



Issue no.1

FIO FOOD NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER
2022

Welcome

In this first FIO Food Newsletter we would like to introduce our Team and the project itself. The project is lead by Professor Alexandra Johnstone from the Rowett Institute, University of Aberdeen and include collaborators from the Robert Gordon University, University of Leeds, University of Liverpool, Leeds-Beckett University and University College London.

The overall aim of the project is to provide actionable evidence for policy on retail strategies to address dietary inequalities in people living with obesity and food insecurity, to support sustainable and healthier food choices in the UK food system.

Funding: Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).



Latest News



Challenge Poverty Week Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) workshop

The FIO Food Team together with Aberdeenshire Council hosted a PPI workshop on the 4th of October 2022 at the Rowett Institute, University of Aberdeen to discuss diet inequalities. The workshop was run by Prof Alex Johnstone and Prof Flora Douglas and had 31 attendees representing the Aberdeenshire consumers.

Discussion themes were:

- What are your priorities for food shopping for health?
- Has this changed recently?

What is PPI?

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) means that members of the public work alongside the research team and are actively involved in contributing to the research process as advisers and possibly as co-researchers (source: NIHR)

What is Food Insecurity?

The condition of not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet one's basic needs (Oxford Dictionary Definition).

The lived experience of retail shopping with food poverty

This is a characterisation and representation of the discussion on the experience of shopping in the retail sector



Mandy

Make ends meet shopper

"It was hard to admit that I needed help to feed the family"

"I use the local food bank and larder to get food. I have noticed that the quality and quantity of food there has decreased recently. It has helped to get help with budgeting for food shopping and to use shopping list to plan what to cook"



Shirley

The secret shopper

"I have a car, a house and live in a nice area, but I was made redundant during the COVID pandemic."

"I feel ashamed that I need to use the local food larder as I don't have enough money to buy the weekly shopping. I live in an area that is perceived to be nice, but I am in trap of poverty"



Robert

The reduced counter shopper

"I shop at 7-8pm at a local supermarket which is the time that the food is reduced"

"It's called 'feeding time at the zoo' locally, when all the food is reduced. I wait for meat to be reduced in price, then do the rest of my shopping. I don't have time to think about all this eco- friendly nonsense"



Sam

The scoop shopper

"I go shopping with a list, but it is too expensive to buy all my food at a supermarket"

"I use a local 'scoop shop', to buy dried foods by weight, such as pasta and lentils - it is cheaper to buy smaller amounts, I only get what I need"



Olivia

The rural shopper

"There isn't many shops near me, I live in a remote area. Its not heat or eat, I can't afford either"

"Prices of food are higher at the local corner shop. I'd like to get a veg box, but I don't know what to do with all the produce and it ends up in the bin"



Fred

The pensioner shopper

"I don't have a fancy computer to do online shopping"

"I can't carry heavy shopping bags from the supermarket, so I prefer to do a single shop each day. Its cheaper for me to eat cold food, as I don't have to pay for cooking"

The research team would like to thank the workshop attendees who shared their time and experience with the project team as well as provided a valuable insight into the lived experience of food insecurity and living with obesity.

Other themes relating to the UK food system were discussed and these are worth noting for future sessions. Supporting vulnerable shoppers or those with disabilities, exploring the needs of ethnic minority groups, and the role of community growing to support food access in the local environment.