also be rolled out across local government services and across the wider public sector. The standards are food-based standards modelled on the Eatwell Guide. They apply to all facilities that serve food or beverages to staff or visitors operating within Health and Social Care settings. This includes catering facilities as well as privately owned retail units and vending machines. The standards should be adhered to when food contracts are being specified in the procurement process (the sourcing, buying and provision or tendering process), and should be applied when planning menus.

## Membership of the Working Group



Public Health  
Agency

Angela McComb, Jennifer McBratney, Rachel Doherty,  
Caroline Bloomfield



Food  
Standards  
Agency

Joanne Casey,  
Sharon Gilmore



safe food

Andrew Castles, Joana Caldeira Fernandes da Silva,  
Marian O' Reilly

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health. *A Fitter Future for all. Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022*. Belfast: 2012.

## 2 Acknowledgements

---

The authors wish to thank and acknowledge the contribution of dietetic, catering and procurement colleagues from across the region during the development of these standards.

In particular we wish to acknowledge the input of:

**Elsa Witherspoon**  
Chair, Hospital Caterers' Association

**Deborah McNeill**  
Hospital Caterers' Association

**Tony O'Hara**  
Hospital Caterers' Association

**Pauline Mulholland**  
Board of British Dietetic Association,  
Dietetic Managers Northern Ireland

**Linda Convery**  
Health Improvement Dietitian,  
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

**Ruth Balmer**  
Health Improvement Dietitian,  
Northern Health and Social Care Trust

**Claire Kelly**  
University College Cork

**Florence McAllister**  
Business Services Organisation

**Tammy Quinn**  
Business Services Organisation

**Audrey Vennard**  
Business Services Organisation

The minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care have been modelled on the Eatwell Guide and based on Public Health England's (PHE) publication "Healthier and More Sustainable Catering: A toolkit for serving food to adults" The authors wish to thank colleagues in PHE for permission to use and adapt the toolkit used in England, and for support and advice, particularly Dr Louis Levy and many thanks also to Jane Crossley, Department of Health.

The authors also wish to acknowledge colleagues in the Scottish Government and Food Standards Scotland for sharing their knowledge and experiences acquired implementing the healthy living award and Healthcare Retail Standard particularly Anne Lee, National Health Service (NHS) Health Scotland.

Acknowledgement is also extended to our colleagues in Wales in particular Judith John, Consultant Dietitian in Public Health for the Welsh Government for insight and information relating to the Corporate Health Standards for Wales and to Jessica Bearman Lead Dietitian for Procurement NHS Wales.

# 3 Introduction

Evidence has shown that a healthy balanced diet with adequate amounts of physical activity can help to maintain a healthy weight, and lower the risk of chronic diseases including heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

The National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) data for Northern Ireland reveals that overall the population consumes too much saturated fat, added sugars and salt and not enough fruit, vegetables, oily fish or fibre compared with current Government recommendations.<sup>2</sup> Worryingly, levels of obesity continue to rise, 60 per cent of adults and 25 per cent of children in Northern Ireland were overweight or obese in 2015.<sup>3</sup>

## RATES OF OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY IN NI<sup>(1)</sup>

6 out of 10 adults in NI are classified as overweight or obese.

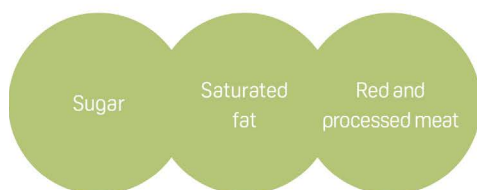


1 in 4 children in NI aged 2-15 are classified as overweight or obese.

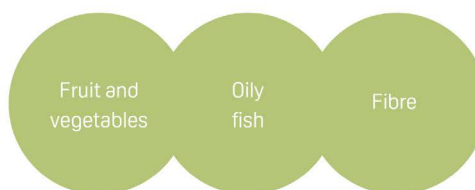


## NORTHERN IRELAND DIETARY INTAKES<sup>(2)</sup>

In NI we are eating too much:



And not enough:



The significant role of the workplace, and employers, in promoting healthier lifestyles and supporting staff to adopt and maintain better nutritional and other choices is increasingly recognised. As a major employer throughout the UK, the Health Service should promote and protect health and lead by setting an example to employers in both public and private sectors. In Northern Ireland there is much valuable work being done locally within Health and Social Care Trusts to promote healthier eating in the workplace and encourage appropriate lifestyle choices. Designing healthier menus, displaying calories on menus and implementing vending policies are some examples of this.

<sup>2</sup> Public Health England and the Food Standards Agency. National Diet and Nutrition Survey: results from Years one to four (combined) of the rolling programme for 2008 and 2009 to 2011 and 2012. London: 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Health. Health Survey Northern Ireland: First results 2015/2015 Belfast November 2016.

# 3 Introduction continued

---

To further support this work, and in line with key objectives of the regional obesity prevention strategy *A Fitter future for all 2012–2022*,<sup>1</sup> the Public Health Agency, Food Standards Agency and **safe food** together have developed minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care (HSC) settings in Northern Ireland. These standards support people working in Health Service catering businesses who want to offer consumers a choice of affordable, healthy and sustainable food.

## Development of the standards

To inform the development of the nutritional standards, a review was undertaken of the work being done in the other areas of the UK where nutritional standards have been successfully introduced in Health Service catering. This included the Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services<sup>4</sup> and supporting 'Healthier and More Sustainable Catering Toolkit'<sup>5</sup> in England, the Scottish Government and NHS Health Scotland's healthy living award<sup>6</sup> and the voluntary guidance on healthy food and drink choices for staff and visitors<sup>7</sup> and the Corporate Health Standard award in Wales.<sup>8</sup>

These initiatives were considered by the Working Group and in conjunction with dietetic, catering and procurement specialists from across the region have been adapted for use in Northern Ireland.

## Application of the standards

These nutritional standards relate to catering for staff and visitors in HSC settings (they do not apply to patient food and beverage provision because there are already standards in place for food and beverages served to patients). These new standards apply to all facilities serving food or beverages within HSC settings. This includes catering facilities, privately owned retail units and vending machines.

The standards should be adhered to when food contracts are being specified in procurement process (the sourcing, buying and provision or tendering process) and should also be applied when planning menus.

<sup>4</sup> Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. Government Buying Standards. London: 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Public Health England. Healthier and More Sustainable Catering: A toolkit for serving food to adults. London: 2014.

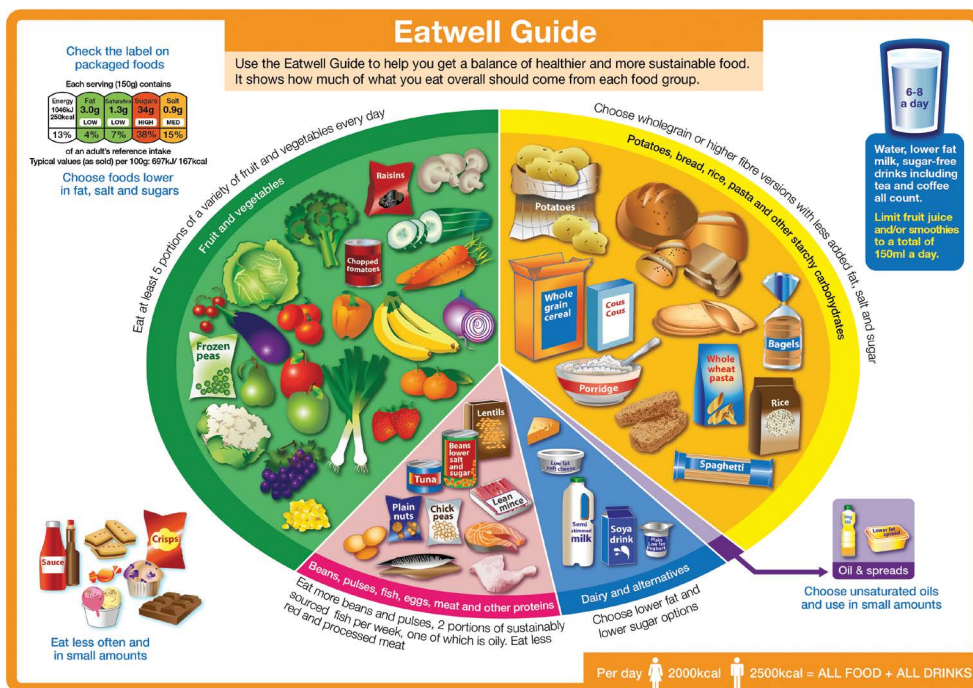
<sup>6</sup> National Health Service, Health Scotland. Healthy Living Award. Glasgow 2011 [cited 2016]; Available online: <http://www.healthylivingaward.co.uk/index>

<sup>7</sup> Welsh Government. Supporting Healthy Food and Drink Choices for Staff and Visitors in Hospital. 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Welsh Government. Corporate Health Standard: A quality framework and award for health and well-being in the workplace. 2016.

## Food-based standards

The nutritional standards for catering in HSC settings are food-based standards that have been developed around the Eatwell Guide.<sup>9</sup> Government recommendations for a healthy balanced diet are reflected in the Eatwell Guide. The Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland launched the refreshed Eatwell Guide locally on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016. It replaces the Eatwell Plate which has been providing guidance since 2007. The new guide reflects updated dietary recommendations on consumption of sugar, fibre and starchy carbohydrates from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's report on *Carbohydrates and Health*, published in 2015.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

© Crown copyright 2016

<sup>9</sup> Public Health England, in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland. Eatwell Guide. London 2016; Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>.



# 3 Introduction continued

The Eatwell Guide shows the proportions of the main food groups that form a healthy, balanced diet, focusing on the following:

- Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day
- Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates; choosing wholegrain versions where possible
- Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks); choosing lower fat and lower sugar options
- Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins (including two portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily)
- Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts
- Drink 6–8 cups/glasses of fluid a day
- If consuming foods and drinks high in fat, salt or sugar have these less often and in small amounts.

In addition to these messages consumers are reminded to eat less salt (no more than 6 g a day for adults), to get more active and be a healthy weight; it is also very important not to skip breakfast. The Eatwell Guide also provides information on calorie guidelines for adults and front of pack nutrition labelling.

The new Eatwell Guide and the booklet which explains the guide in more detail are available to download from the FSA in NI website:



<https://www.food.gov.uk/eatwell-guide>

## Industry Guidance

Where industry guidance exists, it should be applied when procuring products across all categories

e.g. UK wide salt targets <https://www.food.gov.uk/salt-targets>

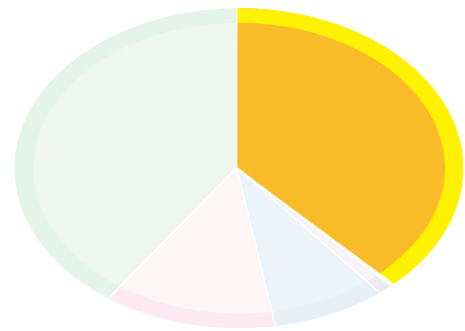
and sugar reduction guidance for industry

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidelines-on-reducing-sugar-in-food-published-for-industry> ,

any updates to these and any guidance that is published in the future.

# 4 Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care

## Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates



### Minimum standards

- Higher fibre starchy options must be available at all meal times (for example brown rice, wholemeal pasta, potatoes with skins).
- At least 50 per cent of breakfast cereals (procured by volume) provided must be higher in fibre – they must contain more than six grams of fibre per 100 g and must not exceed 12.3 g of total sugars per 100 g.
- At least 50 per cent of breads provided must be higher fibre, such as wholegrain, brown, wholemeal, wheaten and granary options. This includes all sandwiches.
- At least 50 per cent of breads, including sandwiches and breakfast cereals (procured by volume) must meet UK wide salt targets for the food industry. <https://www.food.gov.uk/salt-targets>

### What foods are included

- Breads - wholemeal, granary, brown, white, wheaten and soda bread, potato bread, pitta bread, chapattis, tortillas, paninis and bagels.
- Potatoes, sweet potato and squashes (except eaten as a vegetable portion for a main meal, in this case, sweet potato or squash does not count as a starchy food).
- Breakfast cereals.
- Rice, couscous, bulgar wheat (cracked wheat), semolina, tapioca, maize, cornmeal and quinoa.
- Pasta.
- Noodles (including rice, udon, soba and egg noodles).
- Other grains, for example oats, millet, barley, buckwheat, rye and spelt.

### Tips on choosing

#### Bread

- Choose a variety of breads – including wholegrain, brown, wholemeal, granary and seeded versions to meet the standard for a 50:50 split between white bread and higher fibre breads.
- Look for white bread with added nutrients and fibre for customers who do not like brown or wholemeal bread.

#### Flour

- Wholemeal flour can be used for some recipes or used to replace some of the white flour in a recipe.

#### Breakfast cereals

- Choose fortified breakfast cereals as they can be a good source of vitamin D, folate and iron.
- Include cereals that are higher in fibre and lower in sugar to meet the standard for a 50:50 split.

#### Potatoes and potato products

- Buy products that have not been cooked in salt.
- If using ready prepared potato products choose those with lower salt and fat contents.
- Boiled starchy foods, such as rice, potatoes and pasta, and grains should be cooked and served without added salt and fat.

#### Rice

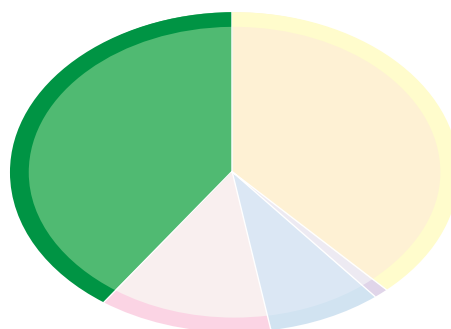
- Brown rice and wild rice are higher fibre alternatives.

#### Pasta

- Brown/wholemeal pasta is a higher fibre alternative.

# 4 Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care continued

## Fruit and vegetables



### Minimum standards

- At least five different types of fruit and vegetables must be available every day.
- A minimum of two vegetables must be served at each main meal service.\*
- Any canned vegetable products must meet UK wide salt targets for industry. <https://www.food.gov.uk/salt-targets>
- At least 50 per cent of desserts produced or procured must contain a portion of fruit, which can be fresh, canned in fruit juice, dried or frozen.\*
- A portion of fruit must be cheaper than a portion of hot or cold dessert.\*
- Pies, casseroles, stews and other composite dishes such as Bolognese sauce or curry must include a total of at least one portion of vegetables or fruit (this could be from a number of different fruits or vegetables).\*
- When offering fruit or vegetable juice or smoothie use the smallest available pack size. This is because only one 150 ml serving of fruit or vegetable juice or smoothie per day can be counted as a portion of 5-A-Day.
- Salad dressings must be offered 'on the side' for at least one salad option at each service.

### What foods are included

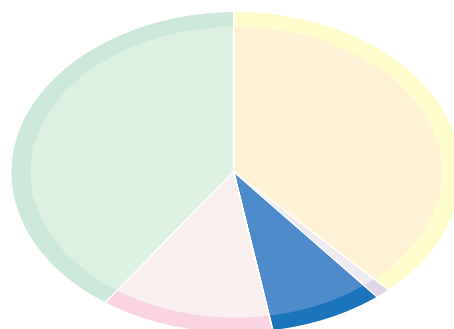
- Fresh, frozen, tinned, juiced and dried fruit.
- Fresh, frozen, tinned and juiced vegetables.
- Unsweetened 100 per cent fruit and vegetable juices (limited to one 150 ml serving per day, which counts towards the recommended 5-A-Day).
- Beans and pulses are also included but only count as a maximum of one portion per day.

### Tips on choosing

- Choose tinned fruit in juice rather than in syrup.
- Choose tinned vegetables and pulses in water, with no added salt or sugar.
- When buying vegetables choose those with no added sauces, salt or fat.
- When procuring fruit and vegetables buy a range of different types and colours to provide a variety of nutrients.
- Buy desserts that contain at least 80 g of fruit per portion.
- When buying composite dishes purchase those that provide at least 80 g fruit or vegetables per serving.
- Promote the use of fresh and seasonal fruit and vegetables.
- When buying fruits and vegetables grown abroad consider fair trade options.

\*The recommended portion of fresh, frozen, dried or canned fruit or vegetables including salad vegetables must be served. See appendix 1.

## Dairy and alternatives



### Minimum standards

- Milk and dairy foods should be offered every day and at every meal.
- Lower fat milk must be available every day.
- At least 75 per cent of milk (procured by volume) must be lower fat (semi skimmed, one per cent fat or skimmed).
- At least 50 per cent of hard yellow cheese (procured by volume) must have a maximum total fat content of 25 g of fat per 100 g.
- 75 per cent of yogurts (procured by volume) must be low-fat (that is, containing less than 3 g fat per 100 g ) AND low sugar (that is, containing less than 11 g of sugar per 100 g).

### What foods are included

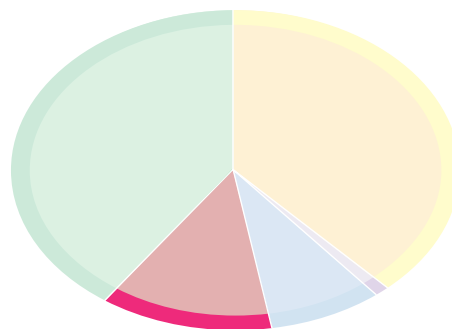
- All types of milk, including dried milk, reduced fat milk, goats and sheeps milk.
- Cheeses, for example Cheddar, cottage cheese, cheese spreads, Edam, goats cheese, Stilton and Camembert.
- Yogurt (fruit or plain, whole milk or low fat), or fromage frais.
- Milk-based sauces, custard and milk puddings, fortified soya drinks and yogurts.

### Tips on choosing

- Often, products are available that are lower in fat and saturates and can easily be incorporated into the menu.
- Switch to semi-skimmed, one per cent fat or skimmed milk.
- Milk drinks such as milkshakes and yogurt drinks can be high in sugar. Choose varieties that are lower in sugar or make them using fruit to sweeten.
- Choose a variety of cheeses to vary the fat content. Hard cheeses such as Cheddar tend to be higher in saturated fat then softer cheese such as Edam and Camembert.
- For cooking, use lower fat varieties of hard cheese; the best option is to use a small amount of mature reduced fat cheese.
- Crème fraiche and soured creams are available in lower fat varieties and can be used as a substitute for cheese with little difference to the taste of the recipe.

# 4 Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care continued

## Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins



### Minimum standards

- Meat or vegetarian protein source must be offered at all main meal service.
- Fish must be offered at least twice a week, one portion of which should be oily fish, for example, tuna or salmon.
- All vegetarian meals must contain a protein source. Cheese based vegetarian options must be offered in total not more than twice each week (where lunch only is served) and a maximum of four times each week (where both lunch and evening meal are served).
- A portion of red or processed meat should not exceed 70 g on average cooked weight.
- There must be at least two days each week when no processed meat or processed poultry is offered. This also applies to salad and sandwich counters.
- At least 50 per cent of meat products must meet the UK wide salt targets for industry. <https://www.food.gov.uk/salt-targets>
- Meat and meat products (procured by volume) are lower in saturated fat where available

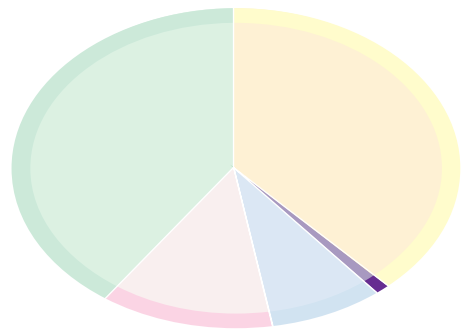
### What foods are included

- Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, beans, pulses, seeds and other non-dairy sources of protein.
- Meat includes all cuts of beef, lamb and pork. Processed meat includes ham, bacon, salami, corned beef, beef burgers and sausages and chicken goujons/nuggets.
- Poultry includes any fresh or frozen products.
- Fish includes any fresh, frozen and tinned fish, such as tuna, sardines, pilchards, mackerel and fish products such as fish cakes and fish fingers.
- Oily fish includes salmon, sardines, trout, mackerel, herring, pilchards and fresh tuna. A portion of oily fish is 140 g.
- Canned tuna is not considered an oily fish because the long chain omega-3 fatty acids are lost in the canning process for tuna. Other canned oily fish are not affected in the same way.
- Eggs – boiled, poached, scrambled or fried and omelettes.
- Beans and pulses, for example, baked beans, chickpeas, butter beans, kidney beans and lentils.
- Other protein products suitable for people following a vegetarian or vegan diet include nuts, tofu and quinoa and textured protein products such as soya.

### Tips on choosing

- Choose leaner cuts of meat where possible.
- Turkey and chicken are lower fat options when the skin is removed.
- When selecting processed meat items choose those with higher meat content and also consider the fat and salt content. Look at the label for more information.
- Meat in pastry, such as pies and sausage rolls, are often high in fat; choose lower fat options where available.
- Choose canned fish in spring water rather than oil or brine.
- Look for canned beans and pulses with no added salt and sugar.
- Source fish (including where it is an ingredient in a composite product) from sustainable sources meeting the Food and Agriculture Organization's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (includes Marine Stewardship Council certification and Marine Conservation Society "fish to eat" or equivalent). Avoid 'red list' or endangered species of farmed or wild fish (Marine Conservation Society 'fish to avoid').

## Oils and spreads



### Minimum standards

---

- All cooking oils must be based on mono or polyunsaturated fats.
- At least 75 per cent of spreads must be based on monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats.
- Choose salad dressings such as soya, rapeseed, corn, sunflower and olive oils.

### What foods are included

---

- Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated oils, spreads (maize, corn, safflower, sunflower, soya, olive and rapeseed) and low fat spreads and oil-based salad dressings containing these oils.

# 4 Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care continued

## Other food and drink high in fat, salt and sugar



### Minimum standards

- All mayonnaise and salad creams (including those used in potato salads and coleslaws) must be low fat, light or reduced calorie versions.
- At least 75 per cent of pre-packed ready meals and pre-prepared sandwiches (procured by volume) must contain less than six grams of saturated fat per portion.
- At least 50 per cent of all main course options must not be deep fried, batter-coated or bread crumb-coated, or include a creamy sauce or pastry. If chips are served, they must be thick-cut and oven-baked. There must be an alternative starchy side option available that is not deep-fried or coated in oil or butter. Do not add salt to chips before serving.
- There must be at least one day each week when high-fat starchy food such as chips, potato wedges, garlic bread or roast potatoes are not served.
- When desserts are served, half of desserts available should contain at least 50 per cent of their weight as fruit.
- Lower fat alternatives to cream should be used in cooking for example, low fat yogurt, very low fat crème fraiche and fromage frais or any similar product that has less than 10 g of fat per 100 g.
- When purchasing chips choose thick cut chips or potato wedges where possible, as these products absorb less fat.
- Savoury snacks including crisps and nuts must be available in the smallest commercially available packet size only (ideally 30 g or less). Unsalted versions must be available.
- At least 50 per cent of savoury snacks must be lower fat options.
- Baked products such as muffins and scones must be less than 60 g per scone and 80 g per muffin.
- No less than 80 per cent of beverages (procured by volume) must be sugar free, diet or have no added sugar.
- All sugar containing drinks must be available in the smallest single serve portion size and must not exceed 330 ml.
- Confectionery, packet sweet/biscuit snacks must be offered only in the smallest standard single serve portion size commercially available. Ideally this should not exceed 250 kcal per serving.
- Traybakes and baked products for example, muffins, scones, brownies and caramel squares must not exceed 250 kcal per serving.
- Salt or salt substitutes should not be on display at tables.
- Sugar sachets/cubes should not be on display at tables.

### What foods are included

- Chocolate, crisps, biscuits, pastries, cakes, puddings, ice cream, sugary soft drinks, sweets, jams, honey and sugar, as well as foods such as cakes, puddings, biscuits, pastries and ice cream as well as rich sauces and gravies.
- Butter, ghee, lard, suet, cooking oils (e.g. palm oil and coconut oil), oil-based salad dressings containing these oils, mayonnaise, cream, crème fraiche.

# 5 Calories on menus

---

Research shows that 75 per cent of people surveyed in Northern Ireland would like to see more information on healthy options when eating outside of the home<sup>10</sup>

Displaying calories on menus can help customers to make more informed choices and enable them to improve their diets. Calorie labelling helps consumers to make informed choices when eating away from home and also helps caterers to provide lower calorie options.

Calories are a measure of the amount of energy in food. Knowing how many calories are in food can help consumers to balance the energy eaten with the energy used, which is the key to a healthy weight. As a guide the average man needs around 2,500 calories a day to maintain a healthy body weight, and the average woman needs around 2,000 calories a day.

When displaying calorie information it is recommended that these four principles of calorie labelling are followed:

- Calorie information is displayed clearly and prominently at the point of choice.
- Calorie information is provided for all standardised food and drink items sold or provided (a standardised food or drink is on sale for at least 30 days a year)
- Calorie information is provided per portion/item/meal
- Information on average calorie requirements (e.g. women need around 2000 calories per day) is displayed clearly and prominently to help consumers 'make sense' of calorie information.

The Food Standards Agency is currently developing a new Caloriewise scheme in Northern Ireland in partnership with district councils. This work follows on from the success of the Caloriewise pilot in 2012 and the subsequent evaluation.

Caloriewise will encourage the display of Calories on menus within food establishments in Northern Ireland and gives caterers an opportunity to alter recipes to provide consumers with an informed easy choice whilst eating out.



## Making sense of Calories

<sup>10</sup>Agency FS. Exploring Food Attitudes and Behaviours in the UK: Findings from the Food and You Survey 2010. 2010.



## 6 Future development

---

It is recognised that the development of nutritional standards is the first step in the process towards successfully implementing them and that further resources and support will be required to achieve this.

The development of a regionally agreed vending policy for use within health and social care is also a further important aim for future work.

# 7 References

---

1. Department of Health (2012) A Fitter Future for all. Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012–2022
2. National Diet and Nutrition Survey: results from Years 1 to 4 (combined) of the rolling programme for 2008 and 2009 to 2011 and 2012
3. Department of Health. Health Survey Northern Ireland: First results 2014/2015
4. DEFRA affairs (2015) Government Buying Standards
5. Public Health England (2014) Healthier and More Sustainable Catering: A Toolkit for Serving Food to Adults
6. National Health Scotland (2011) Healthy Living Award.  
Available from: <http://www.healthylivingaward.co.uk/index>
7. Welsh Government (2011) Supporting Healthy Food and Drink Choices for Staff and Visitors in Hospital
8. Welsh Government (2016) Corporate Health Standard: A quality Framework and Award for Health and Well-being in the Workplace
9. Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland (2016) The Eatwell Guide,  
Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>
10. Food Standards Agency (2010) Exploring Food Attitudes and Behaviours in the UK: Findings from the Food and You Survey

# Appendix 1 – Portions of fruit and vegetables

---

## Fruit

One portion is

- two or more small fruit, for example two satsumas, plums or kiwi fruit
- one piece of fruit, such as one orange, apple, banana, pear or nectarine.
- half a grapefruit, one slice of melon or pineapple, two slices of mango or half an avocado
- six–seven strawberries, a handful of grapes or cherries.

A portion of dried fruit is around 30 g or around one heaped tablespoon of raisins, currants or sultanas, one tablespoon of mixed fruit, two figs, three prunes or one handful of dried banana chips.

## Juices and smoothies

- Unsweetened 100 per cent fruit juice, vegetable juice and smoothies can only ever count as a maximum of one portion.
- The combined total of drinks from fruit juice, vegetable juice and smoothies should not be more than 150 ml a day – which is a small glass.

## Vegetables

One portion is

- three heaped tablespoons of cooked vegetables, such as carrots, peas or sweetcorn
- two broccoli spears
- four heaped tablespoons of cooked kale, spinach, spring greens or green beans count as one portion

## Salad

One portion is

- three sticks of celery, a five centimetre piece of cucumber, one medium tomato or seven cherry tomatoes
- a dessert bowl of mixed salad.

## Pulses and beans

One portion is

- three heaped tablespoons of baked beans, haricot beans, kidney beans, cannellini beans, butter beans or chickpeas.

Pulses and beans will only count as one portion of 5-A-Day no matter how much is eaten.

## Potatoes

- Potatoes don't count towards your 5-A-Day.





