

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

9239/11

Paper 1 Written Examination

May/June 2015

1 hour 30 minutes

RESOURCE BOOKLET



READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Resource Booklet contains Documents 1 and 2 which you should use to answer the questions.

You should spend approximately 10 minutes reading the documents before attempting to answer the questions.
This is allowed for within the time set for the examination.

This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

The documents below consider issues related to the ethics and economics of food. Read them **both** in order to answer **all** the questions on the question paper.

Document 1: adapted from *How Diet Soda Makes You Fat, and Other Food and Diet Industry Secrets*, an article by Dr Mark Hyman published in 2013. The author is a practising medical specialist, a *New York Times* bestselling author and an international leader in health issues.

Propaganda put forward by the food and diet industry has falsely told us that there are no good or bad foods; that the key to weight loss is moderation, and of course that if we all just exercised more, all of us would lose weight. It is their lobbying of government that has led to bad government policy on food regulation, which is the major cause of our obesity and diabetes epidemic.

If losing weight were all about the calories, then consuming diet drinks would seem like a good idea. That's certainly what Coca-Cola wants us to believe in their new advertisement highlighting their efforts to fight obesity. They proudly promote that they have 180 low- or no-calorie drinks and that they cut sugared drinks in schools by 90%. The other food giants making diet drinks also push the same misleading propaganda.

However a new 14-year study of 66,118 women (supported by many other previous studies) found that diet drinks may be worse than sugar-sweetened drinks. The study, published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, discovered some frightening facts. Diet sodas raised the risk of diabetes more than sugar-sweetened sodas. Women who drank one 20-ounce soda had a 66% increased risk. Women who drank diet sodas drank twice as much as those who drank sugar-sweetened sodas, because artificial sweeteners are more addictive and are hundreds to thousands of times sweeter than regular sugar. In animal studies, the rats that consumed artificial sweeteners ate more, their metabolism slowed, and they put on 14% more body fat in just two weeks, even eating fewer calories. So diet drinks are not good substitutes for sugar-sweetened drinks. They increase cravings, weight gain, and diabetes. And they are addictive.

The food and diet industry pushes the use of exercise. However sugar-sweetened drinks make up about 15% of our calorie intake every day. But you have to walk 4.5 miles to burn off one 20-ounce soda, which contains 15 teaspoons of sugar. You have to run 4 miles a day for one week to burn off one supersize meal. So, you can't exercise your way out of bad diet.

The food and diet industry would have us believe that controlling our weight is about moderation. However, we are programmed to like sweet, salt, and fat tastes and those slick combinations of sugar, fat and salt in junk and processed food have hijacked our taste buds, our brain chemistry, and our metabolism. These foods are biologically addictive. We are held hostage by the food industry and we blame ourselves. This is food terrorism!

New research shows that industrial food full of processed sugars, fats, salt, and chemicals is powerfully addictive. And sugar is the worst culprit. One animal study found that sugar is more addictive than cocaine. When rats were given the choice between cocaine and water sweetened with artificial sweetener, they found that sugar was eight times more addictive than cocaine. Even the rats already addicted to cocaine switched over to diet drinks!

If these foods are addictive and drive overeating, then the whole idea of moderation just doesn't work. We can't stop eating, but we can stop eating junk and sugar. So we have to take back our taste buds, take back our brain chemistry, and take back our bodies from the food and diet industry by eating unprocessed food to reset our taste buds and our brain chemistry automatically.

Document 2: adapted from the opening address at the 8th Global Conference on Health Promotion given by Dr Margaret Chan in 2013. The conference was held in Finland and co-hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Finland's Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Dr Chan is Director-General of WHO.

The challenges facing public health have changed enormously since the start of this century. In our closely interconnected world, health everywhere is being shaped by the globalization of unhealthy lifestyles. Under this pressure, chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have overtaken infectious diseases as the leading cause of ill health and death.

As stated in the United Nations Political Declaration on NCDs, prevention must be the cornerstone of the global response to these costly, deadly, and demanding diseases. Their root causes reside in non-health sectors. The consequences of this shift in the disease burden also reach far beyond the health sector to touch economies everywhere. Recent studies demonstrate that the costs of advanced cancer care are unsustainable, even in the richest countries in the world. In some countries, diabetes alone consumes 15% of the total health budget. In the developing world, the costs of these diseases can easily cancel out the benefits of economic gain. So, collaboration among multiple sectors is vital.

Let me congratulate Finland and its partners for the rich and wide-ranging publication on 'Health in All Policies', which is being launched during this event. Drawing on experiences from around the world, the book sets out a wealth of policy options, including suggested regulations.

However, efforts to prevent non-communicable diseases go against the business interests of powerful industries. As the new publication makes clear, it is not just Big Tobacco any more. Public health must also contend with Big Food, Big Soda, and Big Alcohol. All of these industries fear regulation, and protect themselves by using the same tactics.

Research has documented these tactics well. They include lobbies, promises of self-regulation, lawsuits, and industry-funded research that confuse the evidence and keep the public in doubt. Tactics also include gifts, grants, and contributions to worthy causes that cast these industries as respectable corporate citizens in the eyes of politicians and the public. They include arguments that place the responsibility for harm to health on individuals, and portray government actions as interference in personal liberties and free choice.

This is formidable opposition. Few governments prioritize health over big business. As we learned from experience with the tobacco industry, a powerful corporation can sell the public just about anything. Let me remind you. Not one single country has managed to turn around its obesity epidemic in all age groups. This is not a failure of individual will-power. This is a failure of political will to take on big business.

When industry is involved in policy-making, the most effective control measures will be downplayed or left out entirely. Therefore in the view of WHO, the formulation of health policies must be protected from distortion by commercial or vested interests.

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