



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Karin Smyth MP
Minister of State for Health (Secondary Care)

39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

Layla Moran MP
Chair of the Health and Social Care Select Committee
By email: hsccom@parliament.uk

28 January 2026

Dear Layla,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Health & Social Care Committee to make you aware that yesterday we published the UK Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM) 2018, technical guidance and the consultation outcome of the review of the previous NPM 2004/5.

I thank the Committee for its focus on obesity prevention since it launched its much-needed Food and Weight Management Inquiry last year. I have followed the Inquiry with interest, which has heard from many influential experts in this field, and I look forward to the Committee's outcome.

Yesterday's publication will be of interest to the Committee as we have met another significant milestone in delivering our ambitious prevention agenda to tackle childhood obesity and raise the healthiest generation of children ever. I am delighted that we delivered on our Manifesto commitment with the advertising restrictions on less healthy food and drink products on TV and online taking legal effect earlier this month, which will remove 7.2 billion calories from children's diets each year in the UK. Publishing the new NPM is this first important step on delivering on our 10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future commitment to update the standards underpinning the advertising restrictions on less healthy food and drink products on TV and online and the promotions restrictions in stores and their equivalent places online. Updating these standards by applying the new NPM will strengthen these policies and could reduce a further 170,000 cases of childhood obesity on top of their existing health benefits. Evidence shows that the promotions restrictions have already resulted in 2 million fewer sales of less healthy products each day. We will undertake a full public consultation on the application of the new NPM to these restrictions later this year.

The UK NPM is a scientifically developed tool, originally created in 2004/5, used to assess whether food and drink products are 'less healthy' because they are high in saturated fat, salt, or sugar (HFSS). The advertising and promotions restrictions on less healthy food and drink are underpinned by the NPM 2004/5 which is now plainly out of date and does not reflect the latest dietary recommendations of the Government's independent Scientific

Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) published in 2015 to reduce consumption of free sugars and increase consumption of fibre.

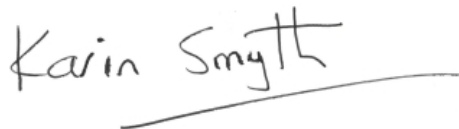
Following SACN's recommendations, a review of the NPM was carried out with an Expert Group and a Reference Group (including industry, regulators and health NGOs). This was then consulted on and finalised in 2018. reviewed and updated through extensive engagement with industry and other experts and consulted upon in 2018. The resulting new NPM is more discerning to free sugars which evidence shows have a stronger association with poor health outcomes in children. Children are consuming twice the recommended level of free sugars which increases their risk of overweight and obesity and associated illness, including poor dental health. Tooth extractions are the primary cause of hospital admissions in children aged 5 to 9. The new NPM also awards more positive points to fibre. Fibre is strongly linked to a lower risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and bowel cancer. 90 per cent of children are not consuming enough fibre. Applying the new NPM to our policies will target more products of concern to childhood obesity, meaning most confectionery products, biscuits, puddings, savoury snacks and ice creams are classified as less healthy. It also means less healthy products that are marketed as being healthier than they are will be captured, including some yogurts and breakfast cereals.

Having confirmed in the 10 Year Plan for Health last July that this change is coming, we have continued to engage with the industry and other stakeholders to prepare for this milestone. We are publishing the new NPM now to maximise the time industry has to consider this change and the impact of the new NPM on their product portfolios so they can plan and adapt.

To further support engagement with industry and others, we will undertake a comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement as we move towards launching a consultation on applying the new NPM to the advertising and promotions restrictions policies later this year.

I would welcome the Committee's support in championing this long-overdue update to the standards underpinning our obesity prevention policies so that they reflect the latest dietary advice and are the most effective in targeting those food and drink products that are the biggest contributors to childhood obesity. I will continue to update the Committee as this important work progresses.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karin Smyth". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

KARIN SMYTH MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH