

Keyword: Professor Linda Bauld

# Scottish Masterchef winner backs campaign to restrict junk food deals

SCOTTISH MASTERCHEF WINNER BACKS CAMPAIGN TO RESTRICT JUNK FOOD DEALS.

By Lucinda Cameron, Press Association Scotland

The winner of MasterChef: The Professionals is backing a campaign calling for restrictions on junk food and drink multi-buy offers to help tackle the country's growing obesity problem.

Gary Maclean is supporting Obesity and Cancer Awareness Week, a new joint initiative from Cancer Research UK and Obesity Action Scotland.

The week, running from October 9 to 15, aims to highlight the link between the two issues.

Obesity is linked to 13 different types of cancer and is the second biggest preventable cause of cancer in the UK after smoking, Cancer Research UK said.

Almost a third 65% of Scottish adults (16+) were overweight or obese in 2016 while 29% of children were at risk of being overweight or obese, according to latest figures.

Mr Maclean was served a large 5lb lump of 'body fat' on a silver platter of doughnuts at the launch of the week on Monday to highlight the link between obesity and cancer.

He said: "To see and feel what five pounds of body fat actually looks like is really shocking. It's hard to believe so many of us are carrying extra weight around on our bodies all the time.

"Obesity is one of the biggest issues facing our society with huge consequences for our health, the NHS and the wider economy.

"Too many cases of cancer and other health issues are linked to obesity and so it's about time we said 'enough is enough'.

"The Scottish Government has an opportunity to set an incredible example to the rest of the UK with an obesity strategy that will help people keep a healthy weight by filling their shopping trolleys with healthy foods that don't blow the budget."

Cancer Research UK and **Obesity Action Scotland** are calling on the Scottish

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Government to introduce regulations to restrict multi-buy offers on unhealthy food and drink, paving the way for supermarkets to promote nutritious alternatives.

Polling carried out by Cancer Research UK last year found almost three quarters (74%) of people in Scotland were unaware of the link between obesity and cancer.

Around seven in ten Scots supported a ban on junk food promotions.

Cancer Research UK cancer prevention expert Professor Linda Bauld, who is based at the University of Stirling, said: "It's clear to us all that the Scottish Government has a once in a generation opportunity to introduce measures that will have a profound impact on our lives.

"Much more needs to be done to raise awareness of the unpalatable consequences of carrying too much weight.

"The Scottish Government's commitment to limit junk food marketing is a step in the right direction but, to progress, regulations are needed to restrict multi-buy offers on unhealthy food and drink.

"We need urgent action now to protect the health of the nation and prevent thousands of cancers in the future."

Lorraine Tulloch, programme lead at Obesity Action Scotland, said: "With around two out of three adults in Scotland overweight or obese we need to see bold and ambitious actions to improve the food environment and make the healthy choice the easy choice."

Food Standards Scotland welcomed the initiative.

Heather Peace, Head of Public Health Nutrition, said: "We will work with CRUK and Obesity Action Scotland to tackle obesity which is estimated to cost the Scottish economy at least £2.37 billion a year, placing unsustainable burdens on the NHS."

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