

## **CINNAMON DAYS COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY (CIC) - WRITTEN EVIDENCE (FDO0044)**

- 1. This submission is made by Isabel Hemmings, Co-Director of Cinnamon Days CIC, a community interest company (social enterprise), and the submission is made on behalf of Cinnamon Days CIC.**

### **Declaration of interests**

2. Cinnamon Days CIC is a company which provides nutritional advice and support to people with metabolic health problems, including obesity. It also supports people with other chronic health conditions and provides preventative health support.
3. Cinnamon Days CIC has received National Lottery Community Funding to run a Health and Nutrition Club for people with ME/CFS and Long Covid.

### **Evidence relating to future policy tools that could prove effective in preventing obesity**

4. Evidence<sup>1</sup> shows direct associations between greater ultra-processed food exposure and a higher prevalence of obesity and direct associations between greater exposure to ultra-processed foods and higher risk of incident type 2 diabetes.
5. As such, adopting approaches to weight loss which emphasise the avoidance of ultra-processed foods and encourage a return to real food may be a useful policy strategy for government.
6. We submit evidence of an approach to supporting weight loss which uses a real food, low carbohydrate approach and which has proven to be effective in supporting weight loss and improved health.

#### *Cinnamon Days CIC weight loss programmes*

7. Cinnamon Days CIC provides online weight loss programmes for people with obesity and other metabolic health conditions, provided by BANT Registered Nutritionists.
8. Our programmes:

- **Use a real food, low-carbohydrate dietary approach** to support weight loss and health improvement - participants are encouraged to avoid highly processed foods, to cook from scratch using foods in their natural state, and not to count calories. Participants are advised how to maximise nutrient intake and minimise intake of harmful sugars, poor quality fats and food additives.
- **Use an online group-based approach**, with regular fortnightly webinars, plus written information, support via a private Facebook group, regular monitoring and support from two BANT Registered Nutritionists for the duration of the programme (usually 12 weeks)
- **Have a strong educational component** – our programmes include a strong focus on increasing the health and nutritional knowledge of participants, as evidence<sup>2</sup> suggests that increased nutritional knowledge may be beneficial in weight loss
- **Focus on other diet and lifestyle factors which may contribute to weight issues** – such as digestive health, sleep, and stress.

*Evaluation of Cinnamon Days CIC weight loss programme*

9. Our programmes focus on supporting people to make dietary changes with a focus on real food and a low carbohydrate approach, and no calorie counting.
10. Initially, in order to determine whether this approach would be effective in supporting participants with weight loss, we undertook an evaluation of our first 12-week programme.
11. The results from the nine participants who completed the 12-week programme are shown below:

	<b>Results</b>
<b>Mean weight loss</b>	- 7.2kg
<b>Mean % weight body weight loss for group</b>	- 6.9%
<b>Mean BMI reduction</b>	- 2.6kg/m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Mean waist circumference reduction</b>	- 8.5cm
<b>Mental health score improvement (using the Edinburgh-Warwick Mental</b>	+ 8.5 units (range: + 2 to + 26

<b>Wellbeing Score (WEBWMS)</b>	units)
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12. The average weight loss was 7.2kg, which represented a reduction of 6.9% in bodyweight on average for each participant.
13. In addition to a significant reduction in weight, participants also experienced other improvements to health by the end of the programme:
- At the end of this programme participants had an average reduction in waist circumference of 8.5cms, which is suggestive of a significant improvement in metabolic health.
  - Improvements in mental health score of 8.5 units. An improvement of over 3 units is likely to be noticeable to the individual.<sup>3</sup>
- 14. Our evidence suggests that supporting people to adopt a real food, low carbohydrate diet whilst restricting highly processed foods can be effective in both supporting weight loss and improving health.**

### **Key trends in foods, diet and obesity**

15. Evidence<sup>4</sup> from research suggests that micronutrient intake declines with higher consumption of ultra-processed foods. This is of considerable concern, given the impact of nutrient deficiency on the health of the population.
16. The UK has one of the highest levels of consumption of ultra-processed foods in Europe.<sup>5</sup> Evidence from The UK government National Diet and Nutrition Survey <sup>6 & 7</sup> indicates that it is likely that a considerable proportion of the UK population are at risk of nutrient deficiencies and that this position has become worse in recent years, perhaps reflective of the increasing consumption of ultra-processed foods.
17. Examples of micronutrient deficiencies as indicated by NDNS data include the following:
- 53% of girls aged 11-18 may be deficient in iron, up from 43% in 2008/9
  - 41% of girls aged 11-18 may be deficient in selenium
  - 40% of young people 11-18 may be deficient in magnesium
  - 28% of women aged 19-64 may be deficient in iron, up from 21% in 2008-12
  - 24% of women aged 19-64 may be deficient in potassium

46% of women and 26% of men aged 19-64 may be deficient in selenium  
59% of women and 34 % of men over 65 may be deficient in selenium  
(up from 51% and 30% respectively in 2008-12)

18. Micronutrients are critical to metabolism, and deficiencies may contribute to weight gain through appetite regulation and energy metabolism.<sup>8</sup> For example, specific vitamins and minerals play an important role in glucose metabolism and insulin signalling pathways.

**19. The micronutrient deficiency which is associated with high consumption of ultra-processed foods is likely to be increasing the disease burden in the UK, including contributing to the increase in obesity.**

*5 April 2024*

## References

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