



# **Dietitians do prevention – public health dietetics in action**

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# What do we mean by 'Population Health'?

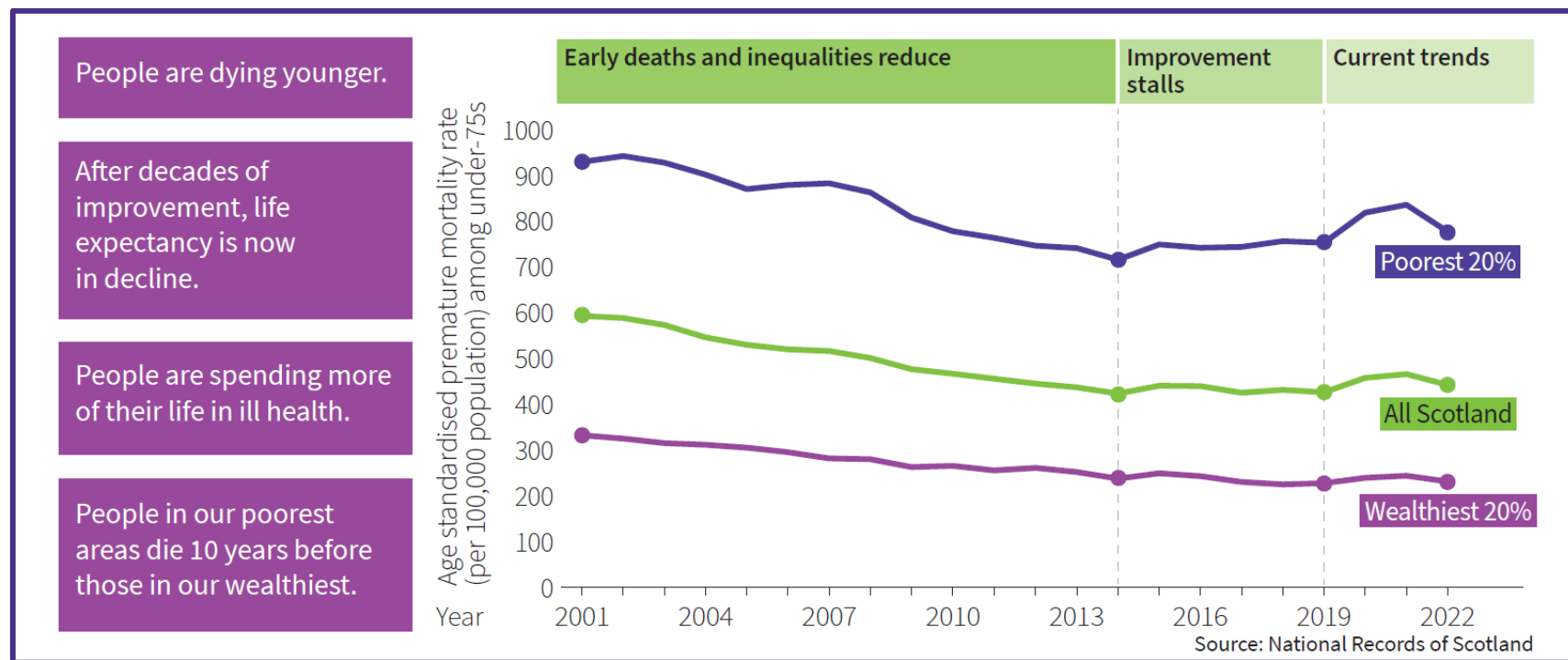
An approach aimed at **improving the health of an entire population**. It is about improving the **physical and mental health** outcomes and wellbeing of people within and across a defined local, regional or national population, while **reducing health inequalities**.

It includes action to reduce the occurrence of ill health, action to deliver appropriate health and care services and action on the **wider determinants of health**. It requires **working with communities and partner agencies**.

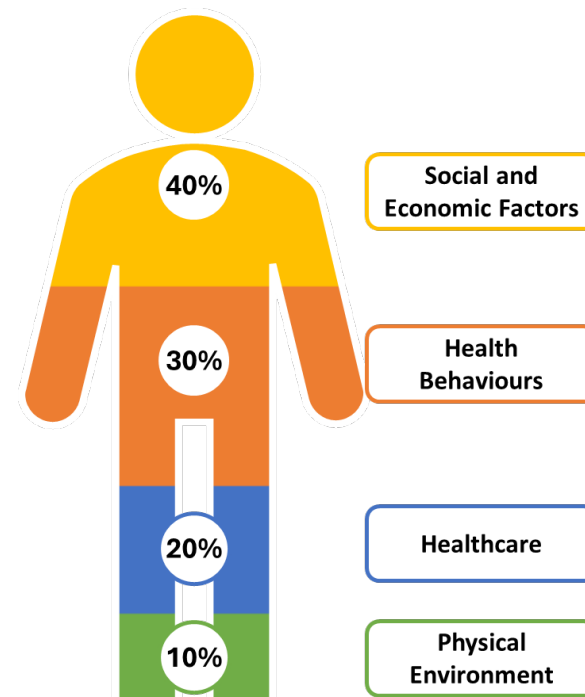
*Source: King's Fund - [A vision for population health: towards a healthier future](#)*

# Why change is needed

Improvements in population health have stalled and Scotland's health is worsening.



## Determinants of Health



**Burden of disease  
forecast to increase by  
21% over next 20 years**

**Two thirds of this increase will be due to increases in:**



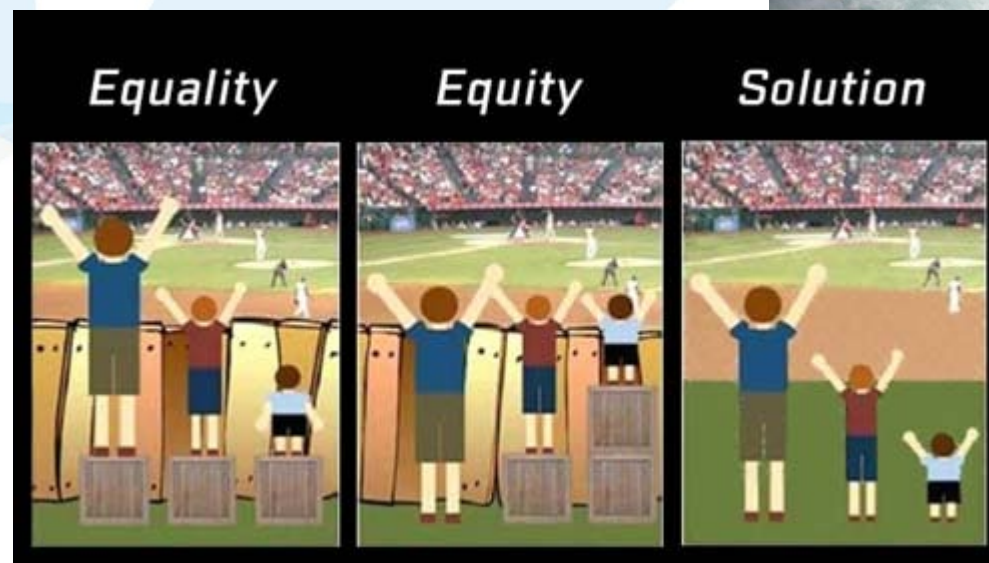
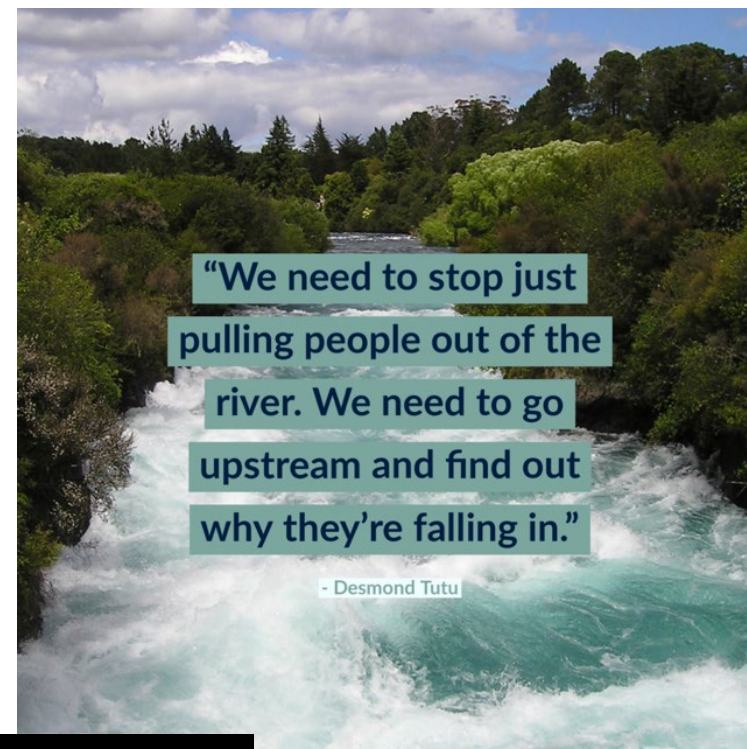
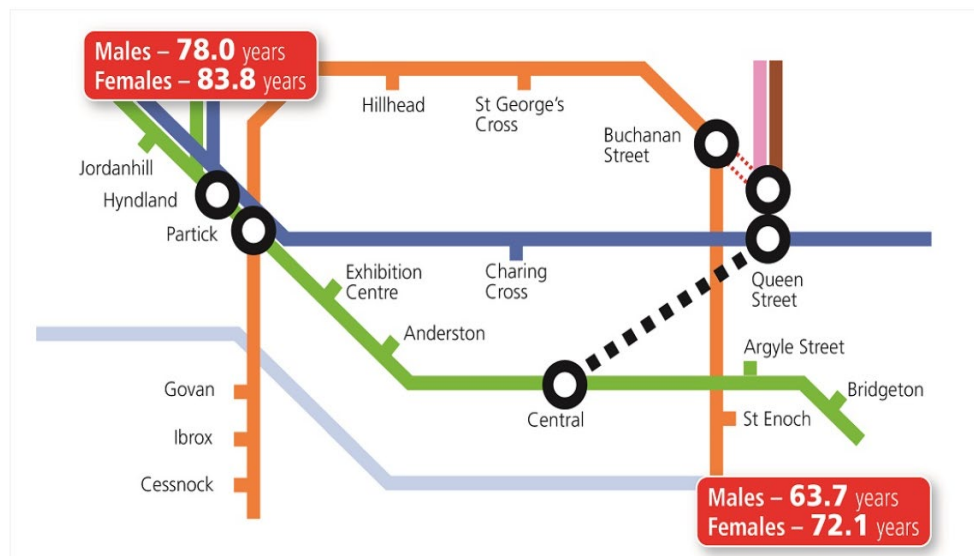
Cancers



Cardiovascular  
disease



Neurological  
conditions



# What works: tackling inequalities

## More likely to reduce inequalities

- Structural changes in the environment
- Legislative and regulatory controls
- Fiscal policies
- Income support
- Reducing price barriers
- Improving accessibility of services
- Prioritising disadvantaged groups
- Offering intensive support
- Starting young

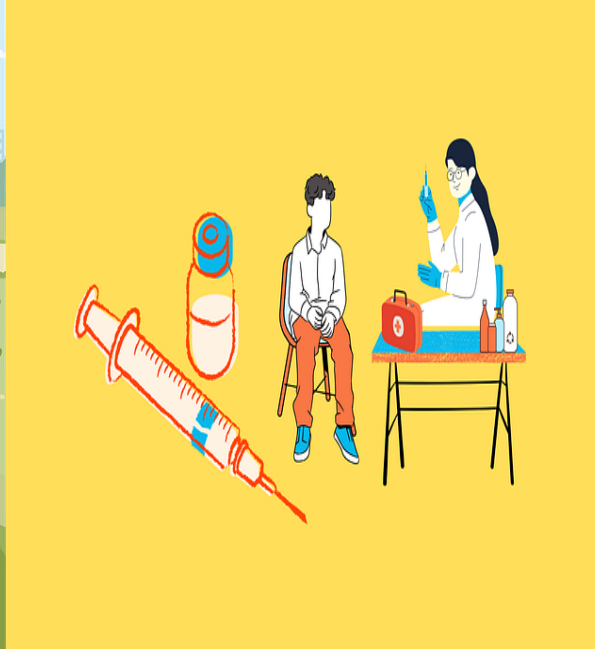
## Less likely to reduce inequalities

- Information based campaigns
- Written materials
- Campaigns reliant on people taking the initiative to opt in
- Campaigns/messages designed for the whole population
- Whole school health education approaches
- Approaches which involve significant price or other barriers
- Housing or regeneration programmes that raise housing costs

# Levels of prevention



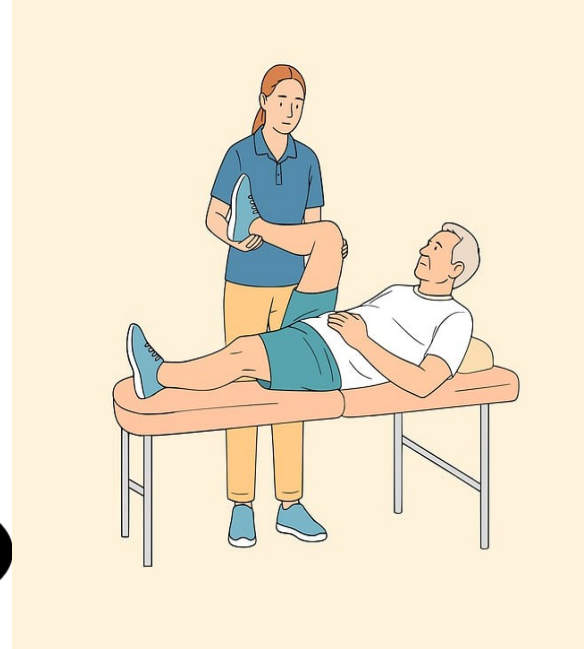
**PRIMORDIAL**  
prevent exposure to risk  
factors



**PRIMARY**  
reduce exposure or  
mitigate impact



**SECONDARY**  
early detection and  
intervention



**TERTIARY**  
manage symptoms and  
prevent further progression



# Scotland's Population Health Framework

2025-2035



# Health and Social Care Vision



Health and care is preventative, supports self-care and partners work together to create good health

Prevention

Access

Health and care is accessible, seamless and equitable



A Scotland where people live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives

Person-led

Health and care is responsive, respects individual needs and delivers outcomes that matter to people

Quality

Health and care is high quality, effective, sustainable and good value



# What makes this Framework different?

## **Whole-System Collaboration**

*Shared roles across sectors to improve health and wellbeing*

## **Holistic and Evidence-Driven**

*Focus on key drivers of health and wellbeing*

## **Flexible & Adaptive**

*Rolling priorities and actions over the decade*

## **Post-COVID Evolution**

*Builds on new partnerships and system changes*

## **Four Nations Clinical Leadership**

*Guided by clinical leaders across the UK*

# Overview

## Vision and Aim

We live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives

By 2035 we will improve Scottish life expectancy whilst reducing the life expectancy gap between the most deprived 20% of local areas and the national average.

## Initial Priorities

1 Embedding Prevention in our Systems

2 Improving Healthy Weight

## Drivers of Health

### Prevention Focused System

Social and  
Economic Factors

Places and  
Communities

Enabling  
Healthy Living

Equitable Health  
and Care

## Guiding Principles

**Prioritise** creating and maintaining good health, and preventing ill health

**Focus** support on people and communities who need it the most

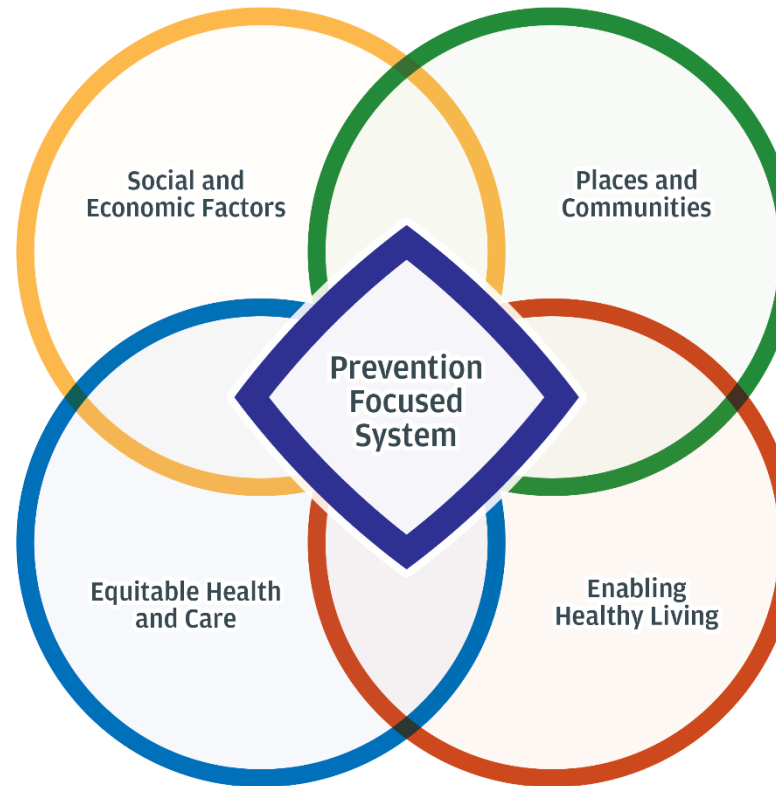
**Change** systems and environments to support individuals to stay healthy

**Deliver** through a whole system approach –nationally and locally

# Initial Priorities

## Priority 1: Embedding Prevention in our Systems

Develop mechanisms that prioritise addressing inequalities and improving prevention within planning, delivery, budgets and accountability.



## Priority 2: Improving Healthy Weight

Develop a whole system approach to improve food environments; ensure a healthy, balanced diet is accessible and affordable to all; and improve population levels of healthy weight

# Improving healthy weight actions

A healthier food environment

- Legislation to improve the food environment

Children have the best start in life

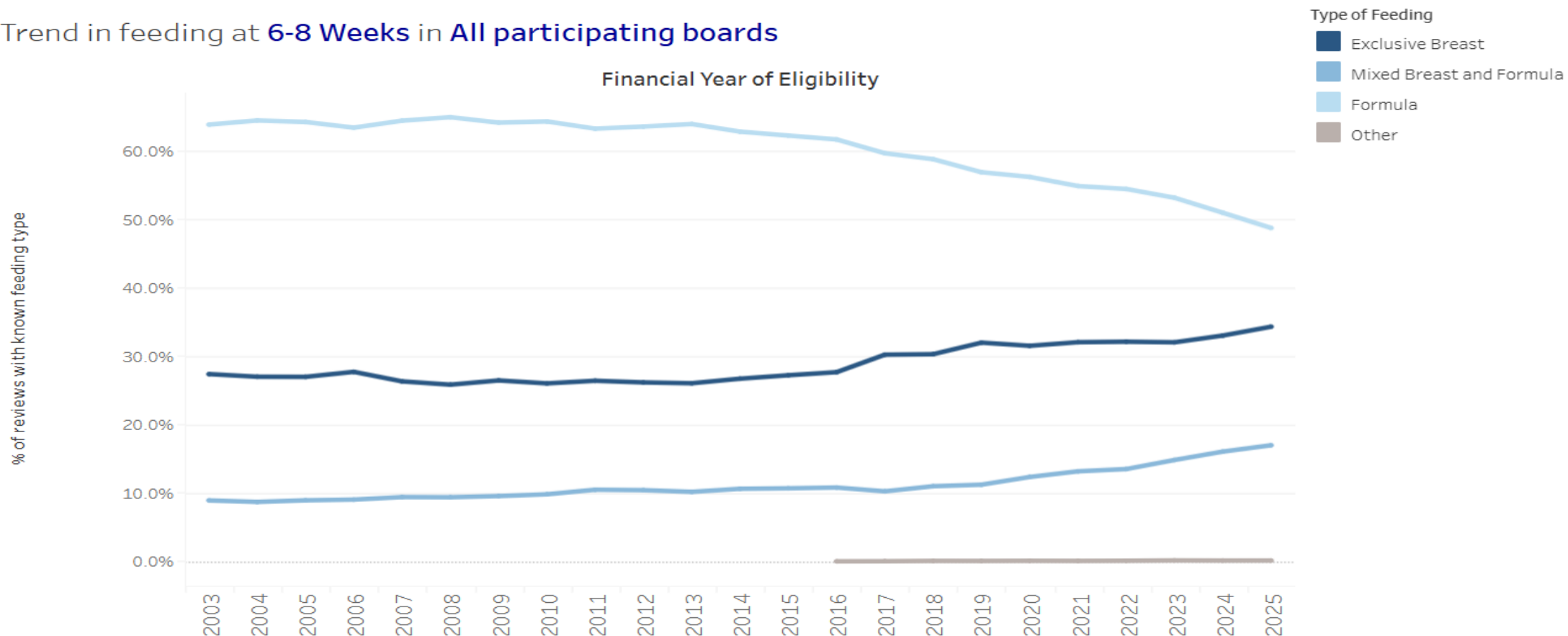
- Supporting good nutrition in preconception and early years to reduce risk of later obesity

People have access to services that support a healthy weight

- Providing access to NHS weight management services, including obesity medicines
- Supporting innovation to improve health of people affected by obesity-related conditions, incl type 2 diabetes
- Supporting the prevention, early detection & treatment of malnutrition

# Infant feeding in Scotland

Trend in feeding at **6-8 Weeks** in **All participating boards**



\* Year ending 31st March

Source: CHSP Pre-School August 2025, Public Health Scotland



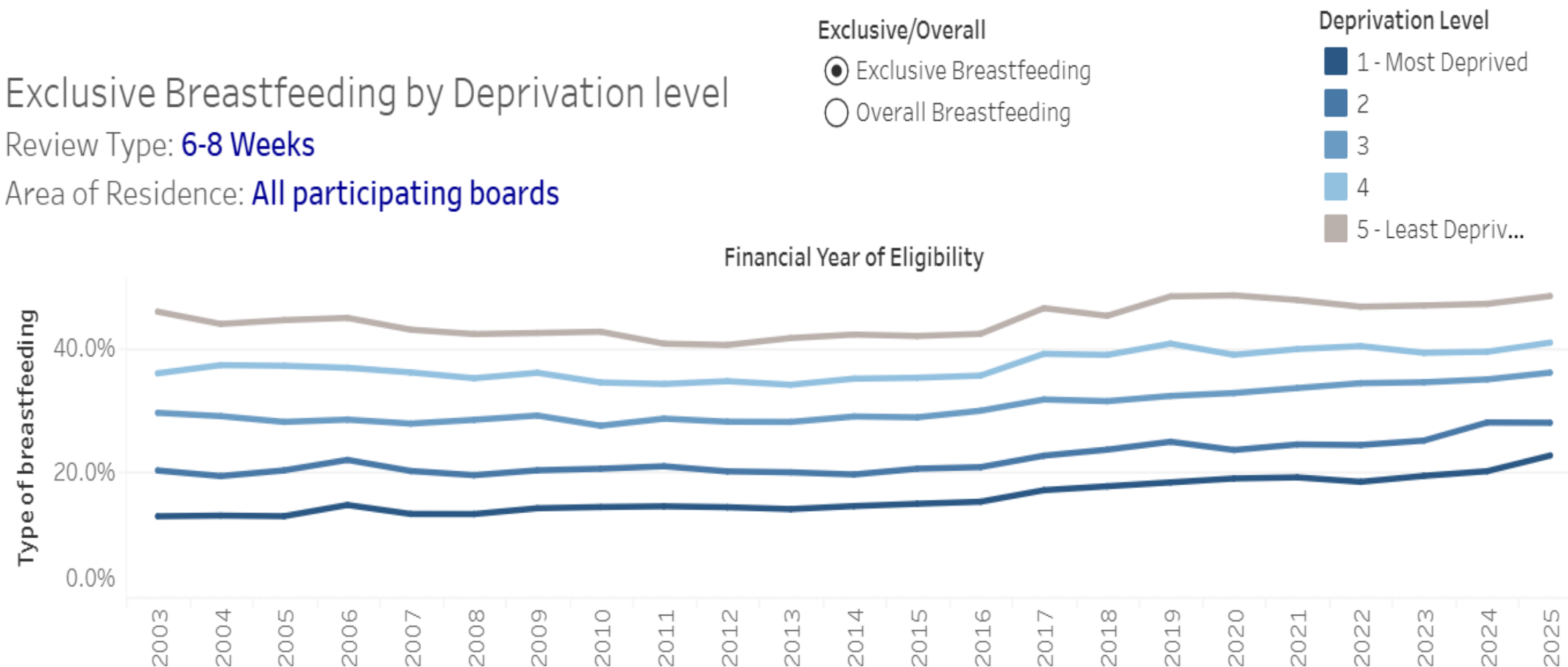
# Breastfeeding and deprivation

Source: CHSP Pre-School August 2025, Public Health Scotland

## Exclusive Breastfeeding by Deprivation level

Review Type: **6-8 Weeks**

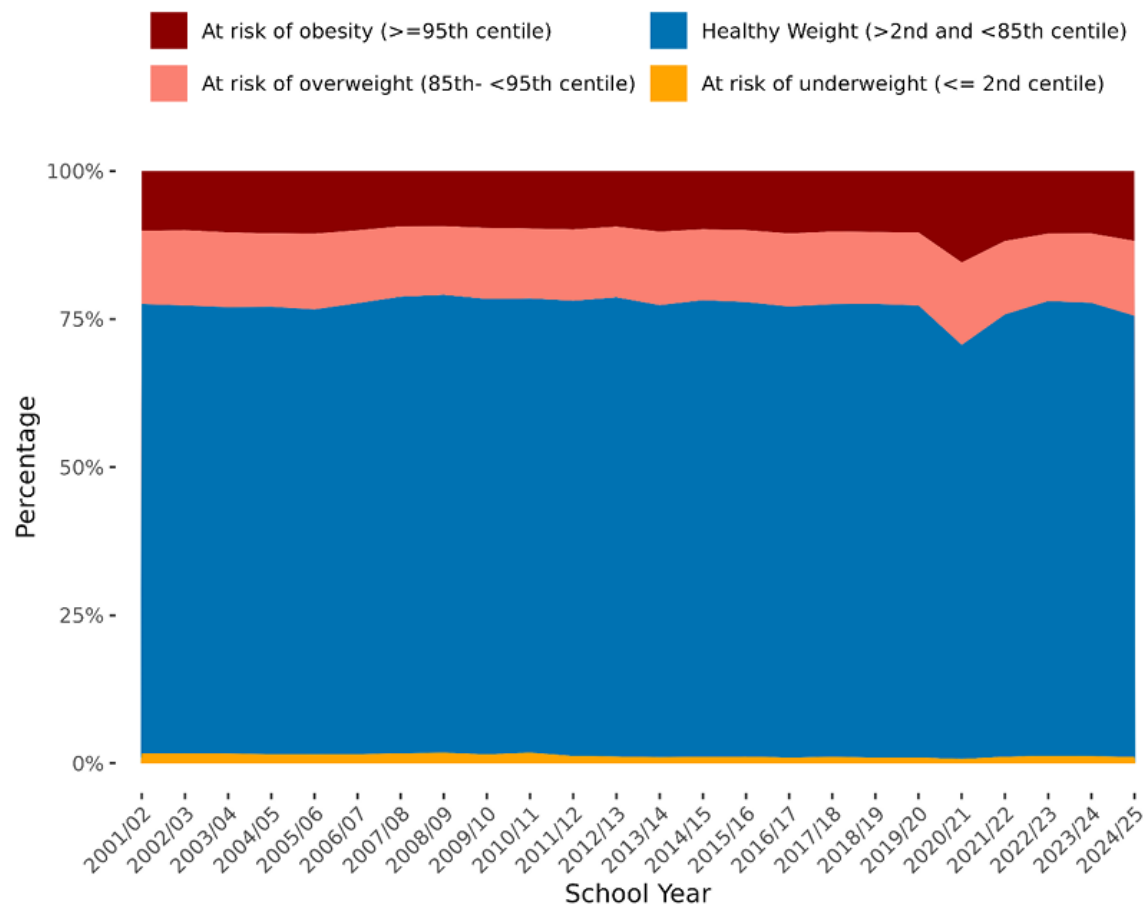
Area of Residence: **All participating boards**





# Children's weight

**Figure 1: BMI distribution (epidemiological categories) of Primary 1 Children, school years 2001/02 to 2024/25, all participating NHS Boards/Scotland**

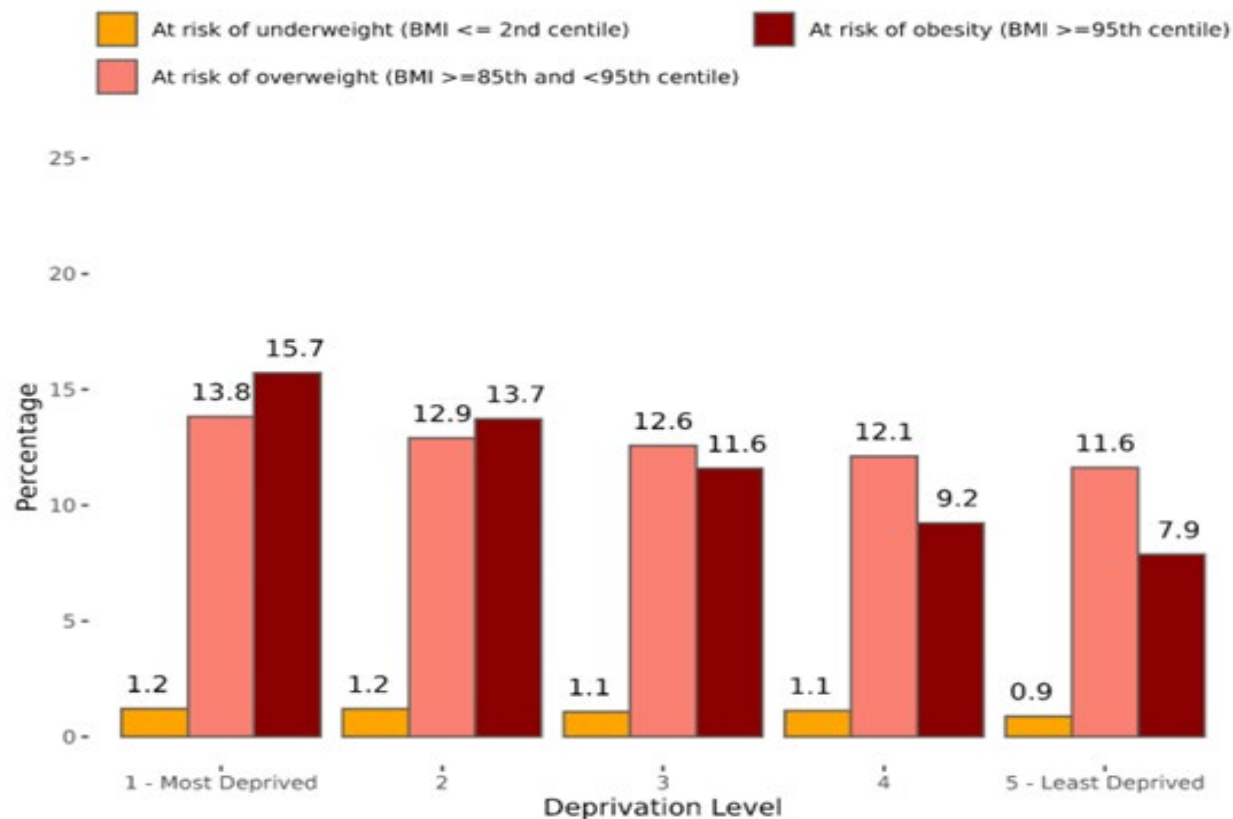


Source: CHSP Dec 2025, Public Health Scotland



# Children's weight and deprivation

**Figure 3: Percentage of Primary 1 children at risk of overweight, obesity, and underweight (epidemiological categories), by deprivation, school year 2024/25, all participating NHS Boards/Scotland**

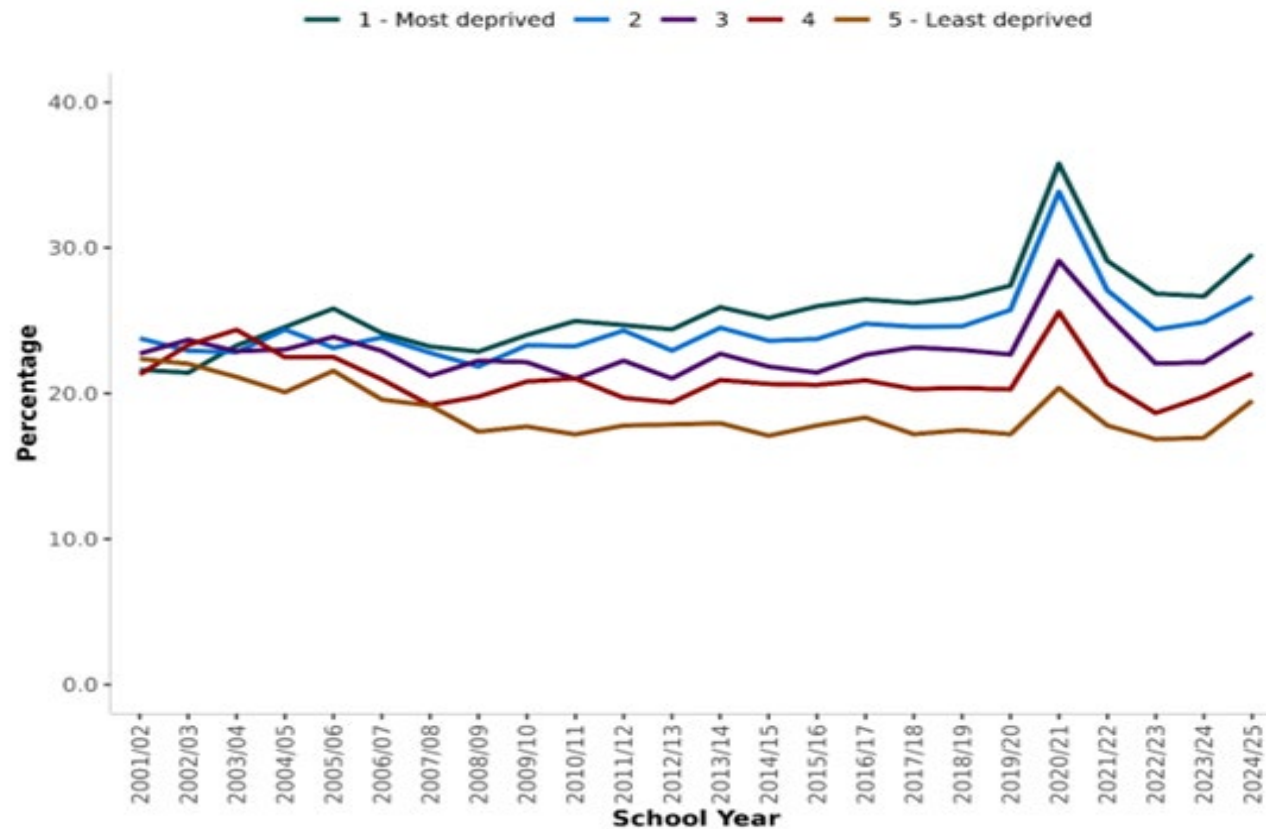


Source: CHSP Dec 2025, Public Health Scotland



# Trend in BMI and deprivation

**Figure 4: Percentage of Primary 1 children at risk of obesity (epidemiological categories), by deprivation, school years 2001/02 to 2024/25, all participating NHS Boards/Scotland**

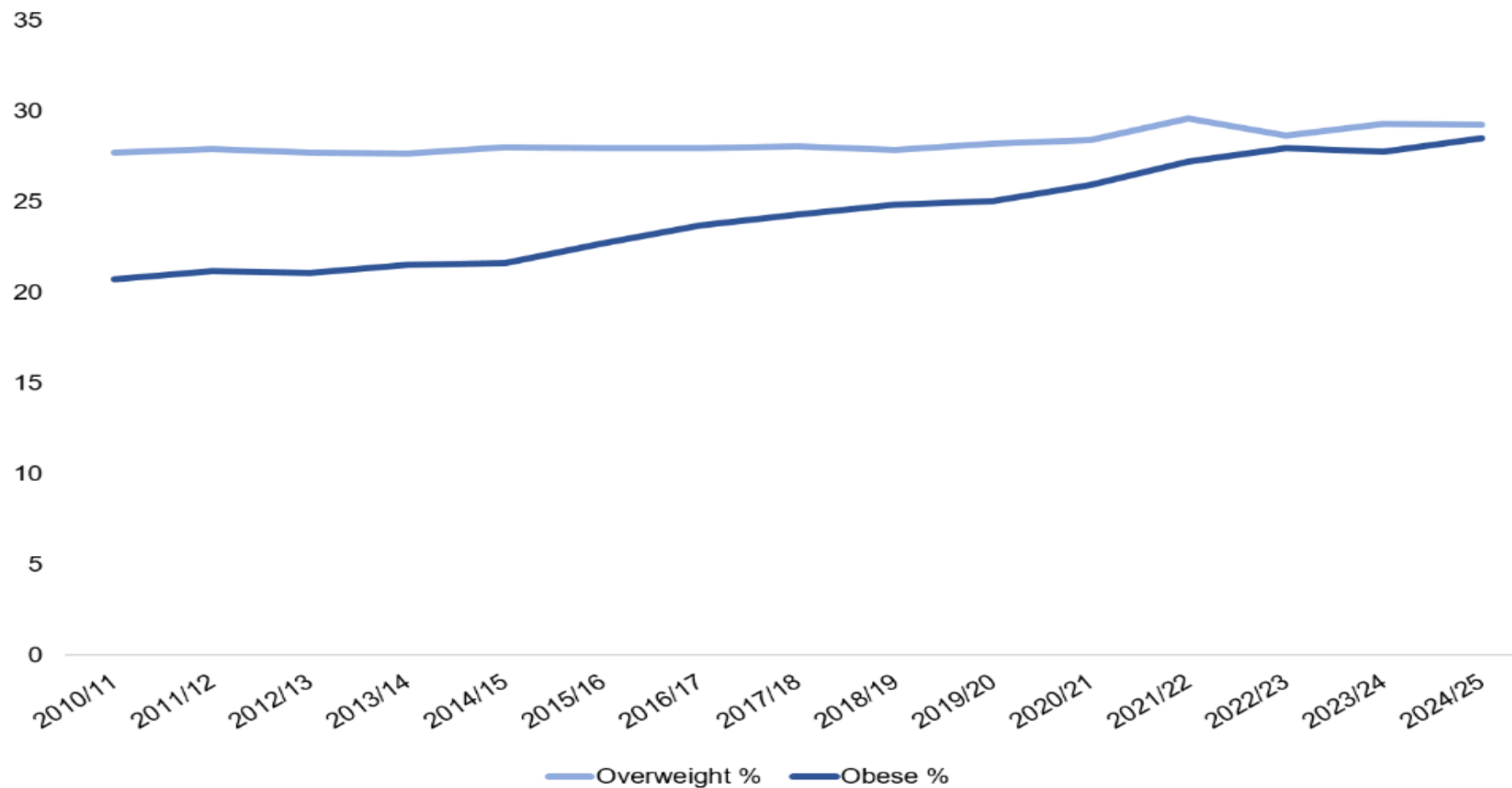


Source: CHSP Dec 2025, Public Health Scotland



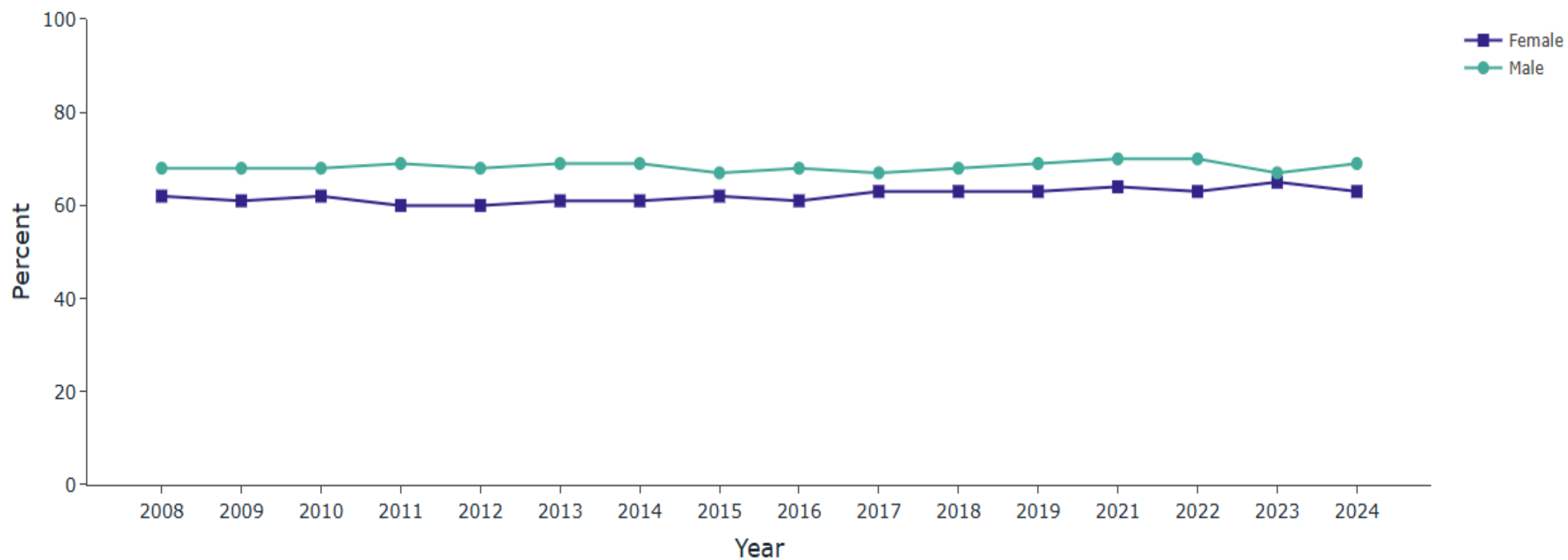
# Maternal weight

Maternal BMI (overweight and obese) at antenatal booking



# Adult weight

Overweight by sex, Overweight (including obesity), Scotland^

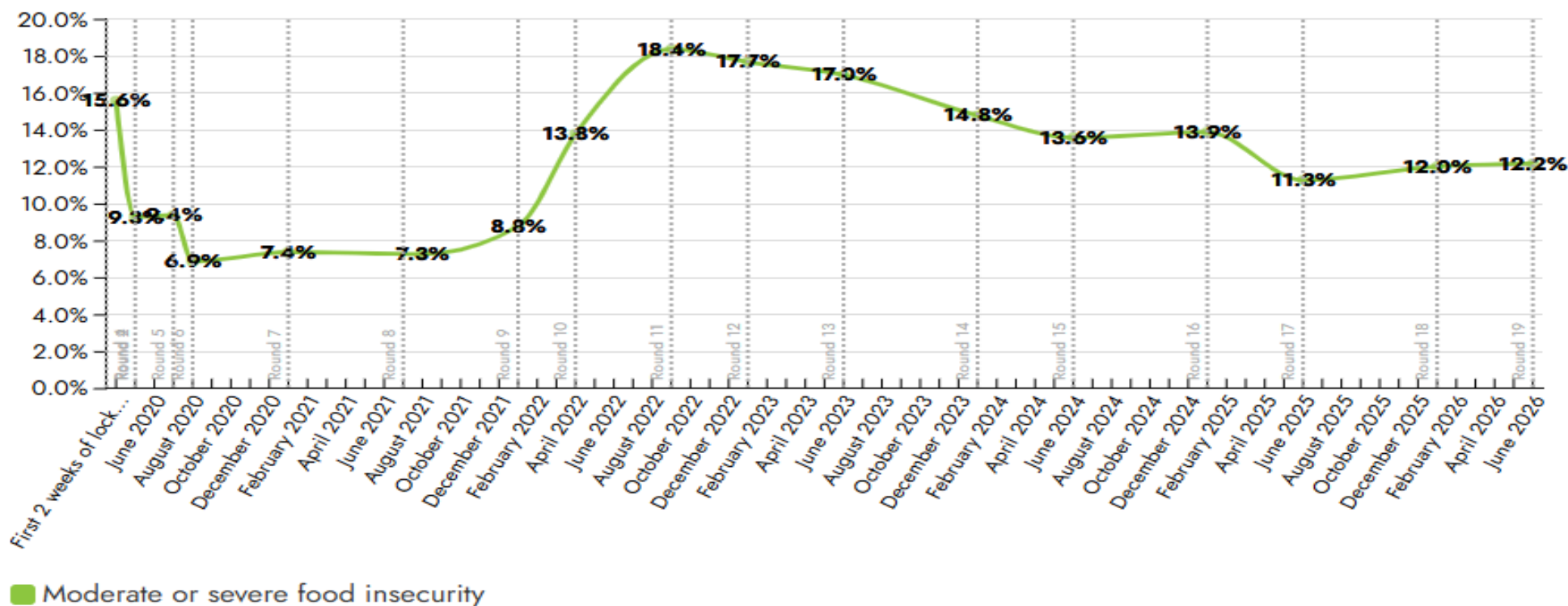


Source: Scottish Health Survey 2024, Scottish Government

# Food insecurity

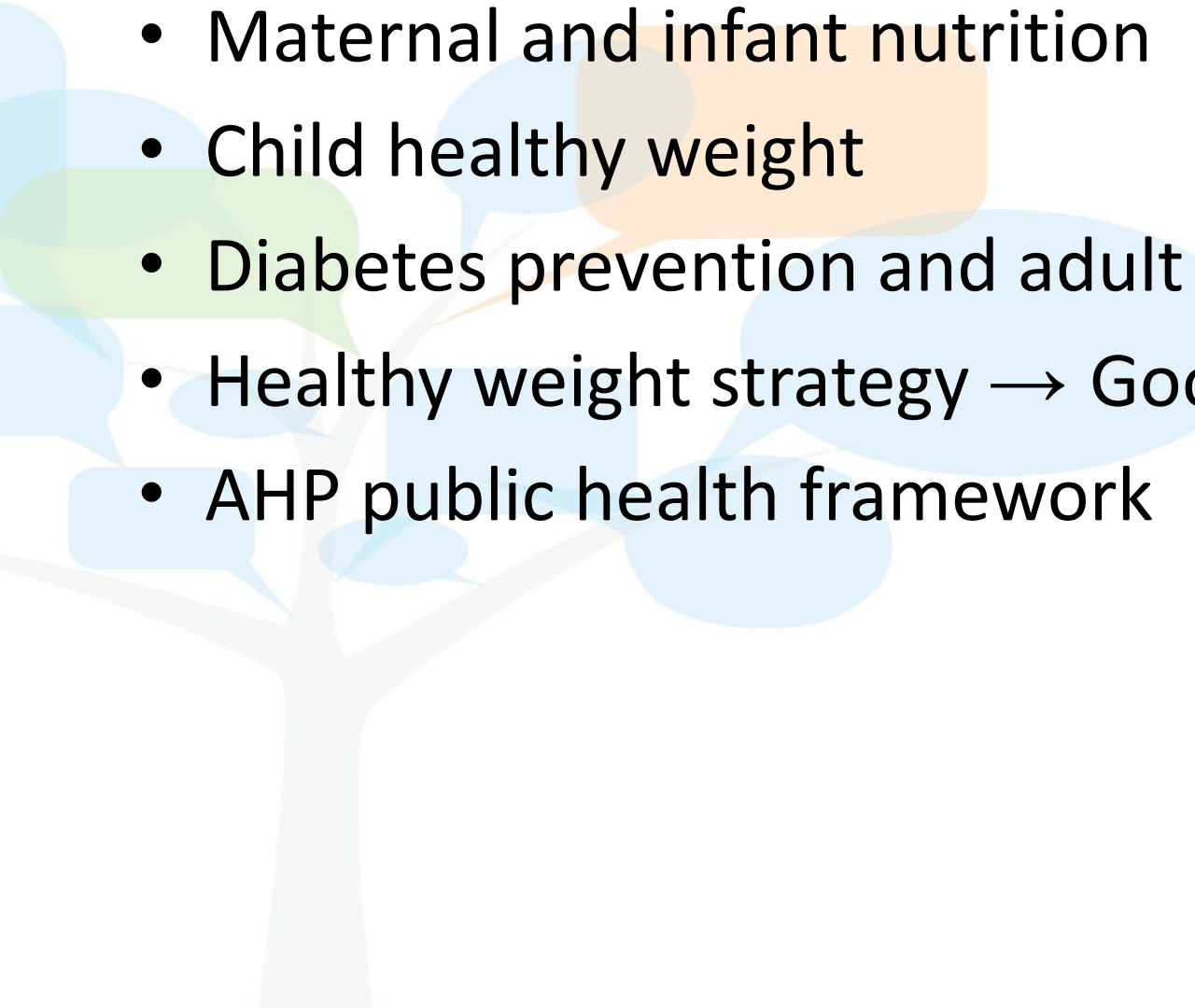
Six and a half million adults (12.2% of households) experienced food insecurity in June 2026

Percentage of households experiencing food insecurity\*:



\* 1-month recall period

# Public health nutrition in action

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- A decorative background graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a light grey tree trunk and branches. Several speech bubbles in light blue, green, and orange are scattered around the tree, some overlapping each other. The bubbles are of various sizes and shapes, some pointing towards the text area.
- Maternal and infant nutrition
  - Child healthy weight
  - Diabetes prevention and adult weight management
  - Healthy weight strategy → Good Food Nation
  - AHP public health framework

# Scottish AHP PH Framework

Scottish Allied Health  
Professions  
Public Health Strategic  
Framework Implementation Plan  
2022 to 2027

July 2022



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

- Vision: *AHPs will improve population health; public health will be a core element of all AHP roles; and the impact of AHPs on the population's health and reducing health inequalities will be increasingly recognised*
- Commitments set out under 5 strategic goals

# Strategic goals

1. Developing the AHP workforce
2. Demonstrating impact
3. Increasing the profile of the AHP public health role
4. Strategic connections and leadership
5. Health and wellbeing of the workforce

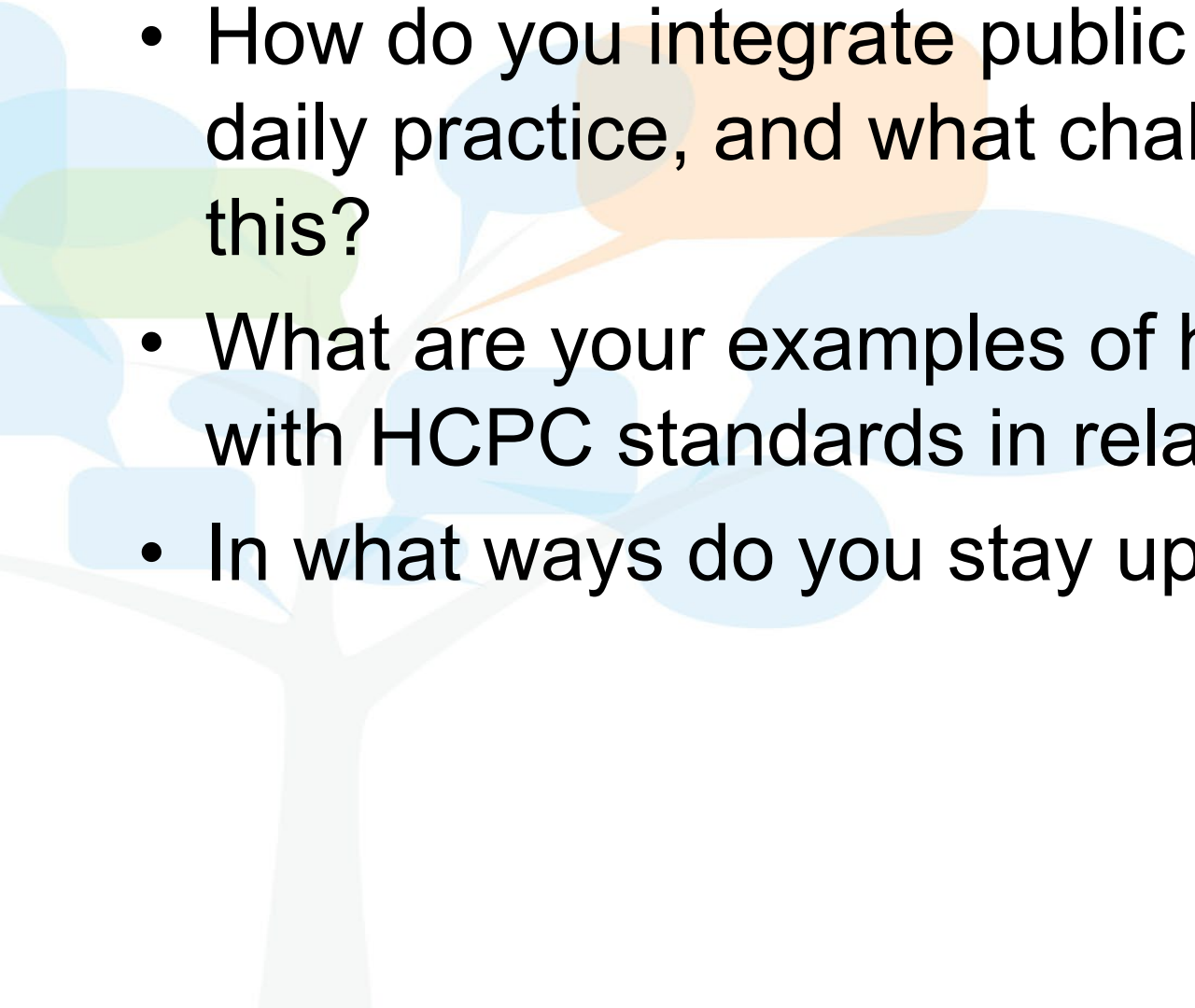
# Examples of activity

- Case studies – Royal Society for Public Health
- Bitesize learning sessions
- Creating a fairer, healthier Ayrshire training
- Inequalities in access to health information
- Delivery of '*Your Amazing Brain*' sessions
- Sharing and promotion of resources

# Sources of information

- Turas Hub <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/80287/ahp-public-health>
- Podcast series <https://psdscotpublichealtheeducation.podbean.com/>
- AHPFS compendium <https://www.ahpf.org.uk/files/AHPFS%20-%20Public%20Health%20Compendium.pdf>
- Royal Society for Public Health [Allied Health Professionals Hub | RSPH](#)

# Questions for discussion

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- The background of the slide features a light grey silhouette of a tree on the left side. Overlaid on the tree and the rest of the slide are several semi-transparent speech bubbles in shades of blue, green, and orange. The list of discussion questions is positioned in front of these graphics.
- How do you integrate public health approaches into your daily practice, and what challenges do you face in doing this?
  - What are your examples of how you ensure compliance with HCPC standards in relation to public health?
  - In what ways do you stay updated on public health?