

# OBESITY AND ORAL HEALTH

---

ISDH Conference

21<sup>st</sup> June 2013

Cork

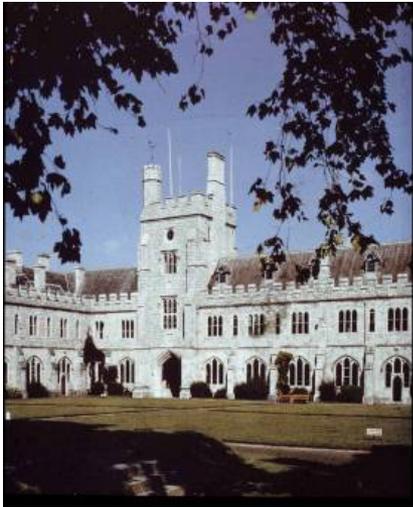
Prof. Finbarr Allen  
Cork Dental School and Hospital



CORK UNIVERSITY  
DENTAL  
SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL

# Introductory Remarks

- Welcome to Cork



# Introductory Remarks

- Obesity – a problem of significance?



# Potential Significance

“Unless effective population-level interventions to reduce obesity are developed, the steady rise in life expectancy observed in the modern era may soon come to an end and the youth of today may, on average, live less healthy and possibly even shorter lives than their parents”

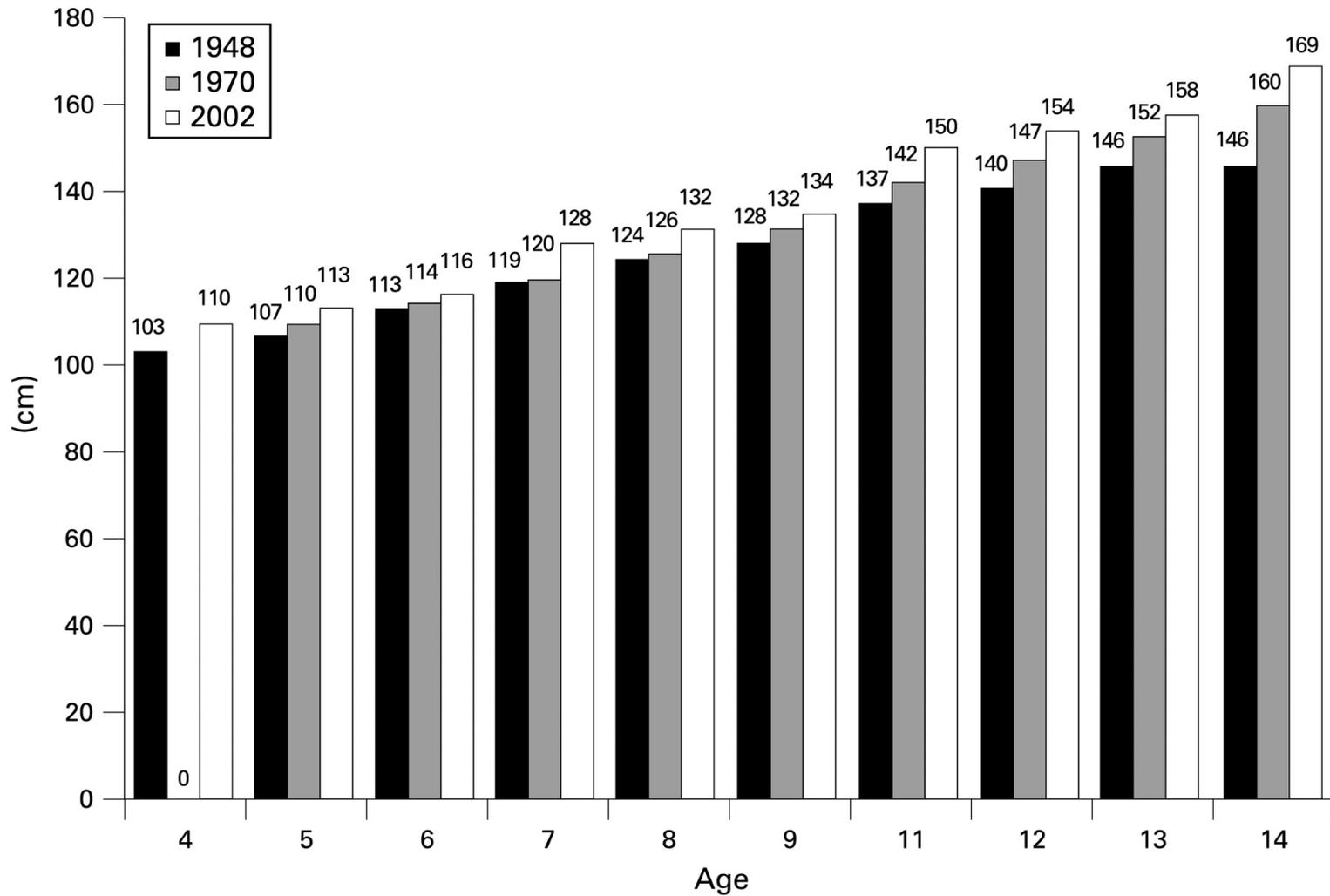
(Olshansky et al., NEJM, 2005).

# Obesity in Ireland

- SLÁN survey
  - 40% of Irish adults overweight
  - 23% classed as obese
  - 59% do not meet DoH guidelines for recommended levels of physical activity
  - Estimated costs of **€1.6 billion** a year to treat obesity related illness

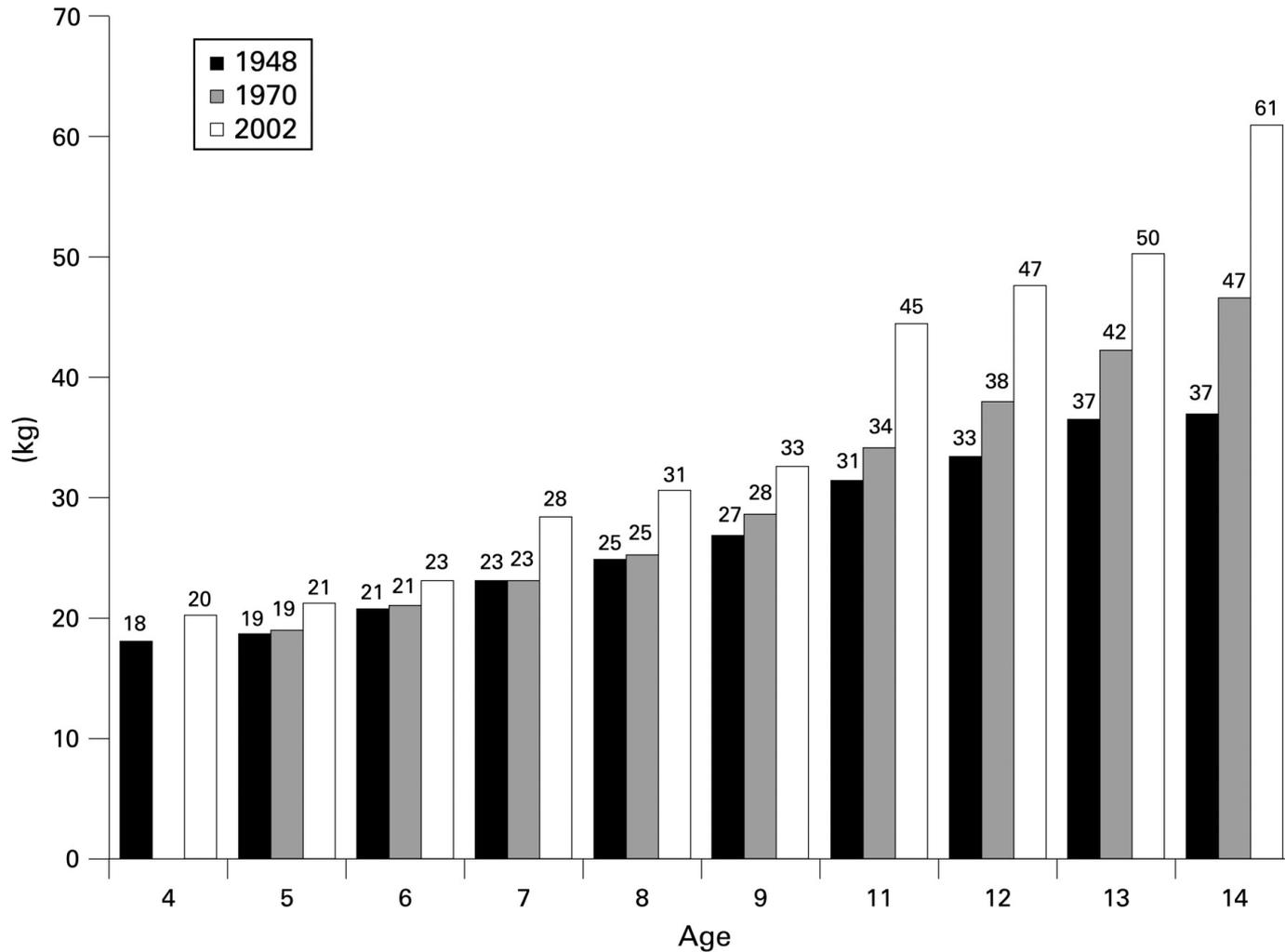


## Mean height (cm) in Irish boys between 1948 and 2002.



Perry I J et al. *J Epidemiol Community Health*  
2009;63:262-264

## Mean weight (kg) in Irish boys between 1948 and 2002.



Perry I J et al. *J Epidemiol Community Health*  
2009;63:262-264

# Introductory Remarks

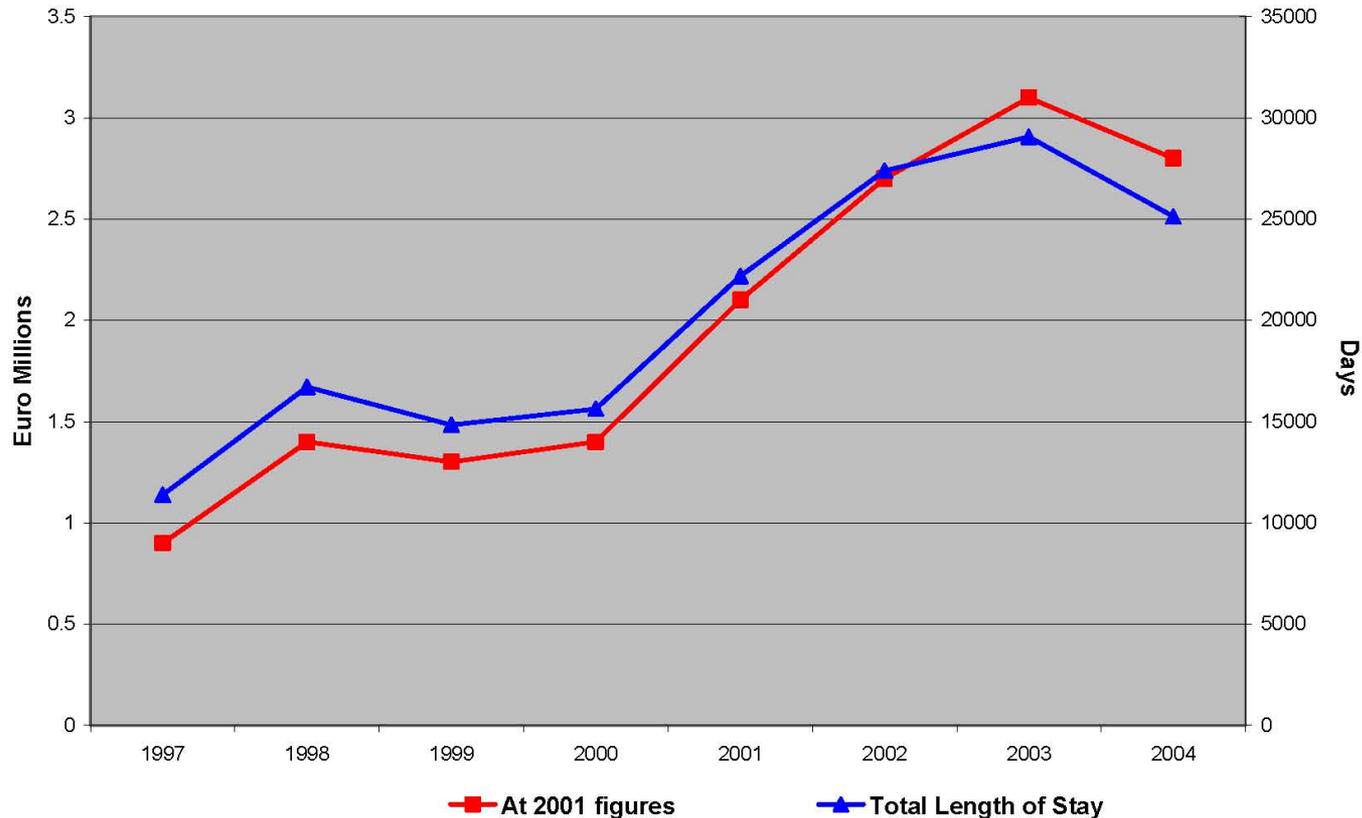
- Impact of Obesity
  - Associated with Chronic Diseases
  - Psychological problems
  - Shortens Lifespan
  - Healthcare costs
- How well understood is this impact?
  - Is the research agenda keeping pace with the rate of increase in prevalence of obesity?
  - Relationship with oral health poorly understood

# Introductory Remarks

- One in Four Irish children either overweight or obese
- Having an overweight parent **doubles the risk** of child obesity
- Complex relationship
  - Environmental
  - Genetic
- SES Gradient
  - Health Inequality
  - Parental Education level influential

Keane E, Layte R, Harrington J, Kearney PM, et al. (2012) Measured Parental Weight Status and Familial Socio-Economic Status Correlates with Childhood Overweight and Obesity at Age 9. PLoS ONE 7(8): e43503. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0043503

# Obesity - Healthcare Costs in Rep of Ireland



Vellinga A, O'Donovan D, De La Harpe, D. *Length of stay and associated costs of obesity related hospital admissions in Ireland BMC Health Services Research 2008;8:88*

# Obesity and Oral Health

- Common risk factors
  - Poor diet, high in fat and carbohydrate
  - Poor healthcare behaviours
- Obesity associated with
  - Fewer teeth
  - Problem based dental visits
- Relationship not fully understood
  - Common disease mechanisms?



# In summary

- Obesity is rapidly increasing in prevalence
- It has major healthcare and societal implications
- Its relationship with oral health requires a lot more research
- Education may hold the key to helping reduce the scale of the problem
- Today, conference speakers address the current problem
- Tomorrow and beyond?