

English hospitals plan to introduce sugar tax

January 18 2016

A sugar tax could be introduced in English hospitals in a move to tackle obesity that the National Health Service (NHS) said Monday could raise up to £40 million a year.

Simon Stevens, [chief executive](#) of NHS England, said that the levy on high-sugar drinks and snacks sold in hospital vending machines and cafes could be introduced by 2020, in an interview with the Guardian newspaper.

It is hoped the scheme would raise between £20 million (\$28.5 million, 26.2 million euros) and £40 million.

"We will be consulting on introducing an NHS sugar tax on various beverages and other sugar-added foods across the NHS," he said.

"By 2020, we've either got these practices out of hospitals or we've got the equipment of a sugar tax on the back of them," he added.

NHS England did not say at what rate the tax would be set, but medical groups and [health](#) charities want it to be 20 percent.

The health administrator said that bad diet had now overtaken smoking as the country's main cause of lifestyle-linked illness.

"Smoking still kills 80,000-plus people a year, smoking is still a huge problem. But it turns out that diet has edged ahead," he said.

"All of us working in the NHS have a responsibility not just to support those who look after patients but also to draw attention to and make the case for some of the wider changes that will actually improve the health of this country," he added.

© 2016 AFP

Citation: English hospitals plan to introduce sugar tax (2016, January 18) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-01-english-hospitals-sugar-tax.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.