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Subject

BUPA's response to the second Wanless report.

Background

Derek Wanless' second report for the Treasury has been published. Following the 2002 report on health funding, the Chancellor commissioned Wanless to investigate how individuals could take much greater responsibility for their health.

The new report says: "After many years of reviews and government policy documents, with little change on the ground, the key challenge now is delivery and implementation, not further discussion."

Mr Wanless says a drive to improve public health would help turn the NHS "from a national sickness service, which treats disease, to a national health service, which focuses on preventing it".

He believes improving the health of the nation could save the NHS billions of pounds. The report, called Securing Good Health for the Whole Population, outlines a range of options available to the government:

- A tax on fatty foods
- A public smoking ban
- Subsidising gym membership
- Higher taxes on cigarettes
- Encouraging industry to reduce salt levels in food.

The report says: "A reduction in sickness absence and increases in productivity can result from better management of employees' health. Organisations such as BUPA are recognising this and advocating employee assistance programmes and occupational health services to contribute towards a more dynamic and productive workforce. Ultimately this could lead to a reduction in costs for treating health issues due to earlier identification and prevention of health problems."

BUPA's position

BUPA provides a range of ways to help its customers maintain their health including free information on the website, health assessments and occupational health services. Half of the FTSE 100 companies use BUPA services. We look forward to working with other organisations to help individuals combat threats to their health.