Priority recommendations

Policy Actions Necessary to Support Healthy Food Environments

1. School Food Policies

Implement nutrition standards for all schools including tuck shops operating therein.
All school-based health promotion should be delivered by health professionals. An Inter-school nutrition forum should be established with support by appropriate governing bodies.

2. Income Support

Establish a committee with a cross-governmental structure to monitor and evaluate food-related income support programmes for vulnerable population groups.

3. Healthy Food Subsidies

Ringfence revenue from tax on unhealthy foods to improve public health initiatives and provide healthy food subsidies targeted at disadvantaged groups in the community.

4. Zoning Laws

Introduce zoning legislation "No Fry Zones" to prohibit the placement of unhealthy food outlets within 400m of primary and secondary schools.

5. Public Sector Healthy Food Choices

Implement a comprehensive policy on nutrition standards for food and beverage provision in public sector. Monitoring of existing policies and guidelines for effectiveness in provision and promotion of healthy food choices should be conducted.

Infrastructure Support Actions Necessary to Support Healthy Food Environments

1. Transparency in Policy

Create a committee which monitors implementation of policies and procedures that ensure open and transparent approaches in the development and reviewing of food and nutrition policies and within the legislative process.

2. Political Support

An Taoiseach to demonstrate visible leadership and commitment to the "Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016-2025 (OPAP)" and commit to garnering cross-party support for the policy.

3. Engagement Platforms with Civil Society

Establish a formal platform between government and civil society - encompassing community groups, NGOs, academia, and the Citizens' Assembly (public), to increase engagement and participation in the planning and implementation of food and public health policies.

4. System-based Approach

Establish a forum consisting of local and national government, policy experts, public health experts and academia to facilitate information-sharing and knowledge transfer. The forum would identify priority areas and implement evidence-based policies to improve the food environment and health outcomes.

5. Health Impacts in Policy

The government to prioritise an evidence-informed national food and nutrition policy with explicit consideration given to the health impacts on vulnerable groups in Ireland and the determinants of health. This requires cross-departmental commitment to reducing health inequalities.