

JamesOHill.txt

From: postmaster@kenny.who.int  
Sent: Saturday, 15 June 2002 19:26  
To: dietandhealth  
Subject: Comments Form

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by  
( ) on Saturday, June 15, 2002 at 19:25:45

---

Name: James O. Hill, Ph.D.

Submitter: Center for Human Nutrition, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

Address: Box C225, 4200 E Ninth Ave

City: Denver

Postal\_Code: 80262

State: Colorado

Country: USA

Email: James.Hill@uchsc.edu

Fax: 303-315-3273

Tel: 303-315-7368

Scope\_of\_Activities: International, National & Regional

Mandate\_of\_the\_Organization: Improve the dietary and physical activity patterns of the population

JamesOHill.txt

Interest: Academic institution promoting research and translation of research results into the community

Sources\_of\_Funding: National Institutes of Health  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Private Industry  
Private Foundations  
Private Philanthropy

Comments: I would like to comment on the Draft Report of the Joint WHO/FAO Expert Consultation on Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases. The report is very timely and provides some important information about nutrition and chronic disease. I believe the report could be improved in the following ways:

1. I echo the comments provided separately by Dr. Steven Blair that the report focuses too much on dietary factors and not enough on the crucial role of physical inactivity in the etiology of chronic diseases - especially obesity. While the report states that there are convincing data that regular physical activity decreases the risk of obesity, little further attention is given to physical activity as compared to nutrition. For example, there is extensive speculation about the nature of nutritional factors in the environment that promote obesity but only minimal discussion of physical activity factors in the environment that may promote weight gain. Substantial discussion is given to suggestions for ways to modify the environment to affect eating such as changing price structure of foods, modifying contents vending machines and taxing undesirable foods. No similar suggestions are given for how to reduce "sedentarianism" in the environment. How about considering price cha!

!  
nges to movies, televisions, elevators, etc. I believe we have stronger data to suggest that increasing physical activity can prevent weight gain than we have for any single nutrition factor. This should be emphasized more in the report. I believe that all governments should be given increasing physical activity as a top priority suggestion to prevent weight gain and deal with chronic disease.

2. The report nicely describes the severity of the problem of chronic disease and clearly makes a case for the urgent need for action to modify diet and physical activity to deal with this problem. The diverse potential solutions proposed, however, do not seem to have any logical flow. I wonder if the committee would consider organizing the summary around the following 3 steps.

JamesOHill.txt

1) Clearly define the optimum dietary and physical activity patterns (to the best of our knowledge) to prevent chronic disease (I must admit that these are not clear to me from this report)

2) Describe how opportunities to achieve these optimum patterns can be increased in the environment (eg. restaurants should offer healthy choices, there should be sidewalks for walking and biking, etc). While having opportunities will not necessarily ensure that people take advantage of them, this is a necessary step.

3) Discuss suggestions for how to get people to take advantage of opportunities to achieve optimum dietary and physical activity patterns. This, I think, is the weakest part of the report and probably related to the paucity of data available. The report stresses things such as price structures, restrictions, taxes. This is one approach, but I think we should also encourage people to pursue the idea of incentives for engaging in desired behaviors. I worry that we recommend, for example, to governments that they consider price structure changes to foods as a strategy to prevent chronic disease. Do we understand enough about the exact diet that should be consumed to do this and do we have any real evidence to suggest this strategy would achieve the desired goal? Given that we have virtually no data about successful ways to modify the environment to encourage the desired behaviors, it seems we should be encouraging different approaches to the problem. There is clearly an urge!

!  
nt need for action, but given that we do not have the data to tell us what will work, we should keep an open mind to different approaches.

3. The U.S. Surgeon General has repeatedly called for collaborations among all sectors of society to solve the obesity problem. I believe that this strategy is important in other countries as well. This was emphasized in the previous WHO consultation on obesity and, I think, should be emphasized more in this report.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input for this draft report.

B1: Submit

-----  
REMOTE\_HOST: richmond.uchsc.edu  
REMOTE\_ADDR: 140.226.107.52

JamesOHill.txt

HTTP\_USER\_AGENT: Mozilla/4.73 [en] (Win98; U)