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**IT'S TIME FOR A PREVENTION-LED MODEL
TO REBUILD THE NATION'S HEALTH:
A CALL FOR CHANGE!**



BANT ELECTION MANIFESTO



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Our manifesto for the next UK general election: prioritise nutrition and preventative healthcare in the NHS to restore and rebuild the nation's health.

From the British Association of Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine (BANT)

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As UK voters prepare to go to the polls, BANT (British Association for Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine) is calling on all parties to place nutrition and preventative healthcare at the heart of their pledges to the UK population.

It is time for a prevention-led model in place of a treatment model.

We call on all parties to support a common-sense approach to our modern healthcare needs, that reflects the changes in society. This new healthcare model needs to support people to stay healthy rather than waiting for them to become ill. Based on healthier nutrition and lifestyles, it is a public health approach that saves lives and tax-payers money.

Satu Jackson, BANT CEO



On several occasions in the past Britain has been labelled the “sickest nation in Europe”. Whereas in the past this was an economic criticism, now it is true in the most real sense. With spiralling rates of obesity and unhealthy weight, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, cancer, and mental health concerns, we are the sickest nation of an already unhealthy continent.

Whilst it has been a tumultuous time for UK health in the wake of the pandemic and continuing NHS strikes, these frightening statistics had been emerging even before these seismic events. Indeed, there have been an astounding 14 strategies and 680 policies put in place by the various governments since 1992 simply relating to obesity. They have all failed.

BANT has spent decades calling for changes in policy that would support a healthier population, both physically and mentally. We are now at a critical tipping point.

The increasing burden of chronic disease and the limitations of conventional medicine, both in terms of knowledge and manpower, requires a shift in focus from both Parliament and within the NHS to put crucial healthcare prevention strategies at the heart of policy.

In this manifesto for health for the coming election we outline our five-point plan for feeding our future and transforming health and nutrition in Britain.

BANT hopes that 2024 will mark a transition in public health policy, with a focus on a prevention-led model which:

- Releases NHS staff and resources currently tied to the care of chronic conditions, allowing better outcomes in acute and critical care.
- Empowers and informs individuals to make lasting and meaningful changes to their health and lifestyle. It will seek to foster a sense of individual responsibility and agency.
- To provide a wealth of consistent and reliable information, resource and guidance to support people to improve their health and advocate improved lifestyles to others.
- Creates an environment for good health through nutrition, which encourages healthy food choices, provides truly useful food labelling to allow for informed choice, and places restrictions on ultra-processed foods and drinks (UPFDs) that are causing so much of the harm to society.

As a nation, we are living longer but less healthily, and it is costing the NHS

15 million

people in the UK are
living with at least one
chronic condition

89%

of UK deaths are
estimated to be caused
by non-communicable
diseases

Focus on disease prevention is the only option if we are to future-proof our NHS.

We need a health service that recognises the major contributors to modern-day disease, and understands which factors are modifiable with preventative measures.

The current 'pill for every ill' model is not effective in the face of diet-induced disease and unhealthy lifestyles. Causality cannot be solved pharmaceutically. There is one tried and tested way to 'treat' diet-induced disease, and that is by improving how we eat.

The benefits of eating a healthy whole food diet are far reaching and can rapidly improve metabolic markers for most diet-related diseases affecting the UK population. The problem is that healthy foods and ingredients are not as affordable or accessible as their ultra-processed counterparts. This creates barriers for many in society who find themselves struggling to access, afford, prepare, and cook healthy meals.

We call on all parties to pull together to transform public health policy. No single effort has more potential to save and transform lives, so it is time to focus on prevention and harness the existing workforce of nutrition professionals to make a real difference in the UK's health crisis.

Our health system must catch up with the demands of today's patients. We need nutrition and lifestyle practitioners working alongside General Practitioners to alleviate some of the burden placed on them by the rise in chronic diseases. Without this, our health system will inevitably collapse.

It does not have to be this way.

The UK has an unharnessed workforce of practitioners on the PSA-accredited register committed to the same high standards and public protection, as those currently working within the NHS.



BANT's five-point plan for a UK Prevention-led health system:



1. Increase the NHS Prevention Budget



2. Integrate Nutrition into the NHS



3. Empower the population



4. Improve food labelling



5. Act against the drivers of obesity



1 Prioritise Funding for Prevention

We need Government to increase funding provisions to facilitate the NHS transition towards a prevention-led model. Alongside this, we also need to expand the workforce, bringing in experts in nutrition and lifestyle medicine to focus on interventions to these growing areas of illness, in turn relieving pressure on the NHS, especially General Practitioners and Primary Care.

5%

Currently less than 5% of NHS spending is allocated to preventative healthcare.



WE CALL ON POLITICAL PARTIES TO:

- Increase the NHS prevention budget from current 5%, and ring-fence additional funding from proposed *Fit for the Future* funds.
- Expand social prescribing and facilitate referrals to Professional Standards Authority (PSA) - accredited nutrition practitioners.
- Introduce government-funded healthy food prescriptions to empower GPs to prescribe healthy whole foods.
- Fund nutrition consultations for patients with food-related illnesses.

Reclaim the UK's Health: Prioritise Funds for Prevention



2

Integrate Nutrition into the NHS

The NHS is not structured to meet the increasing health demands of an ageing population suffering from diet-induced metabolic diseases. Many people in the UK will now experience decades of serious chronic illness, much of which is preventable with the appropriate professional support.

We need nutrition practitioners within the NHS.



BANT nutrition practitioners are experienced in providing both personalised and group recommendations, and behaviour change tools. They can crucially help support, to reduce, and reverse many of the symptoms associated with diet-induced chronic disease.

Currently there are c.3,500 BANT members; Registered Nutritional Therapy Practitioners trained and qualified in clinical practice who are not working within a primary care setting due to lack of joined-up-thinking.

We have an opportunity to integrate PSA-accredited Registered Nutritional Therapy Practitioners into NHS primary care settings:

- In GP surgeries for automatic referrals on diet-induced symptoms.
- In out-patient settings to advise on nutrition next-steps following treatment.
- In paediatric clinics for dietary education for young families.
- In integrative healthcare teams to provide active support for patients with metabolic, digestive, cardiovascular, inflammatory, and autoimmune conditions.

63.8%

of the adult population are overweight and 25.9% living with obesity

WE CALL ON POLITICAL PARTIES TO:

- Prioritise bringing nutrition and lifestyle medicine professionals into the NHS to support patients with diet and lifestyle induced illness as part of a long-term workforce plan for the NHS.

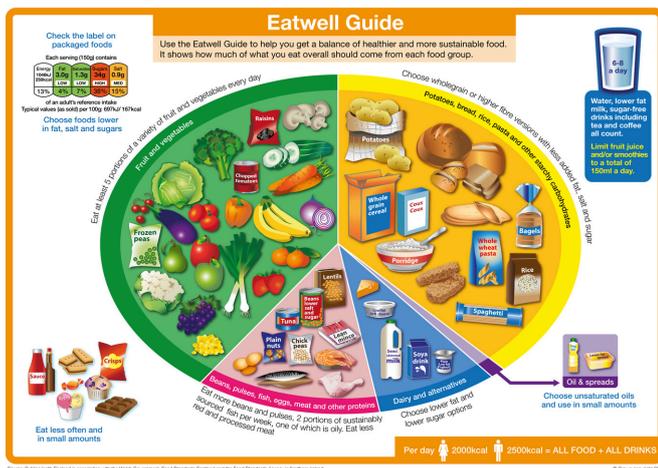
Reclaim the UK's Health: Integrate Nutrition in the NHS



3

Empower the Population

Public understanding of nutrition is at an all time low with less than 0.1 percent of the population currently achieving the national Eatwell Guidelines, last updated in 2016. Since then, there has been a dramatic rise in chronic diseases. Public health guidance is based on population-wide recommendations however, they do not apply to the estimated 50% of the population suffering from chronic conditions. Furthermore, UK guidance has fallen behind other developed nations in providing science-based dietary recommendations based on optimal nutrient-needs, and sustainability alongside environmental considerations.



copyright <https://food-guide.canada.ca>

We need updated guidelines that reflect the latest science and educate on healthy whole food ingredients

WE CALL ON POLITICAL PARTIES TO:

- Review and update the Eatwell Guide (under consultation) using the science-based nutritional recommendations on; animal and plant proteins, carbohydrates and sugars, unhealthy versus essential fatty acids, along with portion guidance and serving suggestions.
- Fund a full programme of dedicated resources and through-the-line communications to properly disseminate the guidelines on a national level.
- Aid compliance with education on how to adapt the general population guidance to better suit the individual.
- Fund group programmes throughout the NHS for overweight, obese, pre-diabetes, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, young families, menopause, and over 60s.

Reclaim the UK's Health: Empower the Population



4

Improve Food Labelling

Food labelling should be honest and meaningful to consumers and guide them towards informed choices at point of purchase. Current labelling loop-holes mean consumers are often misled about the true high fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) content of products. Manufacturers continue to use modified starches, such as maltodextrins, to replace fat and facilitate 'low calorie' claims, and non-nutritive sweeteners, to replace sugars. Since neither are classified as sugars, this misleads consumers and perpetuates dishonest labelling. Critically, this makes it challenging to calculate the true glycaemic effects of foods.



Each serving (150g) contains

Energy 1046kJ 250kcal	Fat 3.0g LOW	Saturates 1.3g LOW	Sugars 34g HIGH	Salt 0.9g MED
	13%	4%	7%	38%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/ 167kcal



bourbon creams



INGREDIENTS Wheatflour contains **Gluten** (with Wheatflour, Calcium Carbonate, Iron, Niacin, Thiamin) · Sugar · Palm Oil · Fat Reduced Cocoa Powder · Glucose Syrup · Dextrose · **Wheat** Starch (contains **Gluten**) · Raising Agent: Sodium Bicarbonate, E503 · Salt · Flavouring.

For allergens see ingredients in bold.

Not suitable for **Nut, Peanut** and **Sesame** allergy sufferers due to manufacturing methods.

Suitable for vegetarians

STORAGE For Best Before, see front of pack. Store in a cool, dry place. Once opened, store in an airtight container.

NUTRITION	Serves approximately	per 100g	per 14g biscuit
Pour environ/Přibližně porcí: 28			
Typical values			
Valeurs moyennes/Průměrné hodnoty			
Energy kJ /Énergie/Energetická hodnota		2040	286
Energy kcal /Énergie/Energetická hodnota		487	68
Fat /Matières grasses/Tuky		21.4g	2.9g
of which saturates /dont acides gras saturés/ z toho nasycené mastné kyseliny		12.1g	1.7g
Carbohydrate /Glucides/Sacharidy		65.9g	9.4g
of which sugars /dont sucres/z toho cukry		25.2g	3.9g
Fibre /Fibres alimentaires/Vláknina		2.8g	0.4g
Protein /Protéines/Bilkoviny		6.2g	0.8g
Salt /Sel/Sůl		0.23g	0.03g
Reference intake (adult) Energy 8400kJ/2000kcal Fat 70g Saturates 20g Sugars 90g Salt 6g			

WE CALL ON POLITICAL PARTIES TO:

- Commit to mandatory food labelling with clear guidance on high fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) products to close loopholes currently which allow manufacturers to pass non-nutritive sweeteners as healthy alternatives to sugar and modified starches (corn, wheat, or potato) as 'low calorie'.
- Introduce one singular labelling framework to make it easier for consumers to compare products, that all manufacturers must adhere to.
- Update guidelines from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's (SACN) in the UK to align with the World Health Organisation.

Reclaiming the UK's Health: Improve Food Labelling



5

Act against the Drivers of Obesity

As a nation, we are moving further away from real food and on average consume 50% or more of our daily calories from ultra-processed foods - a source of empty calories. We need to act against the obesogenic environment by de-escalating the expansion of Ultra-Processed Foods and Drinks (UPFDs), prioritise providing access to health-promoting foods to all communities, particularly low-income families, and review the current Sugar Tax to include ingredients such as maltodextrins and non-nutritive (artificial) sweeteners.

A 2024 review found that ultra-processed foods linked to 32 harmful effects to health

50%

of our national diet is comprised of ultra processed foods and drinks



WE CALL ON POLITICAL PARTIES TO:

- Introduce mandatory reporting by food companies, with clear targets and penalties for volume of UPFDs/HFSS foods sold; fruits and vegetables/fibre foods sold; types of protein sold; amount of food wasted.
- Commit to legislation to limit advertising and in-store BOGOF and other promotions on UPFDs.
- Set mandatory minimum promotional thresholds on fresh whole foods to ensure fruit, vegetables and protein foods are equitably promoted.
- Update the current Sugar Tax to include ingredients such as maltodextrins and non-nutritive (artificial) sweeteners.

Reclaim the UK's
Health: Act against
the Drivers of
Obesity





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Never before have our food choices been so important for the health and wellbeing of our nation. It is time for nutrition to be fully integrated into our healthcare system.



Why refer to a Registered Nutritional Therapy Practitioner

Registered Nutritional Therapy Practitioners are regulated by the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC) that holds an Accredited Voluntary Register (AVR) for the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA). A report by the Royal Society for Public Health and the Professional Standards Agency made a key recommendation that AVR practitioners have the authority to make direct NHS referrals, in appropriate cases, to ease the administrative burden on GP surgeries. BANT nutrition practitioners are the key workforce asset to harness 21st century lifestyle medicine to tackle the rising tide of diet-induced diseases, such as metabolic dysregulation, obesity, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), stress-related fatigue, and other chronic diseases.

To find a BANT nutrition practitioner, please visit bant.org.uk

About us...

BANT is the leading professional body for Registered Nutritional Therapy Practitioners in one-to-one clinical practice and a self-regulator for BANT Registered Nutritionists®. BANT members combine a network approach to complex systems, incorporating the latest science from genetic, epigenetic, diet and nutrition research to inform individualised recommendations. BANT oversees the activities, training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of its members.



It is time to prioritise public health in 2024

