

ACM/1066



Food
Standards
Agency
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Update presentation to ACMSF 29th May 2012

Social Science Research: An update

- Evidence review: Food safety behaviours in the home
- Food and You update
- Kitchen practices research update
- Decontamination treatments (public attitudes)
- Presenting risk and uncertainty

Food safety behaviours in the home: An Evidence Review

ACMSF

SSRC

Agreed programme of work

Published August 2011

Summarises existing evidence for general population
and vulnerable groups

Identifies future priorities

Key Findings

Indications of failure to follow recommended food hygiene practices

- whether know about safe practices or not

Variation across the 4 C's

- cooking and chilling temps; defrosting; food labels X
- different chopping boards; storing meat ✓

Relationship between knowledge and behaviour imperfect

- influences include risk awareness, perceptions and optimism

Poorer knowledge/behaviour linked to various socio-demographics: Male, elderly, lower income, higher education

- higher education = optimism bias
- male = lower food safety knowledge

Key Findings

Reasons for not following safe practices

Lack of knowledge of good practice

Failure to understand the risks posed by unsafe behaviours

Optimism bias – optimistic of own knowledge, behaviour and resilience to illness

Physical impairments – e.g. poor eyesight

Income related factors – e.g. affordability of equipment

“..a particular behaviour is no longer based on reason, but is elicited automatically based on certain..cues or contexts”.

Interventions to improve food safety

Few studies assess the impact of interventions to improve food safety practices and there is little evidence that advice can influence behaviour.

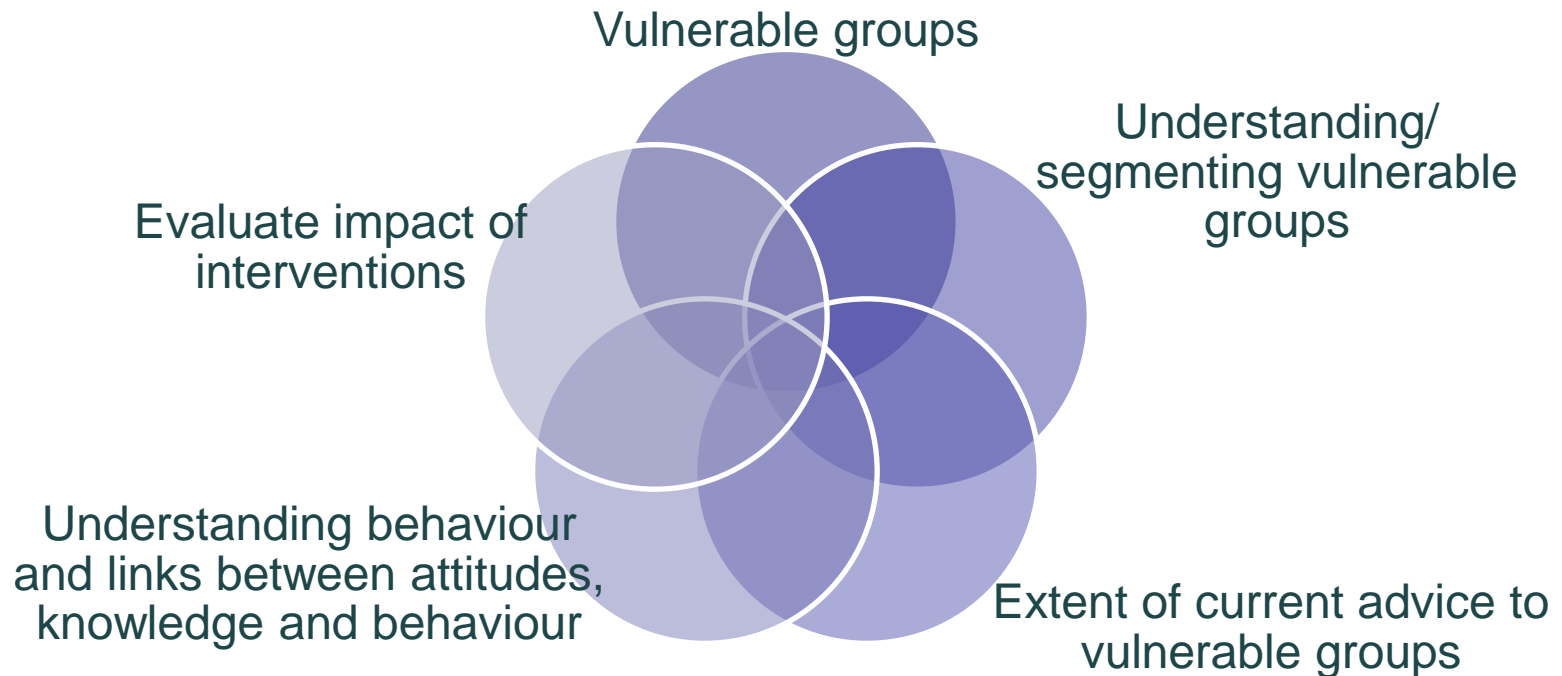
Theory applied to conclude that the following will be important in influencing behaviour:

- Help people recognise unsafe behaviours and consequences
- Recognise if people feel they are not susceptible and raise profile of risks (severity of harm if don't change behaviour)
- Demonstrate the benefits of changing behaviours
- Ensure people feel confident that they can implement the change
- Ensure behaviours appear credible
- Ensure the source of advice is credible

Advice should be specific (but avoiding “it’s not me” is tricky)

Targeted advice to vulnerable groups via relevant HCP

Future research priorities



Food and You update

- Wave 2 currently “in field”
- 45 minutes:
 - ☺ Eating habits, including eating out of the home
 - ☺ Shopping habits
 - ☺ Food safety, including cooking/preparing food at home
 - ☺ Food production, including attitudes to food technologies
 - ☺ Health
 - ☺ Healthy eating (Scotland and Northern Ireland only)
- Analysis:
 - Change over time
 - Cross section and combining sub group data

Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Development

Pilot

Fieldwork

Analysis

Reporting

Wave 1 highlights

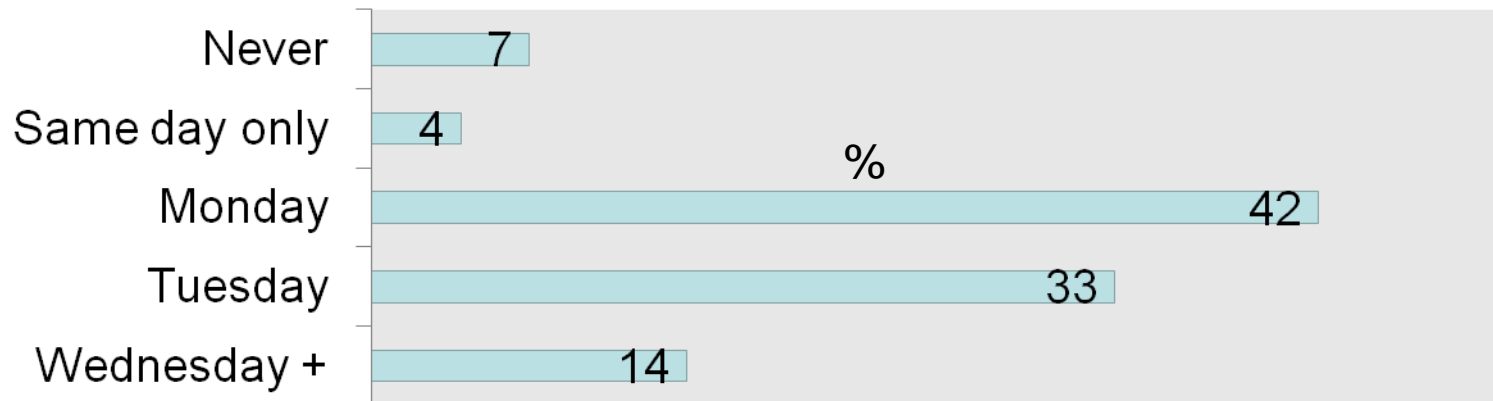
- Majority reported food safety behaviours in line with FSA advice
- Some potential risks highlighted: fridge temperatures, adherence to date labelling, washing raw meat
- Food safety considered higher risk out of home
- Reliance on visual indicators of safety
- Contextual findings on eating/shopping practices

Food Safety Week 2012: “food safety on a budget”

81% think food prices have gone up

- 20% reported cooking at home more
- 12% reported spending more on household groceries
- 13% reported making more packed lunches

When would you eat Sunday left overs?



48% always avoid throwing food away

Kitchen Practices: In home study

University of Hertfordshire with Newcastle University

18+ case study households across the UK

Ethnographic approach, underpinned by “practice theory”

Trialling activity recognition and temperature devices

Pilot study of 6 households refined the approach

External advisory group and SSRC input

Final outputs Spring 2013 : Workshop of findings in March

Attitudes to lactic acid and other treatments: Survey research



GfK NOP



Understanding public attitudes to decontamination treatments pre purchase



Quantitative to build on previous citizen forums



Extensive work to develop questions that make sense



Lactic acid focus but comparison to other treatments



Results summer 2012

Presenting uncertainty: SSRC advice paper

Prof Gene Rowe discussion paper for COT

SSRC discussed different perspectives

Advice paper produced on practical issues

- Even the best strategies will not work for everyone
- Numerical and verbal quantifiers subject to interpretation based on social context
- Vital to understand how risk/uncertainty understood by relevant parties before communicating
- This understanding should underpin RA and RM

SSRC happy to discuss with other SACs