

Embedding consistent food and health messages within some of Scotland's most excluded communities...



Community Food and Health (Scotland) or CFHS is funded by the Scottish Government to support work on food and health in low-income communities.

CFHS worked with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) and other partners to develop a basic nutrition course – the 'Elementary Food and Health' course.

The partners' aim was to ensure that people in Scotland had access to an accredited course that provided consistent and accurate nutrition

messages. REHIS was chosen to provide course accreditation and registration of course tutors because of its existing role of providing this service for food hygiene courses.

Since the Elementary Food and Health course was launched nationally in 2006, CFHS has delivered a targeted programme to promote it in low-income and excluded communities. This included support to some groups to put what they had learnt into practice.



**community
food and health**
(scotland)

The REHIS Elementary Food and Health course:

- is a 6 hour accredited course available across Scotland
- is open to all
- has learning outcomes that include: 'the function of food', 'energy measures and influences on food intake', 'eating for health and wellbeing', and 'putting healthy eating into practice'
- has been completed by over 6000 people since 2006 (approximately 1 in 1000 of the Scottish population)
- requires registered tutors for the course to have a relevant nutrition qualification and training skills
- has the potential to build the capacity of the community and voluntary sector by promoting good practice and by encouraging people in the sector to train (such as by completing the Royal Society for Public Health Diploma in Nutrition and Health) and register as course tutors

Results of CFHS targeted promotion programme:

In low-income communities (summer 2006 – spring 2007):

- 38 courses delivered, covering most NHS areas.
- 395 participants completed the course.
- Participants reported an increased knowledge about food and health and that information learnt on the course will be useful for home and work.
- Course used as stepping stone to further individual learning, such as food hygiene courses.
- Course built groups' capacity to develop activities in the work place, such as working towards the 'healthyliving award'.
- 14 people from the community and voluntary sector registered as new tutors, contributing to the pool of tutors across Scotland.
- Courses delivered at an average cost per head of £60 (some as low as £30).

In homelessness sector (winter 2007):

- Course was part of CFHS two-year food and health work programme in this sector.
- 5 courses delivered.
- 76 participants from a range of organisations completed the course.
- 4 people supported to complete Royal Society for Public Health Diploma in Nutrition and Health.
- 7 people supported to complete Royal Society for Public Health Certificate in Nutrition and Health (this provides a step towards enabling them to registering as REHIS Elementary Food and Health tutors).

In learning disability sector (spring/summer 2008):

- 9 new tutors registered across Scotland (learning disability dietitians as well as people from voluntary and community sector).
- 9 courses delivered.
- 77 participants (support staff, managers and care home chefs) completed the course.
- 5 of the tutors received CFHS funding to develop additional tailored courses specific to the learning disability sector.

CASE STUDY:

Glasgow Learning Disability Partnership developed a nutrition and learning disability course and delivered this alongside the REHIS Elementary Food and Health course. It followed up participants three months later. Four out of eight responded and all reported making changes in their workplace, including:

- working towards the healthyliving award;
- encouraging people with learning disabilities to get involved in preparing food;
- making changes to individual care plans; and
- setting up a healthy living group.

The Partnership plans to continue to teach both courses twice a year within Glasgow.



In the youth sector (spring – winter 2009):

- 24 organisations from across Scotland will put staff, volunteers or young people on the course.
- Includes groups working with young people in supported accommodation, young carers and a range of youth groups working with young people from low-income households.
- The organisations received CFHS funding to put what they learn on the course into practice – to develop healthier snack bars, begin gardening projects or run cookery classes.

CFHS will report on this work in early 2010.



CFHS continues to use other opportunities to promote the course amongst the groups that it supports. Recently this included providing it for some groups working within the Early Years sector. The course continues to be a useful and accessible tool for the promotion of consistent food and health messages. It is an ideal foundation on which to build the confidence, knowledge and skills of those in the community and voluntary sector to develop food and health activities.

For further information:

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