

# An introduction to the Better Care Programme



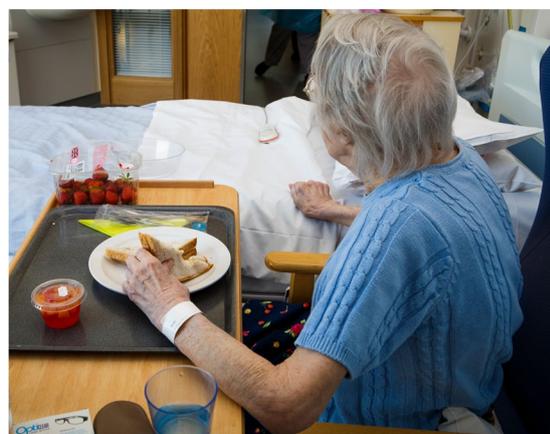
## Overview

The Food for Life Better Care programme is funded by the Big Lottery and aims to harness the power of good food to improve the health and wellbeing of older people and bring communities together to reduce loneliness. We want to co-design solutions with older people and their carers and evaluate the potential for good food to be a good investment for the UK's challenged health and care system.

The project will take place in three locations across England and Scotland: Edinburgh; Calderdale & Kirklees and Leicester & Leicestershire. We will work with older people, their carers and families, statutory health and social care bodies, care home providers, hospitals, NGOs and third sector and volunteer organisations.

## Test and learn approach

The three locations will take an iterative test-and-learn approach. Planning and delivery will be informed by an on-going process of ethnographic research and co-design, with flexibility to trial different interventions in the three locations.



## Common delivery elements may include:

- 1. Older people in the community:** undertaking ethnographic research and co-design to develop training and broader food support packages for older people and their home carers, families and volunteers. Exploring the support available for older people to connect and contribute to their communities in schools, lunch clubs, communal food growing and city farms.
- 2. Care settings:** building on our award-winning partnership with Inch View Care Home to involve residents, care staff, families and volunteers in our whole setting approach to food, including Food for Life Served Here award, therapeutic food activities and intergenerational links.
- 3. Hospitals:** engaging management, staff and volunteers to explore communal dining as well as ways to improve nutritional support following a hospital stay.



## Our expertise:

**Our Local Programme Team** are experts in the field and have extensive experience working closely with local authorities, schools and hospitals allowing them to bring practical skills and advice to care settings. They will lead on local stakeholder engagement, project planning, older people engagement as well as care setting recruitment.

**Our National Specialist Advisors** will lead on evaluation, ethnographic research, service design projects, specialist training workshops and follow-up support. The team includes;

- **Joanna Lewis**, our Strategy & Policy Director, founded the Food for Life Catering Mark in 2007, and now advises the independent Food for Life Catering Mark Standards Committee.
- **Dr Susannah McWilliam**, our Programme Manager, leads our hospitals work and sat on the Hospital Food Standards Panel's expert reference groups on sustainability and healthy eating.
- **Elizabeth Atherton**, our Hospital Advisor, is a registered Dietitian, with an MSc in Public Health (health promotion). She started her career working in the NHS, specialising in Obesity Surgery.
- **Diana Hawdon**, our Nutrition and Care Advisor, is a Registered Dietitian, Public Health Nutritionist and qualified chef with experience addressing nutritional needs of older people in care settings.
- **Jane Sixsmith**, Head of Cooking Skills, works with care settings to develop cooking programmes, professional development and encourage a whole community approach to cooking.
- **Francesca Sanders**, our Head of Service Design, will focus on bringing the voice of the user into the design of services across for Better Care.
- **Amanda Donnelly**, our Research and Partnership Manager, manages research and evaluation for Food for Life working closely with independent researchers and commissioners/funders.



## Evaluation

The University of the West of England is leading the evaluation, collaborating widely and building on related research to ensure relevance across the UK.

Through the evaluation we are ultimately testing a hypothesis: if older people have better access to nutritious food, therapeutic food activities and shared mealtimes across care homes, community care services and hospitals, they will be less susceptible to malnutrition and loneliness and will enjoy enhanced health and wellbeing.

The evaluation will seek to build the evidence base for food interventions which improve health and wellbeing of older people, help people to connect and contribute to their communities, and ultimately demonstrate how food can be a good investment for the health and care system.