



**Strengthening food work across minority ethnic communities
Notes of Meeting held Wednesday 24 Aug 2011 Edinburgh**

Present: Trishna Singh (Sikh San Jog), Lyndsey McLellan (Edinburgh Community Food Training Hub), Jennifer Bell, Sonia Khaila (Edinburgh Community Food), Khalida Hussain (CORE), Mandy Bruce (Edinburgh Community Food), Sue Rawcliffe (CFHS)

Background

Sue covered the background to the meeting:-

- The mapping study of food and health activities across minority ethnic communities commissioned from REACH Community Health Project in 2009.
- Funding of 4 healthier food pilots working on food with minority ethnic communities
- Launch of the Mapping research in December 2010
- Funding for REHIS training for organisations working with parents and young children from minority ethnic communities spring 2011

All of these initiatives had highlighted the need for better information sharing, resources and networking to support food work. This has now been written into the CFHS business plan for 2011-12 with some development time and resources attached to it. The aim of the meeting was to gather views on how best to use these resources to strengthen food work across minority ethnic communities.

Discussion

Training

This was identified as a key priority. Discussion centred on basic training in food and health, food hygiene, customer care and customer service. Many of these courses are available via the training Hub and Lyndsey encouraged people to let her know what they are looking for. The hub can also publish a list of courses that are taking place across Edinburgh and make this available on their website. Some of the difficulties of releasing people for training were discussed. There was also interest in what was seen as 'next level' training – training that would allow volunteers and sessional staff to further their development. Sue highlighted training opportunities that are available via the CFHS learning and development programme.

Pooling Volunteers

This was an area where everyone felt there was room for collaboration. Once volunteers have been trained there is potential for sharing volunteers across different projects. This would support projects while at the same time widening experience for volunteers.

Lyndsey informed the group that the community cafe network in Edinburgh are already exploring this idea and are trying out arrangements. Once this is up and running it could be extended to other groups.

Funding Information

Organisations need information on different sources of funding that might be available to support their food work. Everyone spoke of the difficulties of short term project funding and the need for information on development funding and where and how to access larger source of funding. There is some information on the CFHS website. This is currently being looked at and updated. **Action CFHS**

Resources

There is a need for more resources to support food activities across different minority ethnic communities. Organisations need to know where to access general information on setting up classes, training, and food hygiene. There is also a need for materials tailored to different communities. Everyone was aware of the Kush Dil recipe book – Chat and Chaat and also the Mehip calendar that includes recipes. Everyone felt that they would be willing to share recipes. Sikh Sanjog has recently been asked for gluten free food. Lyndsey offered help if groups need specialist support from the staff in ECF.

It was felt that it is useful to have resources/ information available in a printed version. Some organisations would use on line resources but not all. Equally it could be useful to develop materials in local areas and network this nationally through CFHS and the CFHS website.

Sources of cheap healthy food were an area where information could be usefully shared. Lyndsey explained what was available from ECF.

Action: Sue and Lyndsey to think about this further.

Networking

There was discussion about future networking. Lyndsey spoke about the local groups that the Training hub had set up. These had not worked as well as had been hoped and they were now looking to set up themed groups. The hub could look at a themed group around work across minority ethnic communities. Organisations welcomed the idea of networking with other organisations in their area involved in similar work. The opportunity to network on a wider national basis was also of interest although may prove more difficult given shortages of staff and resources.

Moving Forward

Sue thanked everyone for their time and input into the meeting.

A further meeting is being held with organisations in Glasgow on 25 August. Sue will write up and circulate notes from both meetings. They will also be available on the website for any organisations that were unable to make the meetings to comment on. Based on what has come from both meetings, CFHS will look at what can be taken forward given the time and resources available. This will be shared with everyone who has been involved.