



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISOR

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Tackling childhood obesity

Today the WHO released the interim [report of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity](#). Sir Peter Gluckman is Co-Chair of this Commission arising from his research background and expertise, and independently of his role as Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of New Zealand. He co-chairs the Commission with Dr Sania Nishtar, former Minister of Science, Technology, Education and Training in Pakistan. The report has been informed by the [Working Group on Science and Evidence](#) comprising a broad range of scientific experts.

Structured as a consultation document, the interim report has been released by the Commission to seek feedback from all interested parties. As such, the Commission will be holding hearings in all of the WHO global regions. The interim report focuses on identifying and understanding the issues, the extent of the problem, and the rationale for various intervention approaches. While it addresses at a high level the issues of implementation, monitoring and accountability, these will be addressed in more detail in the definitive report. The [Working Group on Implementation, Monitoring and Accountability](#) advises the Commission via the Director General and will use the interim report as the background against which to undertake its considerations.

Key points of the interim report include:

- The problem of childhood obesity affects both developed and developing economies;
- The health, social and societal consequences of childhood obesity merit urgent action;
- Many children who are not yet obese are on the pathway to obesity and its health complications;
- Childhood obesity has its origins in multiple factors including biological, behavioural (individuals, peers and families) and contextual;
- Governments have a critical leadership role and solutions will involve multiple agencies of government;
- Civil society, NGOs and the private sector also have a critical role to play, and more constructive relationships will be needed;
- Addressing childhood obesity requires attention not just to the obesogenic environment but also to life course dimensions, and any approaches that do not consider both are unlikely to succeed;
- The interim report highlights a suite of strategies that are likely to be needed but that will require tailoring to local circumstance and context.

The Commission will produce its final report by December 2015.

For further information:

See <http://www.who.int/end-childhood-obesity/en/>

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