



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

It suddenly dawned on Steve that there was such a thing as too much salt.



ANNUAL REPORT

May 2010—April 2011

Charity registration 1098818



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

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Consensus Action on Salt & Health

About CASH

Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) is a group of specialists concerned with salt and its effects on health. CASH 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 evidence in July 2008 that the average adult consumes around 8.6g salt each day. Salt intakes have fallen from 9.5g to 8.6g 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 2.6g 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 that added in food processing and manufacturing 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.



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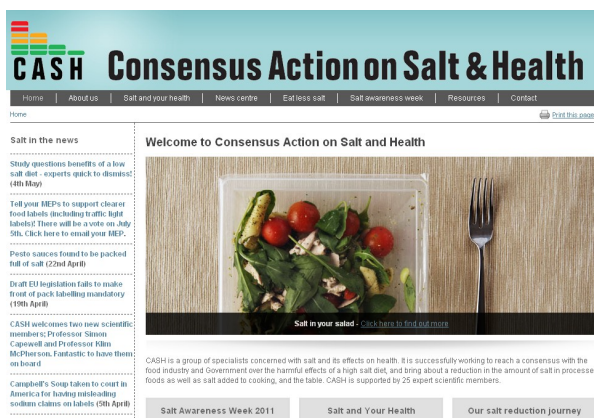
Summary of the year 2010/2011

2010/2011 has been a year of change. The move of the nutrition division of the Food Standards Agency to the Department of Health meant huge uncertainties for the future of salt reduction early in the year. Thankfully the continued and mounting support for salt reduction, both nationally and internationally, has kept the programme on course thus far. Our product surveys have continued apace, receiving widespread publicity, and we have substantially developed our working partnerships with other interested parties. 2011/2012 will be a pivotal year for WASH, as the world is now poised for action. This Annual Report summarises the key activities and achievements that have been made during this period.

CASH staff changes— After 18 months in their respective roles, we were pleased to promote Katharine Jenner to Campaign Director and Hannah Brinsden to Nutritionist. We are pleased to welcome Kim Burns to the team as Professor MacGregor’s p/t Personal Assistant and Gail Thacker, our p/t Fundraiser.

CASH new members— CASH welcomes Simon Capewell, University of Liverpool, Professor of Clinical Epidemiology and Klim McPherson, University of Oxford, Visiting Professor of Public Health Epidemiology

CASH launched a new website— We are grateful to Queen Mary University Web Team for redeveloping the ‘www.actiononsalt.org.uk’ website. It is now a more user-friendly, functional website. This important and long overdue project has allowed us to clearly archive both our own work and the wider work around salt reduction in the UK, as well as providing a more accessible platform for consumers, health professionals and the media to access information and resources about CASH and salt reduction. We are also pleased to have been awarded a ‘Google charity grant’ allowing us to promote our site on Google for free.



CASH Resources

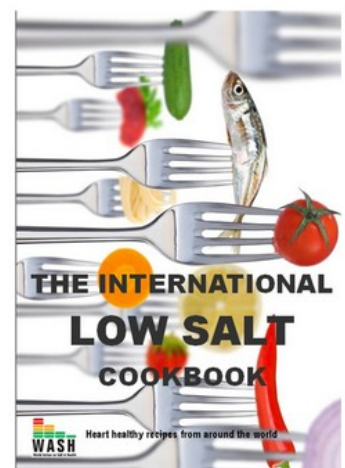
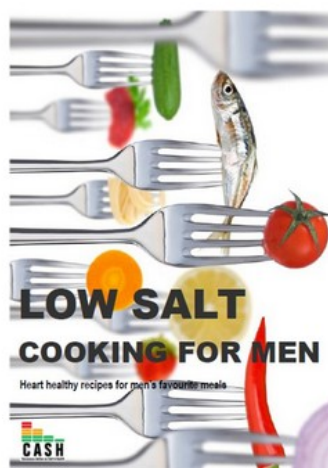
In addition to raising public awareness about salt through our high profile media campaign, we continue to educate the general public and health professionals on the importance of salt reduction. This is an ongoing process achieved through dedicated pages on our website for consumers and health care professionals and through other resources, noted below.

In December 2010, CASH designed and printed a new poster and leaflet on Salt and Men's Health to coincide with National Salt Awareness Week 2011.

CASH reprinted three leaflets; *Salt and your health*, *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. We are grateful to the Pilkington Trust and the Kathleen Lawrence Trust for their contributions. In the future, CASH will apply to receive further grants with the aim of providing all our resources free of charge.

CASH has produced Key Stage 3 educational resources for schools, promoted on the Times Educational Supplement, plus two cookbooks with low salt recipes, including recipes from celebrities such as Levi Roots and Anne Diamond. These books are available to download for free from our website:





Consensus Action on Salt & Health

Consumer Campaigning

Less Salt Please! CASH have had a great consumer response to our campaigns and are helping the public speak up and ask for '*Less Salt Please!*' CASH 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 have provided and published template letters and suggestions on how individuals can go about this, and are considering a number of resources such as fridge magnets and post-it notes so that the concept can achieve wider distribution.

You can also find CASH on social networking site Twitter @cashsalt #salt



Future plans

We are working hard to secure funding for a project in working in **London's Tower Hamlets community** where children, predominantly from a South Asian background, are at particular risk from a high salt diet and of developing serious life-threatening diseases later in life. We will work throughout the community with schools and parents as well as food retailers and suppliers to stimulate education in the salt content of food that children eat.



Alliances

CASH has been developing mutually beneficial alliances with other UK health charities. CASH has been able to include 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. CASH have been invited to speak at numerous events, such as the Sustain AGM and at the launch of the Greater London Authority's Healthier Catering Commitments.

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

Alzheimer's UK	National Obesity Forum
Asthma UK	National Osteoporosis Society
Blood Pressure Association	Polycystic Kidney Disease
Cancer Research UK	Sustain – Good Food for our Money
Department of Health	Sustain—Real bread Campaign
Chartered Institute of Environmental health	Sustain – The Children's Food Campaign
Kidney Research UK	British Heart Foundation
Meniere's Society	The New Economics Foundation
Men's Health Forum	The Stroke Association
National Heart Forum	Which?

Future plans

In 2011/2012 CASH intends to open up the CASH membership to NGOs as supporting members. As well as strengthening our voice, which we feel is very important with the new public health approach, it would serve to increase and diversify the expertise we have on salt to additional health and public health issues. We would therefore like to invite a selection of NGOs to become **CASH NGO members**. The membership will be on an 'invitation only' basis and we will work to expand the membership over the coming years.



Government Level Work

As of July 2010, the Nutrition Division, and therefore responsibility for the salt reduction policy, moved under the government's control at the Department of Health. The public awareness campaign has been merged into Change4Life with no expected financial support for salt reduction. The measurement of 24hr Urinary Sodium measurements has been approved for 2012.

Launch of The Public Health Responsibility Deal

CASH urged the Health Secretary Andrew Lansley to commit to the continuation of the policy. The outcome came in March 2011 when the **Department of Health launched the Public Health Responsibility Deal**. After some intense negotiations, the wording to a pledge for salt reduction was agreed upon.

Over 50 companies that have signed up to the salt reduction pledge within the Responsibility Deal so far have agreed to **reduce salt in their foods by 15% over the next 2 years to meet the 2012 salt targets**, which were negotiated by CASH and the Food Standards Agency with the food industry in 2008. Although this should result in salt intakes coming down by 1 gram from the current intake of 8.6g to 7.6g in 2012, this is still a long way from the maximum 6g /

day target and even further from the NICE maximum target of 3 g / day by 2025.

Whilst it is disappointing not to have more challenging salt reduction targets, given that salt reduction is a simple and highly effective way of reducing the massive burden of blood pressure associated cardiovascular disease in the UK, CASH has supported the deal and is currently advocating the pledge to all manufacturers.

The Department of Health has purchased the Kantar database so they may privately monitor compliance with the pledge.

Future plans

We take our commitment to the pledge seriously, and have an essential role in keeping pressure on industry and awareness in the public arena. CASH will be acting more fully as an independent monitor of the Department of Health's Responsibility Deal, highlighting those manufacturers that are not compliant with the salt pledge or meeting the 2012 targets.

Our priority now is to start the proceedings for setting 2014 targets, in order that we may meet the target of 6g a day.

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 Sun and The Telegraph as well as in regional media.

August 2010. CASH found surprising levels of salt hidden in ‘healthy’ lunchtime salads and pasta bowls. Opting for a salad for lunch can result in you unknowingly consuming over half your maximum recommended daily intake of salt and cause a bloated feeling. A salad from EAT. contained 3.51g of salt and 1 in 10 salads contained more salt than a Big Mac. The story achieved extensive coverage, incl. BBC Breakfast News, Sky news, Five news, the Today Program, regional and national press and radio. We have subsequently held talks with EAT. and M&S about the levels of salt in their salads.



October 2010. Survey reveals high levels of salt and fat in children's hospital meals. Nearly half of children's hospital main meals looked at in this survey exceeded school nutritional standards for salt or saturated fat with 1 in 3 products being ‘red’ for fat, saturated fat or salt. For instance, a lasagne served in hospital contains 6 times more salt than one served in school! The survey received exclusive Sunday coverage in The Observer, and follow up pieces in The Sun, The Star and The Telegraph. CASH and Sustain are now calling for legal nutritional standards for all food served in public sector institutions and for the Government Buying Standards to be extended to all institutions, including hospitals.





October 2010. CASH found excessive levels of salt consumed in coffee breaks. A Luxury fruit scone with a hot chocolate from Café Nero contains 2.43g of salt, equivalent to nearly 5 packets of crisps and more than a third of the daily recommendation. The lack of nutrition information on packets and in store make it difficult to make healthy choices. This release was an exclusive for the Daily Mail and also received extensive online coverage.

Daily Mail, Saturday, October 23, 2010 Page 41

The scone that's as salty as a Big Mac

By Sean Poulter
Consumer Affairs Editor

'YOU might not be surprised by the fat and sugar content of your coffee-shop treat. But there is a third and less likely sting for those partial to scone or a muffin. It might see you consuming as much salt as you would find in a Big Mac.

The revelation comes from a survey of 136 foods and 29 hot drinks served by six of the biggest coffee hop and fast-food chains. The

'Bloated and sluggish'

A SOUR NOTE ON SWEETS	
Salt per portion (g)	
■ Café Nero - Fruit Scone (left)	2.1
■ McDonald's - Big Mac (right)	2.1
■ McDonald's - Low fat Blueberry Muffin	1.7
■ EAT - Chocolate Cookie	1.575
■ EAT - Muesli Cookie	1.575
■ Pret A Manger - Choc Bar	1.528
■ Starbucks - Berry Scone	1.51
■ Café Nero - Chocolate Fudge Cake	1.29
■ Café Nero - Passion Cake	1.14
■ McDonald's - Double Chocolate Muffin	1.1
■ Pret A Manger - Double Berry Muffin	1.05
■ Ready-salted crisps (34g)	0.5

Recommended maximum daily salt consumption

Age	Level	Recommended maximum daily salt consumption
0-6 months	<1g	
7-12 months	1g	
1-3 years	2g	
4-6 years	3g	
7-10 years	5g	
11-14 years	6g	
Adults	6g	

December 2010. Research reveals high levels of salt in the family favourite Sunday roast. A full roast dinner with all the trimmings could contain nearly 10g of salt! 160% of the maximum daily recommendation. Pre-prepared vegetables, potatoes, gravy and stuffing could each contain more than 1g of salt per portion. A portion of a stuffed beef joint from ASDA was found to contain 2.3g, more than a third of your daily salt recommendation. Since this survey ASDA has taken the highest beef product off the shelves.

February 2011: Romantic meals found to contain excessive salt levels. With many supermarkets promoting 'dine in for 2' meal deals for Valentine's Day, Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) looked at 95 products from the 5 supermarkets participating in Valentine's Day offers and found a Valentine's Day meal could contain more than an adult's recommended daily maximum of 6g of salt and the equivalent salt to 15 packets of crisps. Tesco's Finest 2 course meal contains 6.3g salt with the main course alone containing 4.3g.



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

Future plans

With funding from the British Heart Foundation we are able to expand the range of products surveyed from supermarket and big brand products to those previously not investigated by CASH. A number of surveys are planned to expose the high levels of salt still contained within processed, catered and foods consumed out of the home. Planned surveys include: sausages, bread, children's out of home sector and Chinese food.

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 because there are no requirements to provide labelling & nutritional information and no voluntary salt targets for them to work towards. Our aim for both CASH and WASH in 2011/2012 and in the 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 (and also fat). Consumer magazines, trade press and more current-affairs style programming ideas are being explored.

We are investigating further funding opportunities for both the above projects and also with the British Heart Foundation to look at saturated fat as well as salt.

Other PR Activities

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.

Future PR activity

Our aim for 2011/2012 is to raise awareness of the fact that foods bought outside the home or in the catering sector may be very high in salt, and also that salt can be reduced without harmful effects to our food or our diet, including more focus on:

- The out of home sector
- Chefs and chef's products
- Food technology
- Labelling and nutritional information

Consumer magazines, trade press and more current affair-style investigations are being explored.



Consensus Action on Salt & Health

Targeting Chefs

CASH are pleased 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 wrote to a number of high-profile chefs for Salt Awareness Week 2011 to raise awareness about the importance of salt amongst chefs, including chefs in industry. CASH would like to see all chefs to be more aware of how much 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. Slow progress has been made and we are investigating other routes into this area.

Future plans

In 2011/2012 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 and Environmental Health teams. We are distributing our Chef leaflet at the **Skills for Chefs conference** in September, and shall have an online resource for chefs on our website.

The Food Industry

CASH has engaged in a number of discussions with industry nutritionists over the last year and intends, particularly following the Responsibility Deal meetings, to increase the frequency of these meetings over the coming months.

As the progress in salt reduction continues apace, many companies are looking to us to provide technological expertise and to share learnings from other manufacturers. We are keen to emphasise that the barriers to salt reduction have been widely overstated, due to a lack of understanding in the market. We are also strongly recommending that not just the salt content, but also the salt flavour, is reduced, in order to start shifting consumer preferences towards a lower salt diet

Future plans

We are investigating funding options to extend the UK's salt reduction strategy to key wholesalers, who control a large amount of the food supply to the hard-to-reach "casual eating out" sector. This new project will aim to reach a consensus agreement with the wholesalers to take steps to reduce the salt content of the food they sell.

Research

World Salt Awareness Week paper was published in the Journal of Clinical Hypertension to highlight the great work carried out by WASH members during World Salt Awareness Week. The paper highlights the importance of World Salt Awareness Week, and salt reductions and briefly outlines activities which other countries have undertaken to raise awareness. [Click here](#) to read the full editorial in The Journal of Clinical Hypertension

Blood flow in the body's main arteries is significantly reduced within half an hour of eating just one meal high in salt. The paper *Endothelial function is impaired after a high-salt meal in healthy subjects*, published by Dickenson *et al* in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, showed blood flow was 'significantly more impaired' within 30 minutes of eating the salty meal than the low-salt alternative and the restriction reached a peak after an hour. The study showed the amount of salt similar to that in a commonly eaten meal impairs blood flow in healthy men and women. Doctors found arteries rapidly lost some of their ability to pump blood

because of the damaging effects of salt and thought it to be a very early sign of heart disease. The research calls for the mechanisms to be investigated more intensively. [Click here](#) to access the full article

Sugar-sweetened beverage, sugar intake of individuals, and their blood pressure:

Intermap study Ian J. Brown *Soft drinks and blood pressure*. In a study of over 2,500 people, CASH member Paul Elliott has found that drinking more than 355ml a day of sugar-sweetened fruit juice or carbonated drink can be enough to upset the balance. In the study, the link between sugary drinks and higher blood pressure was especially strong in people who consumed a lot of salt as well as sugar. A higher sugar-sweetened beverage intake, by 1 serving/day (355 ml/24-h), was associated with systolic/diastolic BP differences of +1.6/+0.8 mm Hg (both P <0.001); +1.1/+0.4 mm Hg (P <0.001/<0.05) with adjustment for weight & height.

[Click here](#) to access this article



Salt Reduction Initiatives around the World.

New research conducted by Webster et al, to be published in the Journal of Hypertension shows 32 countries now have national programs to reduce population salt intake. Central to the success of these programs is the establishment of targets for the maximum amount of salt in different foods. The Canada, US and UK have set targets for over 80 different food categories. The paper is the first to concisely summarise the most important elements of salt reduction programmes in place around the world, and highlight those most likely to attribute to a successful programme.

[Click here](#) to access the Journal Article

National Salt Awareness Week

CASH organised the 12th annual National Salt Awareness Week. The focus for the Week was 'Salt and Men's Health'. We aimed to publicise the fact that men eat more salt and less fruit and vegetables, have higher blood pressure and are less likely to visit their GP compared to women. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) accounts for nearly 30% of preventable deaths in men and before the age of 75 men are more than twice as likely to die prematurely from CVD (34,431 vs. 16,664 deaths per year). Many of the deaths could have been prevented by eating less salt. Despite the maximum daily recommendation for salt being 6g, men on average are eating 10g/day (women are eating 7g). This equates to 365 pints of salt in a lifetime.

During the week we highlighted the fact that men 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 2011 such a successful event.



It suddenly dawned on Steve that there was such a thing as too much salt.

Charity support. CASH worked with a number of major UK charities as part of National Salt Awareness Week, each representing one of the key health conditions linked to a high salt diet. Together we developed the media campaign, leaflet and poster for the week. Thank you to these UK charities for their support:



Celebrity Supporters. Thank you to our celebrity supporters including:

Anne Diamond (Journalist and Health Campaigner), **Anthony Worrall Thompson** (Chef), **Azmina Govindji** (Media Dietitian), **Chris Kamara** (Sports Presenter), **Cyrus Todiwala** (Chef), **Des Kelly** (Daily Mail Columnist), **Diana Moran** (Fitness expert), **Dr Hilary Jones** (Media Doctor), **Gerald Roser** (Chef), **Levi Roots** (Chef), **Martin Dorey** (Chef), **Mick Brown** (Radio Presenter), **Peter Harden** (Editor of London Restaurant Guide).

Nationwide Events. National Salt Awareness Week received strong support around the country, with over 500 supporting events in schools, football clubs, 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 those who helped to organise the supporting events that took place. More than 70,000 leaflets and 5,000 posters were distributed for free, with an approximate combined reach of nearly 300,000 people.

Parliamentary Reception. The National Salt Awareness Week Parliamentary reception, held at the Terrace Marquee in the House of Commons, was attended by 108 people representing the food industry, Department of Health, NGOs and other relevant parties, as well as a number of MPs and Peers.

The event was kindly hosted by David Amess MP. Speakers include Anne Milton, the Minister for Public Health, and Peter Baker, the Chief Executive of Men’s Health Forum.

The event featured stands from a number of 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:



UK & Ireland



MORRISONS



Blood pressure testing from the BPA



Speakers Anne Milton MP and Peter Baker

Thank you also to the British Heart Foundation for their donation towards the Reception.

Men’s Health Surveys

Men still don’t know how much salt they should eat. A survey commissioned by CASH (carried out by You Gov) as part of the week revealed that 85% of men did not know they should be eating less than 6g of salt a day and as many as 1 in 10 men think they should eat 10g or more salt/day.

One of men's favourite meals, 'pie & mash', found to contain excessive levels of salt. A product survey, carried out for Salt Awareness Week, looking at over 500 pie and mash products from pubs, supermarkets and takeaways, found that a pie and mash meal from leading pub chain Wetherspoons contains a massive 7.5g of salt – 125% of the daily maximum recommendation of 6g. Large differences when comparing like for like supermarket products were also found.

Wetherspoon spokesman Eddie Gershon commented: "We take on board the findings of this report and we will take steps to reduce the level of salt in both these meals in the coming months"

CASH is pleased to report that since this survey was published Wetherspoons has removed the highest salt pie meal from their menu and has committed to the salt reduction pledge as part of the Responsibility Deal.

Media Coverage

Salt Awareness week received more than 240 pieces of media coverage in national and regional newspapers, TV, radio and online.

This coverage lead to an estimated 44 million opportunities to see and hear our message.

How a pie and a pint is a recipe for poor health

Who eats all the pies? Salt surfeit puts men at risk, survey reveals

Aidan's diet diary	
BEFORE	AFTER
Breakfast Alpen with semi-skimmed milk	Breakfast Alpen with semi-skimmed milk and sliced banana
Snack Sausage & egg white baguette with brown sauce	Snack Poached egg on toast with cracked black pepper
Lunch Ham & cheese white baguette	Lunch Chicken or tuna salad on granary baguette with mayonnaise
Snack Two digestive biscuits	Snack Breakfast bar and a handful of unsalted nuts and dried fruit
Dinner Steak and mushroom pie with vegetables cooked in salted water, gravy and pre-prepared mashed potato	Dinner Chicken pie with gravy made from low-salt granules, steamed vegetables and homemade mashed potato. No added salt
SALT INTAKE: 10g	SALT INTAKE: 6g

finding out what salt could do to me shocked me. I had no idea'
Daily Express 22nd March





Consensus Action on Salt & Health

Evaluation

Evaluation of Salt Awareness Week 2012 highlighted the need for the following:

- Explore ways to have a positive angle on the reductions that have been made by the food industry e.g. technological advances
- To collect case studies for use in media and promotion as a tool to increase message reach to the primary target groups
- To explore further opportunities to engage / stimulate debate amongst MPs and Peers
- Recruit volunteers to be involved in the preparation of the week
- Run competitions for free products to increase engagement during the week
- Further work to reach ethnic minorities and areas of social deprivation
- To establish a monitoring and evaluation process to understand the use and effectiveness of the leaflets/posters

Future plans

National Salt Awareness Week 2012 ‘Salt & the prevention of Stroke’.

Stroke is the leading cause of **severe adult disability** and the **third biggest killer** in the UK and worldwide. There are approximately 53,000 stroke deaths every year in the UK and 5.5million

worldwide. High blood pressure is the single most important risk factor for stroke and salt is the major factor that raises blood pressure— **Salt is therefore responsible for many of these strokes.**

Reducing salt intake to the daily recommendation of 6g/day could save 14,600 lives every year. Most of the UK population are **not aware** of the link between salt and stroke, even if they know salt leads to high blood pressure. CASH has therefore decided to focus on the role of salt reduction in the prevention of stroke for Salt Awareness Week 2012.

As part of the week we will again 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 Salt Awareness Week is coordinated globally. We will work in partnership with other non-government organisations to review the evidence surrounding the benefits of salt reduction in relation to stroke prevention to raise awareness about this issue.



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.

WASH Membership

World Action on Salt and Health is now in its sixth year, and the membership has grown to 423 individuals from 82 countries. New members include experts from Brazil, Bulgaria, Barbados, Finland, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey and the USA.

World Salt Awareness Week 2011

World Action on Salt and Health successfully held its third World Salt Awareness Week from 21st – 27th March 2011, reflecting the UK theme of Salt and Men's Health. World Salt Awareness Week

was observed all over the world by countries including: **Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Costa Rica, Chile, Estonia, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, The Netherlands, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the UK and the USA.**

International Pizza Survey

In March 2011, WASH surveyed the sodium and salt content of over 500 pizza products available around the world from well known international pizza outlets such as Pizza Hut, Dominoes, Eagle Boys and Papa Johns, as well as pizzas available in supermarkets and grocery stores.

The results from the survey showed that no single product had the same salt content around the world. This research was carried out as part of World Salt Awareness Week 2011. It identified that in some countries, people are being fed over twice as much salt in popular pizza brands as people elsewhere in the world. The survey combined the efforts from our member countries to receive international coverage.

High Level Meeting on non-



communicable diseases

An important meeting convened by the World Health Organisation and United Nations will be held in New York this coming September. The meeting, attended by Heads of State, will highlight the importance of non-communicable diseases as the major cause of death and disability in the world, both in developing and developed countries.

The major cause of non-communicable disease is cardiovascular disease, i.e. strokes, heart attacks and heart failure, and the major causes of this are high blood pressure, smoking and raised cholesterol. Salt is the major factor that puts up blood pressure. Salt reduction will play a prominent role in the meeting at the UN.

WASH is encouraging all members to alert their Heads of State to this important meeting, and the important role that salt reduction will have in the prevention of NCDs. WASH has also written to the food industry to invite them to get ahead in salt reduction and show their support on this important issue.

Country Updates—Brief overview

New WASH Group Launched In Chile: Following a television programme on ‘salt, the silent killer’, The Minister of Health announced that maximum levels of salt would be set for processed foods per 100g. The Chilean Hypertension Foundation, in support of this announcement will launch its new salt reduction group— ‘Chilean WASH’ on the 29th June 2011. [Click here](#) for full news story

‘National Plan for Salt and Sodium Consumption Reduction’ launched in Costa Rica: In **Costa Rica** the ‘National Plan for Salt and Sodium Consumption Reduction’ was launched on the 19th May 2011. The launch, organized by the Ministry of Health of Costa Rica and the Costa Rican Institute of Research and Teaching in Nutrition and Health (INCIENSA) was sponsored by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Latin-American Society of Nephrology and Hypertension (SLANH). [Click here](#) for more information

Brazil committed to reduce salt in 16 categories of food: In celebration of World Health Day, the federal government of Brazil,

in a bid to strengthen activities to promote healthy lifestyles, announced its commitment to reduce salt in 16 food categories. The Health Minister, Alexandre Padilha, signed an agreement with the food industry for a gradual reduction in sodium over 16 categories of food. The Brazilian Society of Cardiology produced recommendations for sodium limits in packaged foods. [Click here](#) for further information

Sweden established a sodium reduction advocacy group; ‘WASH Sweden’ in November 2010. This network now has over 50 members from the medical profession, health administration, food industry and health professionals. So far WASH Sweden has gained significant media coverage on TV, radio, weekly magazines and a two page spread in Sweden’s biggest selling newspaper.

WASH Sweden held a joint meeting with the National Food Administration on the 23rd March which was attended by health professionals and the food industry, the meeting marked the start of the ‘salt battle’ in Sweden. WASH Sweden plan to present at the Swedish Institute of Food and Biotechnology in Goteborg later this year.

Global Food Composition Database

AWASH has been meeting with stakeholders in the UK, USA, France, Canada, Norway, China, Singapore, India, Fiji, The Philippines, South Africa and New Zealand to discuss collaboration on a global branded food database project.

The overall goal is to bring together readily available data about the composition of fast foods and processed foods globally that can be used to drive national and international improvements in the food supply. The World Health Organisation provided some seed funding to develop a model template for the database which it will be making available to members. WASH will be working closely with the MRC to collaborate on data collection in the UK.

Future plans

- In line with WASH's aim to act as a global monitor, WASH plans to highlight internationally marketed products that are high in salt, follow up international Pizza Survey, and put pressure on pizza manufacturers to reduce salt/sodium.
- In line with WASH's aim to share best practise for Governments and health organisations worldwide, develop a network through which researchers, advocates and health professionals can connect, collaborate and share best practise.
- In line with WASH's aim to raise awareness of the harmful effects of too much salt, WASH supports counties to raise awareness amongst consumers around the world, focussing on high risk groups.
- WASH is leveraging the relationship between its scientific members and the policy makers of the EU and WHO. WASH continues to work to encourage WASH members to get in touch with their own country's representative to offer their expertise and encouragement to facilitate formation and support of a salt reduction program.

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