

UKHospitality warns of further red tape and costs stifling the sector if blunt measures are enforced

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The Department of Health and Social Care recently announced its 10-year health plan for England, outlining how it plans to get the NHS back on its feet and fit for the future. Rightly, a focus for the Government is combating obesity and improving the nation's health, but there is no blanket approach to achieving that goal and not all food businesses can be painted with the same brush.

Hospitality is playing a key role in supporting the Government's ambition, with significant investments and changes having been instigated and implemented by the sector, including menu development and reformulation, and an increase in healthy food choices being available. Hospitality businesses are committed to ensuring their customers have a wide variety of menu options and nutritional information available, to allow them to make informed food choices.

UKHospitality is calling for the Government to collaborate and co-develop measures that can make a positive, genuine difference to the country's health, in a way that's viable for hospitality businesses.

Kate Nicholls, Chair of UKHospitality, said: "We are calling for clarity and detail from Government on the new measures outlined in its 10-year health plan, such as what mandatory reporting is set to look like, and which businesses are eligible.

"Collaboration with the sector will be key as enforcing blunt and ill-suited measures upon business will not deliver genuine change but will instead add further red tape and cost. That cost will be passed onto the consumer, with hospitality businesses unable to absorb any further cost.

“The hospitality sector is up for the challenge of developing a healthier nation, and it’s undeniable we’re already doing a huge amount of work to do just that.

“It’s also important to remember that hospitality is a place for special occasion, and where many people gather for a treat. Whether it’s a trip to the local pub, dining out at a restaurant getting a takeaway, these are occasions that really matter to people and what they look forward. These instances aren’t a daily occurrence and likely to be a treat every few weeks or months.

“We need to ensure the sector isn’t pushed into new rules that end up tainting these experiences. Therefore, working in tandem with Government across a holistic approach that spans across consumers, food businesses, the supply chain and education, is the best way to deliver the food revolution it craves. Not only will this keep the doors hospitality businesses open, but it also protects a staple of British culture.”