



**Paper for information: Government Updates on Nutrition
Related Activities
FSA**

Agenda Item: 9

Please see attached paper for information.

National Diet and Nutrition Survey

- 1) Contract negotiation with a preferred bidder for the NDNS rolling programme has been slightly delayed, but is now nearing completion. It is hoped to have a contract in place by October 2006. Pilot work is now planned for early 2007 and if successful fieldwork for the core rolling programme, covering the whole UK, should commence in 2008. Results would then begin to become available from 2009. A SACN sub-group will continue to provide expert advice on the development of methodology for the rolling programme.

Low Income Diet and Nutrition Survey

- 2) Publication of the report of the survey of low income/materially deprived consumers (covering both adults and children) is now expected in Spring 2007.

Salt Work

- 3) The Agency is committed to reducing salt intakes and has agreed, in line with SACN recommendations, a long-term aim to achieve the average salt intake to 6g for adults by 2010.

Salt Reduction Targets and Self Reporting Framework

- 4) With voluntary salt reduction targets in place since March, the Agency is now focusing on the development of a self-reporting framework for industry, which will be one method of measuring industry progress towards meeting the salt reduction targets that were published in March. The Agency is working closely with stakeholders to develop the framework, and is holding a series of meetings in September to discuss the data that industry can provide. Discussions have already been held with NGO stakeholders to discuss the data they think it would be helpful for the framework to include. Ultimately, the data collected needs to provide sufficient information to enable the Agency to track progress towards achieving the targets without imposing an excessive administrative burden on industry.

Public Awareness

- 5) The Agency launched a major public health campaign on salt in 2004 with a supporting salt website, which can be found at www.salt.gov.uk. The Agency is now in the process of developing phase 3 of its consumer education campaign and will be working closely with a wide range of stakeholders to do this. It is anticipated that Phase 3 will be launched in the spring of 2007. In the meantime, to ensure that the messages from phase 2 of the campaign remain in consumers' minds, the Agency has arranged for a series of short TV adverts to be aired during the summer and autumn. The timings of the advert have been chosen to access our target audience.
- 6) Results from a survey of salt intake in adults aged 19-64 years in England, assessed by 24-hour urinary sodium analysis, are being assessed and are scheduled for publication later this year.

- 7) The Agency published its 'Processed food databank' on 13th July 2006. The processed food databank was designed as a reference tool to provide indicative information on levels of sodium in a range of processed foods. In addition, the databank includes information on levels of fat, sugar and a range of other nutrients in these processed foods. It has been used by the Agency to inform discussions with industry and other bodies aimed at encouraging a reduction in the salt content of processed foods. The data has also been used to inform policy development. For example, the databank was one of the sources of information used in testing the effect of nutritional criteria underpinning the Agency's signpost labelling proposals. The databank contains data collected from the labels of around 1000 products bought in the UK between December 2004 and February 2005. The Agency intends to conduct further sampling rounds to update and extend the databank in the future. The databank can be accessed via the Agency's website: <http://www.food.gov.uk/science/surveillance/fsisbranch2006/fsis1306>

Addressing saturated fat and energy in the nation's diet

- 8) The Agency's Strategic Plan includes a target to work with health departments to reduce saturated fat intakes from 13.4% to 11% of food energy by 2010 (for everyone from age 5 upwards). In addition, the Strategic Plan recommends that we develop (with health departments) targets for achieving energy balance. The Choosing Health White Paper includes a commitment to reduce fat and sugar levels in processed foods. FSA officials are currently developing a strategy to take this work forward, which will be subject to a full public consultation later this year.
- 9) The Agency has been consulting with key retailers, manufacturers and trade associations to seek their input into the development of the strategy to reduce levels of saturated fat in the diet and address the current calorie in/energy out imbalance. We are aware that some industry organisations are already working to improve the nutrition profile of their products, as health and diet is regarded as a competitive issue. Information from a range of sources, including industry organisations will be used to develop a way forward for achieving our strategic goals in this area.

Communications strategy for encouraging behaviour change among teenage girls in 2006 – Sugar Magazine

- 10) The Agency continues to provide consumer-facing information through the Agency's websites and lifestage leaflets. In addition, to help support, influence and encourage teenage girls to improve their eating habits, the Food Standards is working closely with Sugar Magazine (a magazine aimed at teenage girls). This involves giving tips and advice to teenagers about eating well and being healthy, making it relevant and practical to follow. In 2006 this includes:

- three 8 page mini-supplements on healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle;
- four advertorial pages throughout 2006;
- healthier reader recipes (content analysed by FSA) throughout 2006;
- six Q&A problem pages.

- 11) This work is complemented through PR activity with the 2006 celebrity Soccer Six Tournaments that took place in May this year; providing further opportunities to target healthy eating/activity messages to teenage girls through the female celebrity team. The Celebrity matches received considerable coverage with interviews with team members promoting healthy eating messages.
- 12) The Agency is also sponsoring the BDA's W8wise campaign, which this year targets teenagers. We are linking our Sugar magazine/Soccer Six messages with the w8wise campaign and hosting a web chat with Sugar Magazine readers in June. This will allow us a further opportunity to communicate with teenage girls about healthier eating and lifestyles.

School Meals

- 13) DfES announced a package of standards to transform school food on 19th May 2006. This package combines recommendations of the DfES School Meal Review Panel (SMRP) and the School Food Trust's (SFT) Committee on Standards for food other than school lunch. Minimum school food standards came into effect in September 2006 to coincide with the start of the new school year.
- 14) On 4th September, DfES announced further initiatives for improving school food. The 5 point plan will include: Subsidy support to Local Authority for delivery of healthier school food, beyond current commitment of 2008; Targeted support for school kitchens, including design guidance on kitchens and dining rooms in 2007; Non-Statutory pupil entitlement to learn to cook, which school can offer outside curriculum – introduction in 2008; School Cooks development, including additional funds (£2m) to support training expectation; and Regional/sub-regional consortia of food producers to support local supply networks for school food and wider public body requirement.
- 15) The Agency continues to play a part through advising on issues that arise as a result of the introduction on the minimum standards for school food from a nutrition, food hygiene and food allergy perspective. The Agency acted as observers on both the SMRP and SFT Committee and provided recommendations on standards for food other than at school lunch.

School Caterers Qualifications

- 16) DfES and the Agency have supported development of an accredited course, a level 1 **vocational qualification "Providing a Healthier School Meals Service"**, which will equip school caterers with the theoretical foundation needed to enable them to prepare healthier meals. The course explains the functions of the major nutrients, the Balance of Good Health and the nutrient composition of foods commonly used in school meals. Hence providing caterers with the theoretical knowledge needed to introduce beneficial changes. The course is now available across the UK and is intended to be delivered over six hours in a one-day training session or a number of shorter sessions.

- 17) The next steps are to update the Level 1 qualification training materials to reflect the new school meal standards, and to develop a ladder of qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 for school catering staff, to be available from September 2006.

Cooking and Food Skills!

- 18) The Agency has commissioned ContinYou to roll out 'Cook it! - After school Cookery Clubs' across North East England in 100 secondary schools. This will take place within the extended school environment and the main objectives include achieving roll out within the recruited schools; helping schools to secure sustainable schemes; and to maximise the potential for the Agency to consider other opportunities within extended schools. Work started in February 2006. Local Authorities have submitted initial Expressions of Interest and contracts should be completed by end of summer 2006. The Agency, through COI, has commissioned EdComs to conduct an independent evaluation of the project. This continuous evaluation is expected to carry on into 2007.
- 19) The Agency is providing the Academy of Culinary Arts (ACA) with a grant to recruit and support the development of an "Adopt a School" Co-ordinator in East Anglia, working primarily with primary schools. The main aims of the co-ordinator will be to deliver the "Chefs Adopt a School" programme, ensuring special needs schools and those in vulnerable areas are given priority.
- 20) Adopt-a-School is a food education programme developed and delivered by the UK's leading chefs. Designed to compliment the National Curriculum, the programme focuses on developing an essential understanding of taste, communicate where food comes from, look at the processes involved in preparing food and outline the importance of hygiene and safety.
- 21) Building on the success of 'Get Cooking!' in Wales, the FSA and the National Federation of Women's Institutes have begun working in partnership to deliver 'Let's Cook!' cooking courses to small groups of disadvantaged young mothers in England and Wales over the next three years.

Institutions

- 22) The Agency is developing nutritional guidance for major institutions. Work is underway to develop nutrient and food based guidance for institutions which will support cross-Government action on diet and food procurement, including, for example by feeding into the Department of the Environment, Fisheries and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) public sector food procurement initiative (PSFPI). Example menus will also be developed to assist caterers achieve this guidance.
- 23) This nutrient advice will suggest a level of provision equivalent to the average population requirements as a standard. This will be equivalent to COMA/SACN recommendations for different sections of the population and where this spans different age ranges these will be derived from the relevant population recommendations. In addition we will look to address specific excesses and insufficiencies in the diet of different sections of the population by recommending a target recommendation. For nutrients such as salt, fat and NMES this will be

equivalent to 98% of the average population requirement per day. Insufficiencies will be identified as a greater than 5% of the stated population group having intakes below the LRNI for that age group according to NDNS. For these nutrients the target requirement will aim to provide 90-100% of the relevant DRV from meals alone. In this manner snacks would provide additional nutrients where there are insufficiencies but will not provide salt, fat or NMES above 98% of the average population requirement.

24) The Agency will therefore be providing guidance for

- adults in the following groups: older people / care homes, other local authority provision, NHS (including to staff and visitors), prisons, Armed Forces, Higher and further education and central and local government.
- Children: where appropriate, advice is already available or underway in relation to guidance for provision for looked after children and in schools / nurseries and the Agency is not looking to provide additional advice for these settings. Agency guidance will be consistent, where appropriate, with such guidance.

Diets for medical conditions will not be part of this work.

25) The guidance being developed is voluntary and it will be up to the relevant department with responsibility for the particular institution to take forward as and where appropriate. The Agency will not be involved in implementing or monitoring of the guidance.

26) The Agency expects to produce a draft report detailing the guidance in early 2007, but the exact timing for publication has not yet been decided. However the Agency is looking to finalise its guidance for older people in residential care to coincide with other stakeholder activity in this area at an earlier timepoint.

Update on Signpost Labelling

27) Work to agree suitable criteria to underpin the criteria for total sugars in signpost labels has continued. The Agency has been assisted in this work by an independent advisory group which was formed to provide advice on appropriate levels for the High (amber/red) signposting boundary for sugars in the absence of advice from COMA and SACN on intakes of total sugars.

28) The independent advisory group recommendations to the Agency were made having taken account of existing COMA advice on recommended intakes of non-milk extrinsic sugars (NMES, i.e. added sugars including extrinsic fruit sugars such as in fruit juice), other available evidence and comments from interested parties.

29) The issue was re-considered by the independent advisory group, in the light of concern that its proposals could mean that a few products high in natural sugars, principally high fruit muesli, fruit juices and smoothies, might be categorised as 'High' for sugars. The independent advisory group has advised that the

medium/high level for total sugars for signpost labelling purposes should be set at 15g / 100g for all products; and that manufacturers of products which do not contain added sugars should be encouraged to place additional information relating to the source of the sugars on the label to reinforce healthy eating messages and facilitate consumer choice between high sugar products. This advice is currently being considered by the Agency.

- 30) It should be noted that neither the Agency nor the independent sugar advisory group has made any comment on the suitability or otherwise of the IGD GDA values for front of pack signpost labelling.
- 31) The Agency has published web-based material on signposting that is aimed at helping raise awareness with consumers and helping them to use signpost labelling wisely. This information can be found at:
<http://www.eatwell.gov.uk/foodlabels/trafficlights/>
- 32) Further promotional and educational materials will be produced by the Agency in the near future to help encourage consumers to use signposting information wisely to make healthier choices, and to re-inforce existing advice about choosing a varied and balanced diet.

Promotion of foods to children

- 33) The Ofcom consultation *Television advertising of food and drink products to children; Options for new restrictions*, closed on 30 June. Over 860 responses were received from interested parties. A significant proportion supported the Agency nutrient profiling model, discussed by the SACN at its meeting in October 2005 (SACN/05/27).
- 34) In its response to the consultation the Agency called on Ofcom to restrict high fat, salt and sugar food advertising on television and facilitate the promotion of healthier foods at times when all children, not just those under 10, are likely to be watching television (i.e. up to the 9pm watershed).

- 35) The responses to the consultation are available at
www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/foodads/responses/

- 36) Ofcom are due to issue a final statement later in the year.

Recasting of the current European Legislation on Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula

- 37) The recast European Directive laying down rules regarding the composition, labelling and promotion of infant formula and follow on formula was agreed by the Standing Committee on 19th July 2006. The Agency will consult with all stakeholders, including SACN, on new Regulations which will implement the Directive in the UK.

Goat milk protein infant nutrition products

38) During 2006, the Agency secured the withdrawal of two infant nutrition products based on goats milk protein which had been marketed in breach of the UK Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Regulations. The Agency are currently discussing the removal of a third such product ('Nanny') from the UK market. The Department of Health has requested that health care professionals inform mothers that infant milks based on goats' milk protein are not suitable as a source of nutrition for infants and advised them that action is being taken to remove these products from the UK marketplace.

Update FSA Wales

AFAL Awards for Food Action Locally 2007

- 1) The 2007 AFAL Awards are set to be launched on 13th October with a closing date of 15th December. This is the 4th year the awards have been run in Wales and it is hoped that a high level of interest will be maintained and that we can build on the 57 nominations received last year. The awards will be published widely across Wales and a judging panel will be selected from the Implementation and Monitoring Working Party members at their next meeting on 20th October.

Primary Care Practitioner Training

- 2) Following an initial small scale pilot, the nutrition module for Primary Care Practitioners will be piloted on a larger scale in a real life setting to establish whether or not the course is sustainable. This enhanced pilot will be run by the University of Bangor.

Get Cooking

- 3) The NFWI Cymru delivery of FSA Wales 'Get Cooking' course continues to gain momentum and popularity, and is increasingly being used by community groups. NFWI Cymru are continuing to deliver 28 FSA Wales Get Cooking courses as funded by the Welsh Assembly Government Food & Fitness grants until March 2007. This is a specific action in the Welsh Assembly Governments 'Food and Fitness - 5 Year Implementation Plan' to contribute to the development of cooking skills in children and Young People.

Food and Well Being Interim Review

- 4) Warwick University commenced the interim evaluation of Food and Well Being in May and June when they conducted workshop sessions at FSA Wales Nutrition Conferences in North and South Wales. The review has been commissioned to assess progress on implementation of the associated Action Plan and to measure impact to date. The review will help determine prioritisation of future activity. As part of the process, focus groups are scheduled for October 2006 and the evaluation team will also be meeting with a number of key stakeholders. The final report is expected at the end of December.

Nutrition Network for Wales (NNW)

- 5) The official launch of the NNW website took place in June 2006 and aims to complement the annual nutrition conferences which provide face-to-face networking opportunities. The network provides links to other national and international diet and nutrition networks as well as comprehensive databases of almost 300 Community Food Initiatives and 250 Education and Training Resources. In June alone the website received over 4000 hits from individuals and organisations concerned with improving diet and nutrition.

Keep Well This Winter Campaign (KWTW)

- 6) The 2006-2007 campaign was launched by John Griffiths AM, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services in Anglesey on 18th September. FSA Wales has produced 35,000 bilingual 'Stock up your Store Cupboard for Winter' leaflets for the KWTW pack and contributed to an audio resource in conjunction with the RNIB. This year FSA Wales is also arranging training of WRVS Meals on Wheels volunteers to enable them to deliver the healthy eating message to more vulnerable elderly adults across Wales. This follows on from FSA Wales' peer educator programme within the KWTW campaign.

Update FSA Scotland

- 1) Following the Report (and recommendations) of the Working Group on Monitoring Scottish Dietary Targets, the following projects been commissioned by FSAS Science Branch and are currently underway:

Secondary Analysis of Existing Data

Review of progress made towards the Scottish Dietary Targets using existing data sets

- 2) The first phase of this work was completed in November 2005 and was presented to both the Food and Health Council and to the Scottish Diet Action Plan Review Panel in December. Reflecting the SEHD priority to reduce health inequalities in Scotland, the project was extended to include analysis of the Scottish Expenditure and Food Survey data on food and nutrients in relation to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. The report is now complete following peer review and was published on the Agency's web site on Monday 11th September coinciding with the publication of the Scottish Diet Action Plan Review Report.
- 3) A research requirement was published in FSA Research Requirement Document No. 21 to invite proposal for the continuation of this work to 2010, encompassing data from both the Expenditure and Food Survey and the Scottish Health Survey. Proposals have now been received and been appraised. Decisions regarding commissioning are yet to be taken.

Intake of Non Milk Extrinsic Sugars (NMES) by Scottish School Children

- 4) This survey began in December 2005 after extensive negotiations around finding a suitable data set from which to draw the sample. Eventually permission was granted from the Department of Work and Pensions to allow us access to Child Benefit Records.
 - The dietary assessment methodology includes a combination of Food Frequency Questionnaires, Diet Diaries and 24 hour recall and will provide information on NMES, as well as other nutrients of interest in relation to children diets in Scotland.
 - Field work for the main study was completed on 8th September 06 and is currently being coded in preparation for analysis.
 - Final Report due May 07

Dietary Sodium Intake of the Scottish population estimated by urinary sodium excretion

- 5) This survey, which started in February 2006, will provide information to measure progress towards the Scottish Dietary Targets as well as information that can be fed into UK measurement of progress towards the FSA strategic plan target to reduce dietary salt intake.

- This project is identical to the study being carried out by FSA in England but with additional spot urine samples being carried out in Scotland.
- Project report December 2006

The following two research projects, unrelated to the Scottish Dietary Targets, are currently underway:

Food Access.

- 6) This project is designed to provide a retail map of access to affordable and healthy food across Scotland using a combination of GIS mapping and a newly developed Healthy Indicator Shopping Basket Tool for Scotland.
 - The survey field work has been completed and the data has been checked and data analysis is underway.
 - The project outputs will include a national assessment of retail mapping across Scotland using case study sites.
 - The project has been designed so that it may be rolled out for use by Local Authorities / Health Boards to assist them in identifying problems in their areas.
 - Project due to report early 2007

Investigation into the impact of Target Nutrient Specifications (TNS) on food purchased in Scotland to supply the education sector and other public sector organisations.

- 7) This project was designed to explore the extent to which the TNS for manufactured foods used in school meals (developed by FSAS to assist in the achievement of the Hungry for Success Nutrient Standards) has improved food supply to education and other public sectors.
- 8) The final report has now been peer reviewed and due to be published shortly.

Cook-it! Resource

- 9) The Agency in Scotland is currently working in partnership with the Scottish Healthy Promoting Schools Unit (SHPSU) to develop a Scottish version of the guidance booklet.

Aberdeen Football Club

- 10) A joint initiative between the Agency in Scotland and Aberdeen Football Club (AFC) to improve children's fitness and knowledge of food hygiene & diet was launched on 2 Feb 2006. Over 1,000 Primary 3-4 pupils from 12 schools in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Local Authority areas participated in the pilot project. Activities were organised around the AFC schools' coaching programme and linked to the school curriculum. The pilot has now ended with final evaluation anticipated by end June 2006. Following the success of the pilot, Phase 2 is a partnership between FSAS, Active Schools (part of SportScotland) and AFC, due to start in Autumn 2006. The support of the Active Schools' co-

ordinators for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire will enable the project to reach up to 40 schools in NE Scotland and AFC are again providing coaching input. An event highlighting this partnership & Active Schools involvement is planned at Pittodrie Stadium on 19 Sept.

School Food

- 11) As a result of the UK Agency consultation on UK TNS in 2005, the revised target nutrient specifications for manufactured foods used in school meals in Scotland were launched on 19 May. Their use is voluntary in Scotland and will be reviewed again by the Agency in Scotland, in consultation with stakeholders, in 2008.
- 12) On 3 May 2006, the SE launched a consultation “Improving the Health and Nutrition of Scotland’s Children” on the Schools (Nutrition and Health Promotion) (Scotland) Bill. This proposes legislation building on Hungry for Success (HfS) – a whole school approach to school meals in Scotland. The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Bill was introduced into Parliament on 8th September and published on Monday 11th September. A short life expert-working group (includes 4 meetings) has been set up in order to draw up the regulations for the nutritional standards as specified in the Schools (Health and Nutrition) (Scotland) Bill. Please find below a link to the Bill papers as published on the Scottish Parliament website:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/bills/68-SchoolsHN/index.htm>

Elementary Course in Food and Health

- 13) The Agency, along with a partnership group, has been involved in the development of a catering training course. The objectives of the course are to provide candidates with a basic knowledge of the link between diet and health. The course provides knowledge, which can be put into practice in a number of settings from school dining halls and workplace canteens to community cafes and in the home. The course is being provided by the Royal Environmental Health Institute for Scotland (REHIS) through its approved training centres and was first piloted in summer 2002. However, delays have meant that the course was not officially launched until November 2005, with the first course being run in January 2006.

Food and Health Course – Roll out in Low Income Communities

- 14) Food Standards Agency Scotland and the Scottish Community Diet Project (SCDP) are providing funding to boost the above Food and Health Course’s provision in low income communities. A contractor was appointed in May 2006 to carry out this project which involves commissioning a series of subsidised courses in low income communities across Scotland and assisting existing REHIS elementary food hygiene course providers to become elementary food and health course providers. The project is expected to last for no more than six months. FSAS and SCDP have both committed funds to this project on behalf of the partners group for the course. Areas where there are food access/food poverty issues and gaps in existing training provision are being given priority.

Food and Health Alliance

15) The Food and Health Alliance was established in April 2005 by FSAS and the Scottish Executive as a network for people with an interest in food and health. The emphasis of the Alliance is on inclusion and wide engagement involving all sectors of the food chain and it is hoped that the Alliance will become a 'one-stop-shop' information point for all those involved in food and health in Scotland. Since its inception, the partnership has evolved to include NHS Health Scotland, with the Scottish Executive taking more of a strategic role. The Alliance is continuing to attract members, with current membership sitting at approximately 650. An information audit has now been carried out, with a report of the findings due in late September. A dedicated Alliance website is also currently being developed and it is anticipated that a prototype home page should be available by October.

Saturated Fat and Energy Strategy

16) As part of the Agency's Saturated Fat and Energy Strategy, FSAS will be holding a stakeholder meeting in October to feed industry comments into the UK wide strategy.

2nd Annual Scottish Conferences – British Nutrition Foundation

17) Food Standards Agency Scotland delivered presentations at the 4 Scottish conferences in September. This consisted of updates on Signposting, the Salt Campaign, the new Strategy on reducing saturated fat and energy balance and a new cooking club resource.

Update FSA Northern Ireland

Student Survey and Survival Guide

- 1) The Food Standards Agency has developed a new Student Survival Guide for first year undergraduate students in Northern Ireland. The Guide includes information on shopping and cooking on a budget; kitchen hygiene; getting the most out of your diet; how to prepare food and a number of practical recipes. The context for this work is the research the Agency carried out last year on student eating habits and behaviours. This was commissioned through ARK (a joint QUB and UU social and political archive body) and targeted all students at Queens University Belfast and the University of Ulster. The research was further supplemented by a series of focus groups carried out by MORI Ireland. The survey assessed food attitudes and behaviours amongst university students in Northern Ireland and collected information on social factors which impact on their ability to obtain or to choose a healthy balanced diet.
- 2) There are a range of diet and health related issues for young people that differ from those experienced by the rest of the population. These include iron deficiency, reproductive health, low intakes of calcium, Vitamin D and restricted food consumption. At present, there is limited information available on the diets of 18 - 24 year olds and this survey is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland to focus specifically on student eating habits. Over 3,500 students took part in this exercise.
- 3) The findings from the survey suggest that first year students are the most vulnerable in terms of their diet. It is also clear from both the research findings and from student feedback, that there is a need for practical, educational and accessible information on eating well for this age group. The Agency is working with the University of Ulster as a pilot exercise. The Guide itself will be targeted at first years in Halls of Residence and briefing sessions have already taken place with Residential Assistants as part of their induction programme. The Guide will be evaluated late November, early December.

Homeless Research

- 4) Homeless households in Northern Ireland were identified as being a priority vulnerable group during 2005/06. There is presently limited research exploring the issues homeless persons face in sourcing, funding and preparing food for themselves and/or their families in Northern Ireland.
- 5) Deloitte were awarded a contract in January this year to carry out the following research objectives:
 - Deliver a better understanding of the impact of poverty and social exclusion on the diet of people who are homeless in Northern Ireland
 - Establish the extent to which homeless persons are vulnerable to poor diets and inadequate nutrition through research design based on a recognised nutritional data collection methodology e.g. food frequency questionnaire

- Explore the issues homeless persons face in sourcing, funding, storing and preparing nourishing food for themselves and/or their families through structured interviews with a sample of homeless persons
 - Explore issues of service use and service access by homeless persons in Northern Ireland and develop a clear understanding of the barriers to healthy eating. This will include interviews/discussions with hostel staff, for example
 - Identify the impact of food poverty upon health and wider experiences of social exclusion
 - Identify gaps in current food provision for homeless persons across a range of support services.
- 6) This exercise was treated as a pilot study. Primary research was carried out with 80 homeless households, 10 of which were rough sleepers. Both a structured questionnaire and a food frequency questionnaire were used. Further primary research was carried out with policy makers and service providers. A final report has been prepared and a series of meetings arranged with key stakeholders. The focus of work during the course of the next few months will be with single mothers in hostel accommodation and young single homeless persons.