

Choosing Health

A booklet about plans for improving people's health



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A CD-ROM of this easy read booklet is at the back of this booklet.

What is this easy read booklet about?

The Government wants to help people in England to be healthier.

The Government has written a booklet called *Choosing Health*. It says what the Government is going to do to help people in England to be healthier.

This easy read booklet tells you all about *Choosing Health*. You can find out:

- why we need things to change
- what people want from the Government to help them to be healthier
- what the Government wants
- what the Government is going to do
- how to find out more.



The key points in *Choosing Health*

This box tells you the most important things in *Choosing Health*.

Many people in England are unhealthy.

The Government listened to what people said they want from the Government to help them to be healthier.

The Government has made plans saying what it is going to do to help people be healthier.

The most important things the Government will do to help people be healthier are:



Make it easier for people to choose healthy lives.

The Government will do things like give people good information about health so they can make good choices.



Help children and young people to be healthy.
The Government will do things like work with schools to help children be healthier.

Help local communities to help people be healthier.
The Government will do things like looking at stopping people from smoking in most public places and most work places. This will mean that people will not have to breathe in other people's smoke.





Make health a way of life.

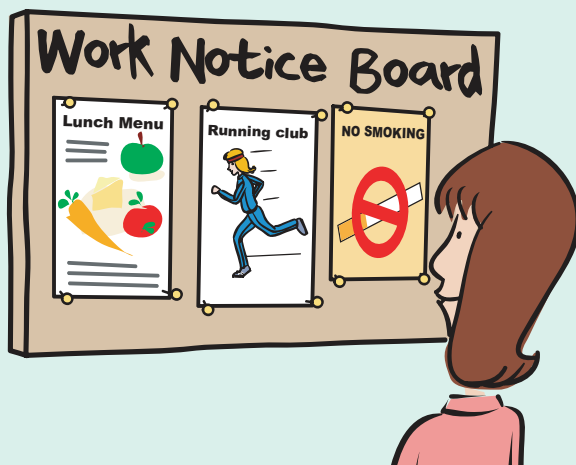
The Government will do things like give people the chance to have a health guide who will give help and advice on being healthy.

Support the National Health Service (NHS) to help people be healthier. The Government will do things like train staff to give people advice on being healthy.



Help people to be healthier at work.

The Government will do things like make working conditions better. This is things like making sure people get enough holiday days off work.



Keep reading if you want to find out more.

Why do we need things to change?

Many people in England are unhealthy.

- Today, there are many more people who are overweight than there were 20 years ago.
- For some time, lots of people were giving up smoking. But now fewer people are choosing to give up smoking.
- There are lots of problems caused by people drinking too much alcohol.
- More teenage girls are getting pregnant and having babies.
- More people are getting 'sexually transmitted diseases' by having unsafe sex.

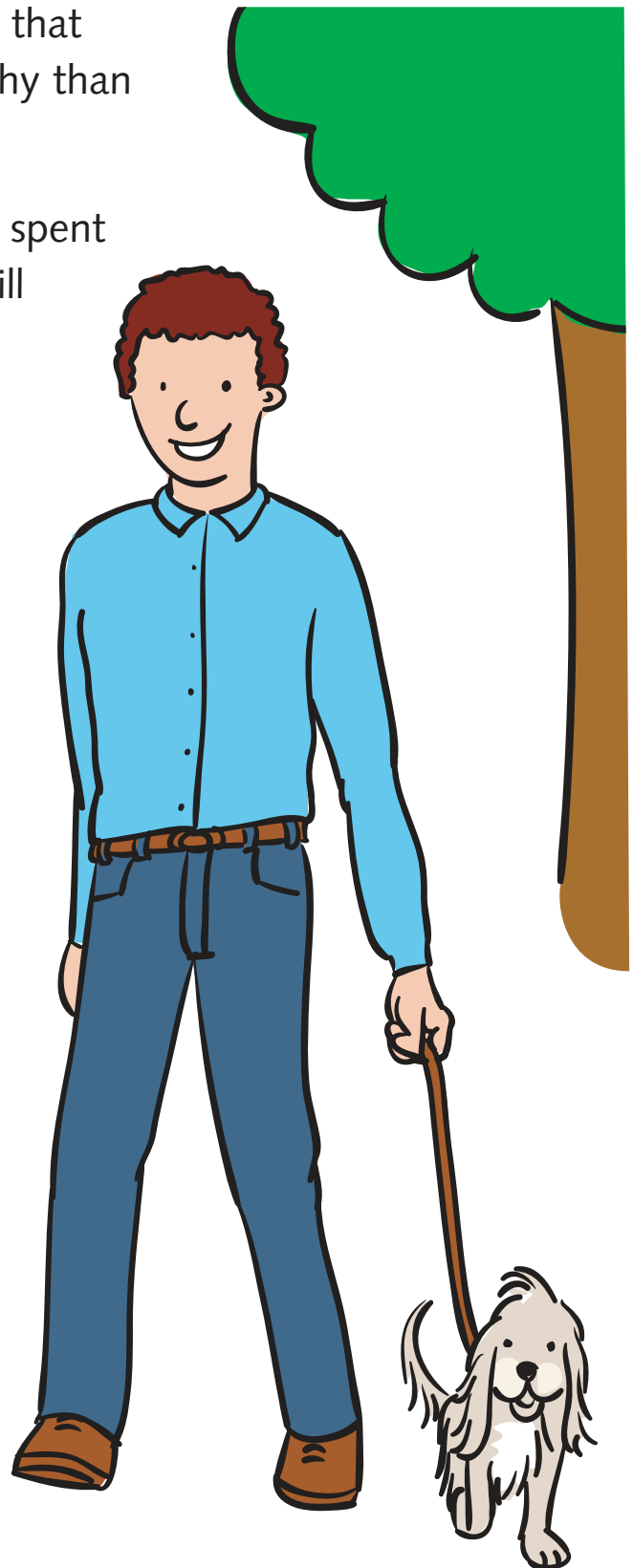
All of these things can make people ill and unhealthy. And all of these problems are getting worse.



The Government is also worried that many poor people are less healthy than richer people.

In the past the Government has spent money helping people who are ill to get better. But the Government has not done very much to help people to be healthier to help **stop** them getting ill.

The Government now wants to help people to be healthier.



What people want from the Government to help them be healthier

The Government asked people in England to say what they want from the Government to help people be healthier.



- People said they want to make their own choices about their health. But they want good information and support to help them make good choices.
- People said that the Government should only stop people from making their own choices about health if there is a good reason.
- People think that we should all help to make sure that children are healthy.
- People want support to be healthy. But this support needs to be right for them. It needs to meet their own needs and lifestyle.

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- People said that the Government should make sure that **everyone** has the chance to be healthier.
- People think that everyone needs to work together to help people to be healthy – like local government, the NHS, people who make and sell things, and people who write newspapers. People want the Government to make this happen.

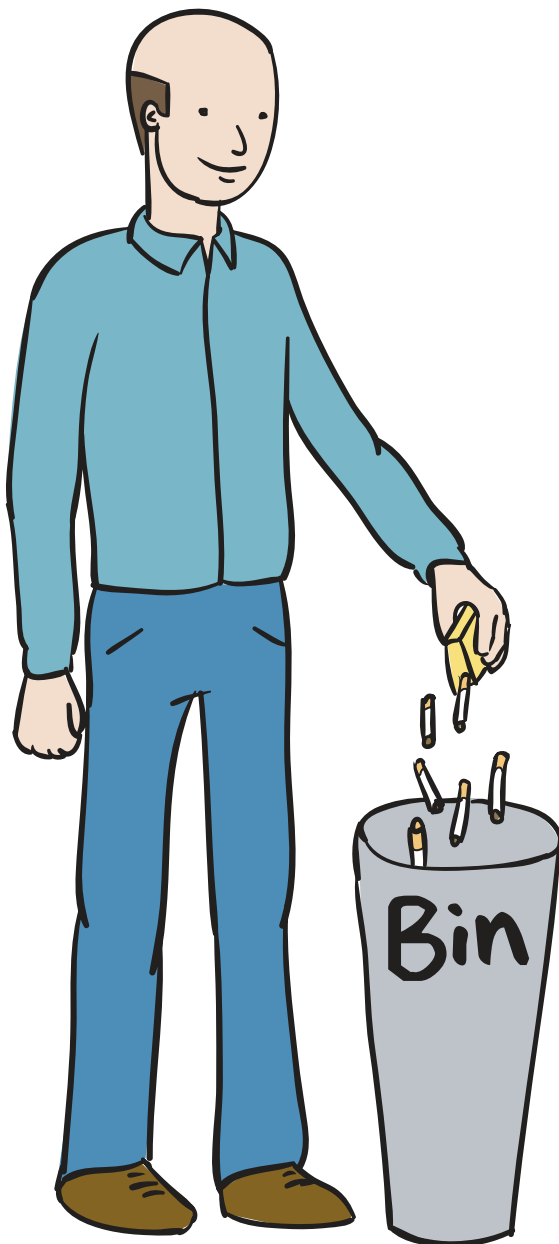
The Government listened to what people said. The *Choosing Health* booklet is based on the things people said they wanted.



What the Government wants

Here are the main things the Government wants. They are the things that people told the Government they want too.

We want less people to smoke.



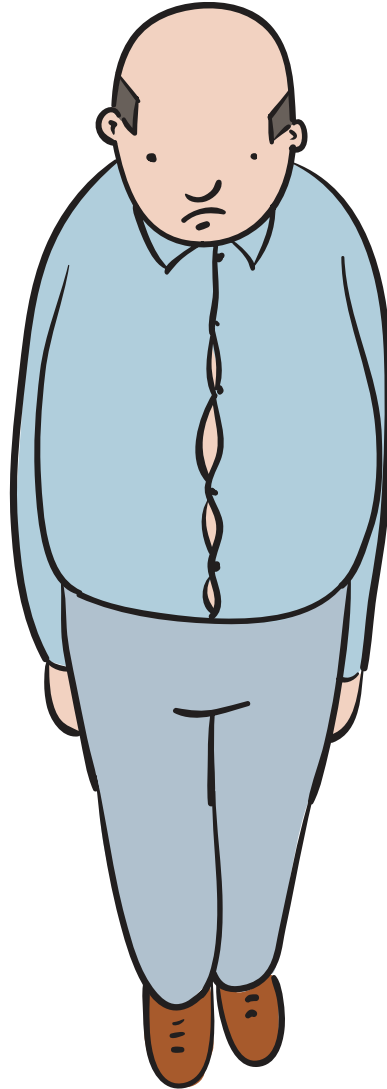
This is because:

- smoking causes diseases that kill people, like heart disease, strokes, and cancer.
- many people want help to stop smoking.
- many people are worried about breathing in other people's smoke and getting ill because of this.

We want less people to be overweight.

This is because:

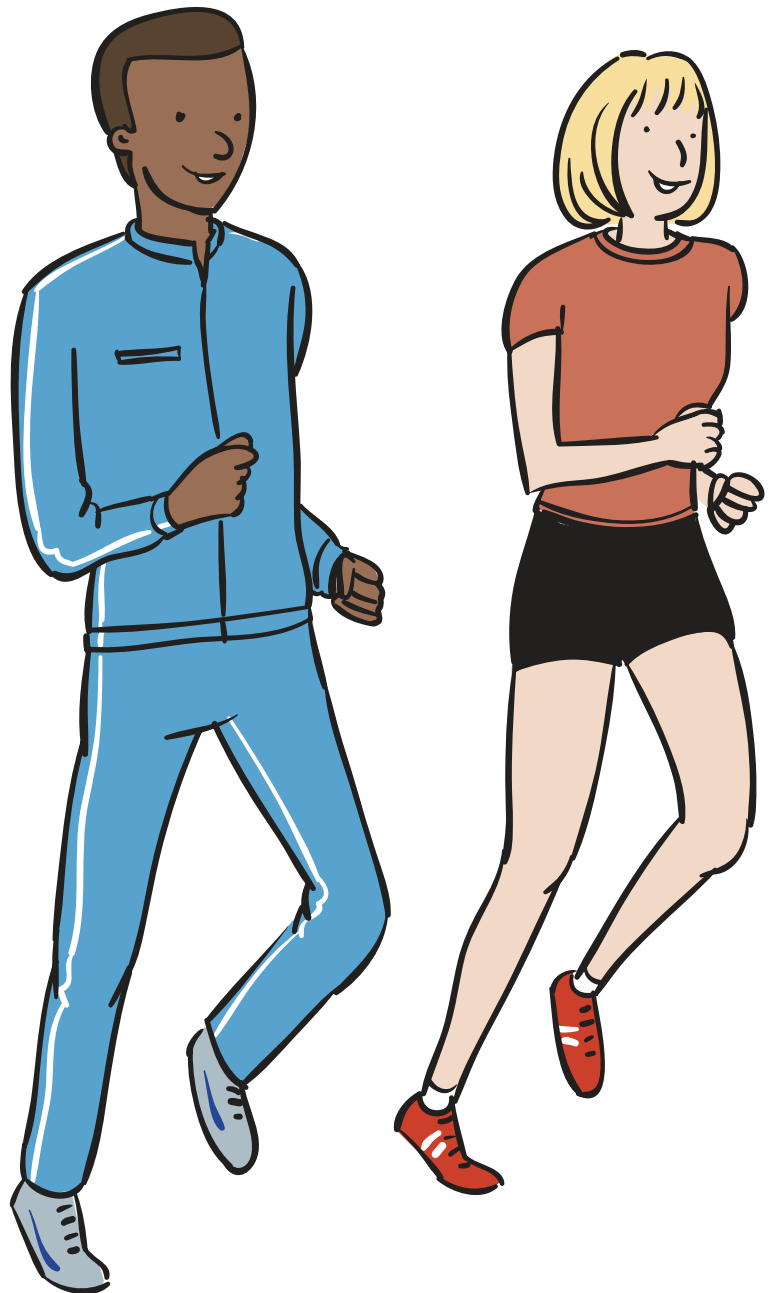
- being overweight can make people ill. It can cause things like heart disease, cancer and diabetes.
- over the last 20 years, there has been a big rise in the number of people who are overweight. If we do not do something about this now, there will be lots more health problems in the future.



We want more people to do exercise.

This is because:

- a lot less people now walk and cycle than they did 25 years ago.
- people who do exercise are likely to live longer. They are much less likely to get diseases like heart disease, strokes and some cancers.



We want to help people to drink alcohol sensibly.

This is because:

- people can die from drinking too much alcohol.
- there are lots of problems linked to people drinking too much alcohol. These are problems like crime, people not being able to work, and people hurting their families.
- the NHS spends a lot of time and money dealing with problems that are caused because of people drinking too much alcohol.



We want to help people to stay healthy sexually.

This is because:

- more people are not keeping themselves safe when they have sex.
- more people have now got 'sexually transmitted diseases'. These are diseases that people get through having unsafe sex. These diseases can make people very ill or even cause death.



We want to help people to be healthy mentally.

This is because:

- many people in England now have mental ill health. Mental ill health is things like being very depressed.
- it is very important to be healthy mentally, as well as having a healthy body.
- mental ill health can lead to people killing themselves.



What the Government is going to do

Making it easier for people to choose healthy lives

The information we get about health is very important. It helps us to make choices about our health and our lives.

The Government wants to make it easier for people to choose healthy lives.

To do this we will:

- give people good information so they can make their own choices about their health (for example, whether or not to smoke).
- help people from poorer communities to make good choices about health.
- try to stop so many people buying unhealthy food, cigarettes and alcohol, especially children and young people.

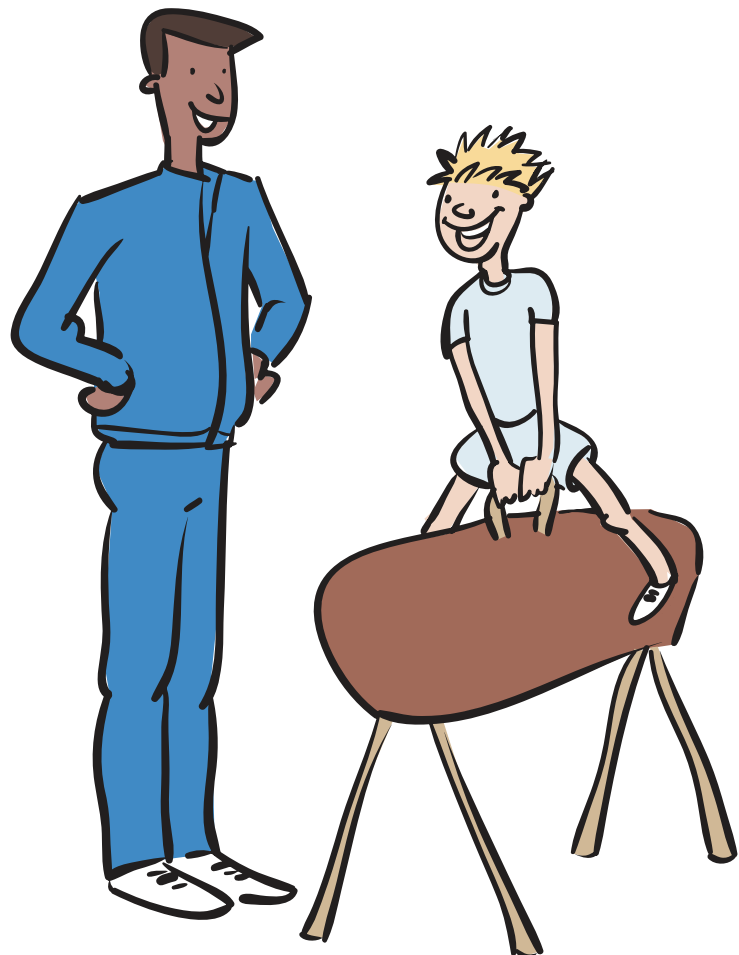


Helping children and young people to be healthy

We want to help children and young people to be healthy.

To do this we will:

- give better information about health to parents, children and young people.
- work with schools to help children to be healthier. This includes things like giving children healthy food to eat, and making sure children see a school nurse.
- encourage children to do sport and exercise.
- give bigger punishments to shop owners who sell cigarettes to children and young people.



Helping local communities to lead the way on health

Your local community is where you live. Your community includes all the people who live in your area, all the groups and organisations in your area and all the businesses in your area, like local shops.

Where you live can make a big difference to how healthy you are. We want local communities to help people to be healthy.

To do this we will:

- make sure the NHS and local authorities work with groups and organisations to help people to be healthier.
- spend time and money helping poorer communities to help people to be healthier.
- work with sports clubs to help more people to do sport.



- make it easier for people to walk and cycle to places.
- think about stopping people from smoking in most public places and most work places. This will mean that people will not have to breathe in other people's smoke.

Making health a way of life

Many people want to be healthier.

But many people find it hard to make changes to their lives to become healthier. We want to help people to make these changes.

To do this we will:

- give everyone the chance to have a health guide if they want one. A health guide is someone who will give advice on healthy living, and support people to make changes to their lives to become healthier.
- give everyone the chance to have their own health plan. People will be able to get help and advice about living a healthier life.



Supporting the National Health Service (NHS) to help people to be healthier

The NHS helps people who are ill to get better. But the NHS can also help people to learn about being healthy. This means they will be less likely to become ill.

We want to support the NHS to help people to be healthier.

To do this we will:

- help the NHS to make sure that everyone gets the health services they need.
- give all NHS staff training and support so they can teach people about being healthy.
- work with people who need more help, like people who have been ill for a long time and people with mental ill health.
- make sure that special services to help people stay healthy are good and easy to use. These special services include services to help people be sexually healthy and to help people stop smoking.



Work and health

The work you do and where you work can make a big difference to your health. We want work places to help people to be healthy.

To do this we will:

- help more people to get a job.
- make working conditions better. This is things like making sure people get enough holiday days off work.
- give more help to employers to help their staff to be healthy.
- make sure the NHS is a healthy place to work. This will show other organisations what a healthy work place should be like.



How to find out more

If you want to find out more about *Choosing Health* you can:



look at the website
www.dh.gov.uk/publications

Your CD-ROM

The CD-ROM is set to AUTORUN. This means it should start by itself when you put it in your computer.

If the CD does not start by itself and you are using a PC:

- Right click the CD-ROM icon
- Click "Explore"
- Look for an icon called *Choosing Health*
- Double click it.

If the CD does not start by itself and you are using a MAC:

- Look for an icon called *Choosing Health* on the desktop
- Double click it.

Make sure your speakers are turned up high so you can hear the sound.

To use the CD-ROM you will need a computer with a minimum screen resolution of 800x600. If you are using a PC, it will need a minimum specification of pentium 1 running 128 Megs of RAM. If you are using a MAC, it will need a minimum specification of first Edition G3 running 128 Megs of RAM.



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