



For safe food and
healthy eating

**Summary report:
Health inequalities impact
assessment scoping
workshop for
Food Standards Scotland's
Eat Well, Your Way
resource**

17th February 2023

1. Background

Eat Well, Your Way is an online resource developed by Food Standards Scotland (FSS) to deliver practical, pragmatic healthy eating advice to consumers. Based on a behaviour change model developed by NHS Education for Scotland, it acknowledges the social, cultural and environmental influences on food choice and offers advice on how to make small, manageable and sustainable changes. It is aimed at lower income populations, who are often most in need of support.

As part of the development of the Eat Well, Your Way resource, FSS held a virtual health inequalities impact assessment scoping workshop on Thursday 19th August 2021 with representatives from Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland, NHS and third sector organisations including Nourish Scotland, Food for Purpose, BEAT and Edinburgh Community Food. The purpose of the scoping workshop was to identify potential positive or negative impacts of the resource on different population groups, and to identify actions to mitigate against or enhance these.

This report provides a summary of the findings from the scoping workshop.

2. Impact scoping

Population groups in which potential positive impacts were identified included:

- Children and young people, either indirectly as a result of parents using the resource, or directly as a young person making independent choices
- Older people who have IT access and skills to navigate the resource
- Those who care for others and/or provide information about diet to others as part of their professional or voluntary role
- Disabled people and those living with health conditions, who are supported to use the resource by professionals or volunteers.
- Those with low incomes, but potentially those with higher incomes also as the resource provides advice to support individuals to save money with the food they buy, allowing for spend in other areas.

In addition to the above, it was suggested that the resource could potentially positively impact all population groups by empowering individuals with evidence based advice and support, thus increasing their knowledge and facilitating their ability to make informed, healthier choices.

Population groups in which potential negative impacts were identified included:

- Minority ethnic communities, those whose first language is not English or those with religions or beliefs, who may experience barriers of language and identification in the subject matter used within the resource e.g. food items or shopping/cooking practices
- Those with low literacy/health literacy who may find it more difficult to engage with the resource
- Disabled people and those living with mental health conditions including eating disorders who may find content triggering, or difficult to reconcile with other aspects of their lives
- Those living in deprived areas who may not find the resource relatable
- Those living in remote/rural areas who may not be able to engage with all the content within the resource

- Males, particularly within minority ethnic communities, who are often more difficult to engage with in diet and health improvement activities
- Refugees and asylum seekers, and those experiencing homelessness may not/find it difficult to engage with the resource if faced with limited facilities for accessing IT, shopping, cooking and eating food
- Older people without IT access and skills.

3. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- Reduce the amount of text, presenting information in a more visual, succinct and user friendly way e.g. pictures/ videos
- Language should be reviewed to convey more empathy and compassion, recognising constraints of the food system and individual circumstances
- Lived experience of food-related behaviours should be captured within the resource through engagement with community members/organisations
- Consider the target group of the resource and whether further tailoring of content or additional physical materials is required to meet the needs of specific groups
- Further collaboration with those who have expertise in mental health and eating disorders to ensure that advice is not stigmatising or triggering
- Stakeholders should be consulted in the process of resource development, promotion and evaluation, including young people; community representatives and organisations; minority ethnic community representative organisations; local authorities (child poverty working groups); the Community Health Exchange; mental health organisations and health professionals (specifically eating disorders).

4. Future action

Food Standards Scotland will engage with the groups where potential impacts were identified to further refine and improve the resource. FSS has planned a programme of evaluation, development and promotion of the Eat Well, Your Way resource over the coming years.