



Issue no.4

FIO FOOD NEWSLETTER



MARCH-APRIL
2023

The last few months of the FIO Food work was focused on capturing the lived experience of people living with obesity and food insecurity ensuring all outputs are co-produced with our Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) group members who supported the revision of the topic guides and study posters. Recent discussions with our group members have focused on recruitment processes and how we should recruit participants to the interviews and focus groups. Also, the online FIO Food survey is underway, collecting national data on food purchase behaviours.

We are happy to welcome a new data scientist - **Rayan Onyonka**! Rayan will work closely with the work package 2 Team based at Leeds Institute of Data Analytics (LIDA) and will contribute to processing of food purchase data.

Lastly, the Team was busy with knowledge exchange activities around the Science and Sustainability Weeks as well as sharing our insights on conferences and workshop with more information below.



Academic conferences & workshops



Nutrition Society Scottish Section Conference

The theme of this year's Scottish Section Conference was '**Diet, Health and Inequalities**', which is a key societal challenge.

The attendees met in Glasgow on the 28-29th of March 2023. The FIO Food Lead - Professor Alex Johnstone opened up the conference with an excellent plenary talk on food insecurity in people living with obesity.

Event overview [here](#)



ECR workshop



The FIO Food Early Career Researchers (ECRs) organised an online workshop for other ECR colleagues from the TUKFS network to discuss **Impactful dissemination in co-produced food systems research**.

The event had three brilliant Expert Speakers representing:

- the retail sector - **Nilani Sritharan**, Group Healthy & Sustainable Diets Manager, Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd,
- academia - **Rosemary Green**, Professor of Sustainability, Nutrition and Health, Centre on Climate Change & Planetary Health, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and

- the public - **Ken Clare**, Director of Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Services Patient and Public (PPI) advocate for people living with obesity

The talks were followed by a workshop and discussion. We are looking forward to disseminating the outputs from the event!

British Feeding and Drinking Group 47th Annual Meeting

Professor Charlotte Hardman and **Dr Rebecca Stone** attended The British Feeding and Drinking Group 47th Annual Meeting at the University of Leeds (13-14th of April 2023). Rebecca presented a poster on behalf of the FIO Food team showcasing preliminary findings from their collaboration with the Food Standard's Agency. Using the Food and You 2 survey, this work explored how food security levels predicted the likelihood of using behaviours in favour of health and sustainability. Well done Bec!



Knowledge Exchange Events

Westpark Primary School visit



Techfest



The Rowett hosted three events in March, all with a focus on healthy and sustainable diets. We welcomed a group of young people aged 12-16 from **Shmu Youth Media** group, a group of 60 pupils aged 8-10 from a **local primary school** and families as part of **Techfest**, the North-East of Scotland's annual festival of STEM, to the institute. Visitors were offered the opportunity to learn more about healthy, sustainable diets through hands on activities, presentations and a tour of the Rowett including talks with researchers in various departments.

The young people especially enjoyed making smoothies using produce grown in the Rowett's vertical farm.

Shmu Youth Media group



Publications

Perspective article

The Team is happy to share a perspective article published in the *Obesity* journal. Professor Alex Johnstone reflected on the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the obesity epidemic and called for improved policy, behavioural interventions, retail strategies and the need for actionable evidence in a bid to address dietary inequalities in people living with obesity and food insecurity.

Full text available [here](#).

Press release [here](#).

Cost of living crisis

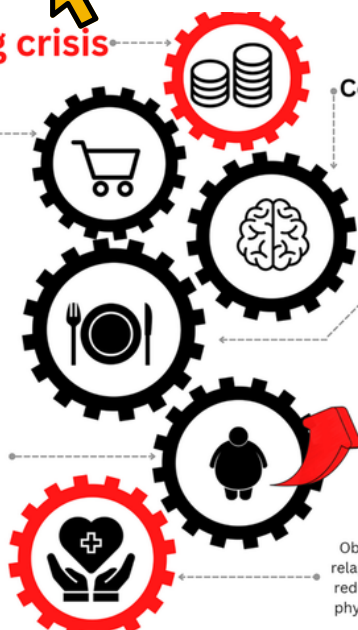
Food insecurity

40% of British consumers is worried about being able to afford to purchase food in the next month.²



Increasing obesity prevalence

In high-income countries, diet quality and health status are strongly correlated with socioeconomic status.³



Coping strategies

economical
psychological
social

Diet quality

Dietary choices of those on the lowest incomes are often limited to a low-price, high-energy combination which promotes weight gain.³

Poor health

Obesity is a chronic, progressive, and relapsing disease and is associated with reduced life expectancy and a range of physical and mental health conditions.¹³

Podcast

In this podcast, Professor Alex Johnstone discusses the FIO Food Project ethos and reflects on her career as a female scientist and what helped her to successfully lead and manage high calibre research activities within the Rowett Institute.

Hosted by: Dr Adrian Brown and Prof Paul Gately

Listen [here](#).

