



Fact Sheet

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

JUNE 2010

A short introduction to: Training the trainers – healthy cookery skills

What this fact sheet is about

This fact sheet summarises information gathered from across Scotland on activities that 'train the trainers' to deliver healthy cookery and food preparation skills in low-income communities. It includes information about **informal training**, and formal '**training the trainers**' courses. The final section has links to websites, or other documents where you can find more information.

How we got this information

We contacted key people within NHS Boards from across Scotland; we also spoke with some local authority, healthy living centre and community food initiative staff to find out about training activities that had been delivered in the last two years. This fact sheet is based on 21 examples of activities from within ten of the 14 NHS Board areas.

Why train the trainers?

Cookery skills sessions are popular with a wide range of groups working within low-income communities. For example, around half of the 220 groups that applied to the CFHS annual small grant scheme in 2009 planned to deliver cookery sessions. As well as teaching individuals how to prepare affordable healthy meals, some groups deliver these because they provide social benefits and build skills such as team working, budgeting, literacy and numeracy. Training staff and volunteers to become cookery tutors builds the capacity and confidence of groups to deliver food activities

themselves, removes the need to find and hire a tutor and more importantly, ensures that healthy eating messages are integrated into the group's other activities. Finally, the Food Standards Agency funded 'Cookwell' intervention in 2002, found that six months after attending cookery courses, participants were cooking from basic ingredients more often and were more confident at using a recipe.

What's happening in Scotland?

Twenty-one examples of 'training the trainers' activities were provided from across Scotland. Nine courses are formal, five are informal, one is a mix of formal and informal and six formal courses are currently being developed. Six of the formal courses are currently being delivered and two of these have been delivered regularly for over six years, (in West Lothian and Grampian). None of the current training projects charge trainees from their area to attend, however, they might charge for materials.

How do you train the trainers?

How long does it take?

Training takes anything from a couple of hours to 120 hours (including homework). Training that only takes a few hours always includes further support. Three of the formal courses are between 40 and 120 hours long, two are around 30 hours, two are 18 hours, one is 12 hours and one is around two hours.

Fact Sheet

Who delivers the courses?

Many of the projects bring in staff from a range of backgrounds to contribute to the training. These include: dietitians, community food workers, oral health workers, college staff and freelance tutors.

Who attends training for trainers?

Most trainees are workers or volunteers who will deliver cookery sessions within their own or partner organisations, such as those working in supported accommodation units, youth groups and nurseries. Most tutor training courses are delivered to a mixed group, but some are aimed at specific groups, such as those working in early years or learning disability settings. Training projects that run mixed courses suggest that trainees benefit from learning and networking with people from other types of organisations. Trainees are usually expected to have basic cooking skills, an interest in healthy eating and a commitment to make use of what they learn on the training course. Some trainees will mainly teach cookery on a one-to-one basis after the course, whereas others will run group cookery sessions.

What do they learn?

All training aims to make sure that the trainee will be able to:

- show others how to make affordable healthy and tasty meals in a way that will encourage them to try these meals again at home;
- give consistent and credible healthy eating messages using methods that are suitable for those they support; and
- pass on food hygiene skills and deliver sessions safely.

Some training the trainers courses include topics such as: group facilitation skills; community development; identifying and addressing numeracy and literacy skills; evaluation skills; and nutrition information for specific groups such as older people or babies.

How do they learn?

All but one of the formal courses includes practical hands-on cookery or food preparation

sessions, even if these are just a few hours. These are used to boost cooking skills and teach healthy eating in a practical way that can be passed on to others, (e.g. how to show others how to remove fat from meat or make a meal with a high vegetable content). This also gives the trainees a chance to taste new foods, such as meals that have been prepared using flavouring other than salt, or less fat.

All the formal training courses include theoretical sessions on nutrition and healthy eating. These include interactive sessions based on the Food Standards Agency 'Eatwell plate'. Over half the courses expect or encourage trainees to complete formal accreditation. Most of these use the six-hour Royal Institute of Environmental Health (REHIS) Elementary Food and Health course as accreditation in nutrition. The course in West Lothian is credit rated for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

All courses either include accredited food hygiene training (such as REHIS food hygiene courses), or expect trainees to have completed an accredited food hygiene course.

Informal training involves providing mentoring for individuals and opportunities to assist or lead cookery courses or help at health events. Two of these are based in rural areas where formal group training is more challenging to organise. One project provides a mix of informal and formal training for volunteers; formal training includes the REHIS courses followed by mentoring.

What happens afterwards?

All trainees are provided with resources, such as cookery course handbooks, project recipe books and nutrition information. Four courses also provide cookery tutor networking opportunities or newsletters, five offer support or advice if it is required, and six provide assistant tutor places at cookery sessions or health events.

Fact Sheet

What are the main challenges of training the trainers?

Training projects and managers reported two main challenges and concerns:

1. Ensuring that new trainers use credible and consistent healthy eating messages after training and teach participants to prepare healthy meals.

This is addressed in two ways: a) making sure that trainees have learnt enough about healthy eating, and b) have access to support or information afterwards. More than half the courses expect or encourage trainees to complete formal assessments, which will ensure a basic knowledge of nutrition. Other training uses quizzes, questionnaires or interactive Eatwell plate sessions to informally assess trainees. Support after a course, such as access to advice, support, mentoring, handbooks and recipes can provide reassurance that new tutors will provide healthy eating messages and teach participants to prepare healthy balanced meals.

2. Organisations are often unable to allow staff enough time to attend long courses.

The two longest established training projects addressed this issue by offering two levels of courses, the shortest of which takes between 12 and 50 hours, (including homework). However, one of these (Grampian) now only runs the shorter course. Another project piloted a 30 hour course but plans to reduce the length of any future courses as the result of feedback.

Other challenges that training projects have to address include: access to funding and making sure that trainees are aware of how their reactions to new tastes can influence participants.

What are the results?

The Grampian training project requests feedback from trainees at the end of courses, including how they intend to use their learning. Positive feedback has included comments on

learning more about cooking healthy meals and having access to the Grampian 'Confidence to Cook' resource pack. West Lothian has found that its tutor training has increased the capacity of organisations within its area to deliver cookery courses; with more organisations delivering their own courses. Forth Valley surveyed 50 people who had attended REHIS Elementary Food and Health training. Many of the courses included practical cookery sessions. Thirty-three people responded; 17 of these said that the course had encouraged them to include food activities within their organisations and 11 people planned to start food activities within six months. Two training projects within Dumfries and Galloway received informal feedback from trainees indicating that they are making use of what they learnt within their organisations.

What's next?

Six organisations are currently planning or developing formal training courses. Two are considering buying the West Lothian course for their areas. One is planning to change and formalise existing mentoring activities. One learning disability project is piloting informal training that could be formalised in the future and another project is piloting formal training aimed at learning disability support staff. In Fife, a new training kitchen has recently opened with project workers currently planning how to train the trainers. All six organisations are considering using only formal nutrition assessment, either through REHIS or SQA. NHS Greater Glasgow is currently assessing the two different formal courses that it currently runs and is considering running a modular training approach similar to the West Lothian course.

Case studies

Forth Valley

A community food worker in Forth Valley is currently providing mentoring to two volunteers who are running cookery sessions with young people. The community food worker is supporting them whilst they run cookery sessions, providing prompts when required and help with budgeting and shopping for classes. The community food worker will accompany

Fact Sheet

them to sessions until they are ready to run these without her support. The volunteers have already had positive feedback from participants, which helped develop their confidence. In the future the volunteers will start to mentor others running cookery sessions of their own.

West Lothian

West Lothian Health Improvement Team has been providing 'Get Cooking' classes to individuals since 2003. Tutors for 'Get Cooking' are trained through the 'Community Food and Nutrition Skills' course. This is a modular course, supported by the British Dietetic Association and credit rated (level 6) for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework by the SQA. The course is divided into eight units. Participants are required to complete all eight units to be awarded the Certificate in Community Food and Nutrition Skills (CFNS). Certificates and learning hours are also awarded for each unit completed. The units give the opportunity to focus on specific service areas and have training sessions that are client-specific.

The team delivers the course outside West Lothian and offers places on its tutor training course for a small fee. The team is currently developing a training course that will allow others to deliver the CFNS programme outside West Lothian.

Where to get more information

Information about training projects:

Grampian 'Confidence to Cook' and 'Training for Trainers'

<http://hi-netgrampian.net>

West Lothian 'Get Cooking' and 'Community Food and Nutrition Skills':

www.getcooking.org

Healthy Valleys, volunteer opportunities:

www.healthyvalleys.org.uk

Information about training projects in CFHS newsletter 'Fare Choice'

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

NHS Grampian 'train the trainers':

Fare Choice: issue 49

Edinburgh Cyrenians' train the trainers:

Fare Choice: issue 49

NHS Dumfries and Galloway:

Fare Choice: issue 51

Fife Training Kitchen: Fare Choice: issue 52

Information on developing cookery courses:

The Cookwell Manual, and Cookwell evaluation, The Food Standards Agency

www.food.gov.uk

'Get Cooking!' (Cookery with young people) and 'What's Cooking?' (Cookery with children), The Food Standards Agency

www.food.gov.uk

'Good food in tackling homelessness handbook' Edinburgh Cyrenians

www.cyrenians.org.uk

'A taste for independence: using food to develop skills for life' CFHS

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland

Elementary Food and Health course and food hygiene courses

www.rehis.org

Thanks

A big thank you to individuals who contributed to the fact sheet from: Borders Healthy Living Network, Edinburgh Community Food Initiative, Edinburgh Cyrenians, Healthy Valleys, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, NHS Fife, NHS Forth Valley, NHS Grampian, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, NHS Lothian, NHS Orkney, and West Lothian Local Authority.