

## **Strengthening food work across minority ethnic communities**

**Note of National Networking Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013  
Royal Exchange House, Glasgow.**

### **Present:**

Nathalie Ouriachi      Karibu/ North Glasgow Community Food Initiative

Chris Mantle            Edinburgh Community Food

Tanveer Parnez        BEMIS

Emilia Pietka          BEMIS

John Casey             Glasgow CHP South sector

Robina Akthar        Pollokshields Development Agency

Florence Doika        Central and West Integration Network

Ian Stirrat             Scotia Clubhouse

Peter Wylie            Scotia Clubhouse

Sue Rawcliffe         Community Food and Health (Scotland)

### **Apologies**

Adil Bhatti             Pollokshields Development Agency

Sue welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming along. Sue explained that she had decided to go ahead with the meeting with smaller numbers than usual, as CFHS is about to move to NHS Health Scotland and it may have taken a while to reorganise another meeting.

### **A focus on maternal and infant nutrition**

Tanveer and Emilia introduced the study carried out in partnership with CFHS to provide a snapshot of community and voluntary sector activity in relation to maternal and infant nutrition across minority ethnic communities. The study was circulated and is available on the CFHS website at <http://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/cfhs-bemis-maternal-infant-nutrition-report.pdf>

The study that was launched at the Maternal and Infant Nutrition conference on 7 February at Dynamic Earth provides a snapshot of the work that organisations are involved in, who they are working with, the resources they use to support their work

and their future learning and development needs. It also contains information gathered from four different minority ethnic communities on their experience of finding information in relation to maternal and infant nutrition. Emilia described the methods used – building a contact list, survey of organisations using survey monkey, focus group and individual interviews with carers from different minority ethnic communities.

The study found just 15 organisations in Scotland who are working on maternal and infant nutrition across minority ethnic communities in Scotland. The majority of these organisations are in the central belt and there is no organisation that described this work as their core purpose. The majority of organisations (6 out of the 15 organisations) were organisations with a remit to promote race equality and challenge exclusion among ethnic minority communities. When asked about the barriers to developing work in this area –a lack of resources to develop work in this area was highlighted.

Findings from the focus groups and individual interviews suggested that most carers looked to family and friends for information in relation to maternal and infant nutrition and that the discrepancy between this information and that provided by health professionals can cause confusion. Also the lack of recognition in standard resources of the diversity of diets across cultural and ethnic minorities. One African mother wanted to introduce solid food to her child however could only find information about spaghetti and lasagne and not anything that would relate to African cuisine. Another Polish mother spoke of advice to use ready-made food when she would prefer to cook home-made food for her children. There was also a concern that differences in habits and diets between minority ethnic communities and the local population are often perceived as a gap in their knowledge.

There was discussion on the findings and John spoke about the work of the Steering group in Glasgow for maternal and infant nutrition. This covers support for breastfeeding, weaning fairs to which every mother is invited and the best start baby clubs across the city. He was very surprised particularly in relation to material from the focus groups and individual interviews and the messages that parents appear to be receiving. He will take the report to the steering group for further discussion. Discussed the fact that there is a need to support carers from minority ethnic communities to work with their own food choices – a key message being to keep your good diet and maybe make some small changes in relation to fat, salt and sugar. This is the message that should be being reinforced by health professionals and it was thought to be disappointing if this was not happening.

### **Case Study: North Glasgow Community Food Initiative (NGCFI)**

Nathalie presented the case study that she has developed on NGCFI's work with asylum seekers and refugees. It presents a volunteer, Blanchard's story in his own words. The format is designed to be easily accessible and includes photographs, links to video footage of the work on NGCFI and hyperlinks that readers can follow to follow additional information. Funding from CFHS supported the work.

The case study took several months to develop from the initial ideas to final product. It involved planning the outline, undertaking video training, story boarding, filming and editing material in different areas of the projects work, collecting additional information before collating all the material into the final case study. NGCFI also worked with a photographer to record the day to day work. Everyone had to be very flexible given that it was planned to develop the material over last summer and the weather was not at all as planned. Overall however, the whole process was developmental and confidence building for the staff and volunteers involved.

The case study is available on the website at <http://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/NGCFI-case-study.pdf>

### **Case Study: Staywell Multicultural Healthy Eating Project**

Florence spoke about the case study that she is developing on the work of the Staywell multicultural healthy eating project. This project is working with four elderly day care centres in Glasgow – Asra, African and Caribbean network, Shanti Bhavan and Wah Lok. The centres work with Chinese, Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi and African and Caribbean older people. The groups meet once a month for a coffee morning and the current series are themed around healthy eating.

Florence reported that there have been three coffee mornings to date. The first introduced ideas on healthy eating across the different groups and participants made t shirts reflecting this theme. The second included a lunch which was adapted to demonstrate the healthier eating messages. The third is being held in conjunction with Glasgow Women's library and will focus on arts and healthy food. Stories will be collected about food and will be developed into a book which can sit alongside the case study.

Work has started on writing up the case study which will sit on CFHS website alongside the CORE and NGCFI ones.

### **Practice Developments/ Exchange**

John reported that the food strategy group for South Glasgow has reorganised and will now have two subgroups – one looking at cooking skills and the other food poverty. This reflects current priorities. 75-90% of work in Glasgow will now be targeted to specific areas.

In relation to the community health tenders – the one for the North East and North West of the city has now been awarded; the one for the South of the city has still to be agreed. The tenders may change the shape of community food work in Glasgow City.

Chris reported that ECF are not finding many groups in Edinburgh working on food across minority ethnic communities.

Scotia clubhouse continues to work on developing healthier choices and encouraging members to try food from different parts of the globe.

Robina reported that Pollokshields Development Agency has a weekly lunch club for older residents. They are looking at current menus with a view to increasing healthy choices.

### **Priorities for future activity**

Discussed CFHS' move to NHS Health Scotland and the work planning process for the year ahead. Sue suggested the main priority would be to take the work on maternal and infant nutrition forward especially in relation to stimulating work in this area and developing good practice examples. As a result of the discussion at the meeting, it seems that there is also work to be done on developing culturally responsive resources – suggested recipes and also maybe also visual resources to support work on maternal and infant nutrition.

Budgets have still to be approved, but Sue would also anticipate there being some funding available also for further case study development as these are an important resource for other organisations.

Agreed that it is useful to continue to meet and that another larger national networking event would be something to work towards to showcase practice across the country.