

Ministry of Food Interim Evaluation Dec 2009

Summary

The primary purpose of the Ministry of Food (MOF) project, which was launched in 2008, was to help encourage better habits concerning attitude to food and dietary health. The project has delivered a series of 10 week courses to a broad range of participants. The courses were developed and delivered via a partnership between NHS Rotherham and RMBC and builds upon the original MOF 'Pass it on' concept.

The first 12 months of this project has concentrated on delivering the courses to as many participants as possible and provides two key challenges. These are; maintaining momentum after the 'celebrity effect' has waned and secondly to evaluate longer term impacts.

This interim evaluation presents an opportunity for taking stock of the current project achievements after the initial 10 week course phase is complete. It is expected that the report findings will help provide useful information when moving into the next phase of the project evaluation. This involves contacting participants again at the 6 and the 12 month stages and will help establish what kind of longer term benefits the courses might have fostered.

The framework for this evaluation is based upon the 'Stages of Change' model provided by NHS Rotherham. The model helps identify the various stages which a participant moves through as they progress toward a healthier diet. The model is useful for tracking longer term change rather than just immediate impacts and will also be an essential help in preparing for the telephone interviews at the 6 and 12 month contact stages.

This interim evaluation provides database analysis of the questionnaires collected at both the start and end of the course. A breakdown of the most common types of change experienced by the participants was established through Stages of Change model. Interpretation of this can help illustrate some of the potential future challenges for maintaining good dietary habits.