

## **FHF call for evidence**

**The Associate Parliamentary Food and Health Forum (FHF) will be conducting a short inquiry in spring 2007, which will consider the links between diet (and in particular the consumption of fish oils) and behaviour.**

### **Issues the inquiry team wishes to consider will include:**

Does the healthy functioning of a human brain require fish oils in the diet? If so, why?

What aspects of brain function does the consumption of fish oils influence (for example, mood, memory, ability to concentrate, impulsivity or aggression)?

Is there an agreed optimum daily intake of fish oils for the average adult or child?

Is there an ideal balance of omega-3 and omega-6 (with or without other vitamins and minerals eg vitamin E) for the average adult and the average child?

Are fish oil supplements sufficient – if appropriate standards apply as to the combination and quality of essential fatty acids in approved supplements – or do people need to eat oily fish?

What role is there for foods fortified with fish oils?

What evidence is there that the consumption of fish oils has a positive effect on the mood, behaviour and learning of children or adults?

Can any beneficial effect of the consumption of fish oils observed in trials to date be explained by any other factors?

Would increasing the consumption of fish oils be beneficial for the general population (including people who do not have overt omega-3 fatty acid deficiencies)?

What policy recommendations should be made to Government concerning the consumption of fish oils in the UK?

### **The inquiry will seek to answer the following key questions:**

- Should more research be carried out on school children to see if increasing fish oils in their diet has any beneficial effect? (And should any such trials involve unselected populations or special groups?)
- Should further research be carried out to determine the optimal daily dietary intake of omega-3 (and omega-6)?
- Should more research be carried out with offenders across prisons/young offender institutes to see if the results of earlier research (eg Bernard Gesch, "Nutrition in Young Offenders", British Journal of Psychiatry 2002) are replicated across a larger population group?
- Should an improved diet/daily supplements be provided as soon as possible throughout establishments providing care and/or accommodation for children and/or adults with learning disabilities/behavioural problems?

FHF would welcome written comments on these issues.

## **Guidance to those submitting written evidence**

Written evidence is invited in response to the questions above, **to arrive by no later than 2 March 2007.**

The links between diet and behaviour is a very broad subject and the inquiry is deliberately focussing on limited aspects of it. There is no need for individual submissions to deal with all the issues referred to in this document. Evidence should be kept as short as possible: submissions of not more than three sides of A4 paper of free-standing text, excluding any supporting annexes, are preferred. Paragraphs should be numbered.

Evidence should be sent electronically to [patricia.constant@centrallobby.com](mailto:patricia.constant@centrallobby.com)

Evidence should be attributed and dated, with a note of the author's name and position. Please state whether evidence is submitted on an individual or corporate basis.

Evidence becomes the property of the Food and Health Forum, and may be printed or circulated by FHF. You may publicise or publish your evidence yourself.

Submissions will be acknowledged. Any enquiries should be addressed to Patricia Constant at [patricia.constant@centrallobby.com](mailto:patricia.constant@centrallobby.com)

This is a public call for evidence. You are encouraged to bring it to the attention of other groups and individuals who may not have received a copy directly.

***FHF, 2 February 2007***