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NNP NHD

Wednesday, 12 June 2002

World Health Organization
Nutrition for Health and Development
Diet and Health
20, Avenue Appia
1211 Geneva
Switzerland

RE: Diet, Nutrition & the Prevention of Chronic Disease

Dear Colleagues,

May I first and foremost applaud your efforts to create this report. It will be a welcome addition to improving the health of populations and will also hopefully carry with it considerable moral weight which will influence governments and others to dedicate more attention and resources to preventing chronic disease through diet. While recognising the need to concentrate on dietary intake, the report does, nevertheless, highlight the need for similar documents addressing related topics such as:

- Food hygiene;
- The role of pesticides and agrichemicals in long term health;
- What efforts should be made to promote organic production methods;
- Similar questions about IPM and GMO production methods;
- Food allergies; and
- The issue of food miles and how they may contribute to wider determinants of health such as road accidents and pollution.

I would hope to eventually see similar guidance from a joint WHO/FAO perspective which links dietary intake to broader issues like those listed so that agriculture and health interests work in synergy rather than against each other.

Regarding specific points of the document:

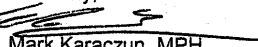
1) I would support the three strategies as outlined on page 19. However, I was surprised to see that the issue of "sustainability" was not addressed here. Sustainability is a strong theme in environmental matters (of which food is an important one) and also has resonance among the public. It may be the "sustainability" argument which becomes the main driver for the types of environmental change you advocate.

2) In addition to promoting nutrition among all health professionals (p.48), there is still a need for specialised advice particularly for those with complex co-morbidities or facing complicated psycho-/socio-/economic challenges. Therefore, you should also recommend adequate numbers of community-based nutritionists/dieticians who can offer specialised as opposed to general advice.

3) You should also recommend that government lead by example and request regular reports to WHO/FAO on steps they have taken to do so.

In closing, I again applaud your efforts and look forward to strong direction from the WHO and FAO in influencing governments and wider societies to act accordingly.

Sincerely,


Mark Karaczun, MPH
Public Health Advisor CHD & Stroke Prevention

I am the county-wide lead for promoting healthy eating within the local National Health Service. The NHS and local Primary Care Trusts have a strong interest in diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic diseases. We are currently working toward targets in national policies and bidding for dedicated lottery funding to support a local 5-a-Day (fruit and vegetable) community-based initiative. We receive U.K. Department of Health funding (limited in what is devoted to prevention or nutrition) and grants from other sources (e.g. lottery funds) when possible.

North Norfolk 

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