



Webinar
Wednesday June 17th
09:00 – 10.00 AM

Dr Clare Relton
Senior Lecturer in Clinical Trials
Pragmatic Clinical Trials Unit
Institute of Population Health Sciences
Queen Mary University of London (QMUL)
c.relton@qmul.ac.uk

Dr Megan Blake
Senior Lecturer in Geography
Department of Geography
University of Sheffield
m.blake@Sheffield.ac.uk

Hon Senior Research Fellow in Public Health
ScHARR
University of Sheffield



Barts and The London
School of Medicine and Dentistry

www.smd.qmul.ac.uk

Outline

- Background
- Developing and testing the idea
- Assessing the impact at scale
 - Plans
 - Challenges
 - Opportunities
- Questions

Background

- Food insecurity
- Diets
 - high energy-dense, nutrient poor, processed foods
 - low in fruit and vegetables
- Food production - environmental change
- Healthy Start scheme - decline

NIHR PHR research funding call

- 19/03 Systems approaches to local influences on food choices and diet (July, 2019)

Research Questions

- What are the impacts, including on inequalities in diet and health, of local campaigns encouraging healthy food choices through marketing or other means?
- What are the impacts of structural or policy interventions that aim to increase the availability of healthier foods at a local level?



NIHR | National Institute
for Health Research

- Weekly delivered vouchers (5 x £1)
- Redeemable with **local independent** fresh FV suppliers.
- Offered to **households** (not individuals)
- **All** households are eligible, regardless of size, type or income
- Households encouraged to share vouchers
- Included with vouchers
 - easy vegetable based recipes
 - brief recipe related nutritional information
 - healthy eating messages
 - information on relevant services, assets & initiatives

FRESH STREET

A feasibility study of a household cash transfer scheme for fresh fruit and vegetables in the North of England

Sept 2017- Feb 2019



Developing and testing the idea

Vouchers for fresh fruit and veg

- *Can we develop area based scheme?*
- *What will it look like? (value, timing, voucher type, delivery)*
- *Is it feasible to deliver, reach target population, how measure impact*
- *How might it work with everything else?*

Community consultation

- Area (streets)
- Households **not individuals**
- **All** households (not just those on benefit)
- 5 x £1 vouchers every week
- Redeemable at **local** FV shop & market FV stalls
- Weekly recipes, healthy eating messages and nutritional information
- Efficient voucher redemption system



Signed up local suppliers



Laithes Lane '5-a-day' shop



Barnsley market stalls

Chose the streets



Laithes Crescent

Mostly elderly
couples and
singles



Clifton Avenue

Mostly
families



Bungalows with elderly singles / couples

Trowell Way

Mixed
demographics

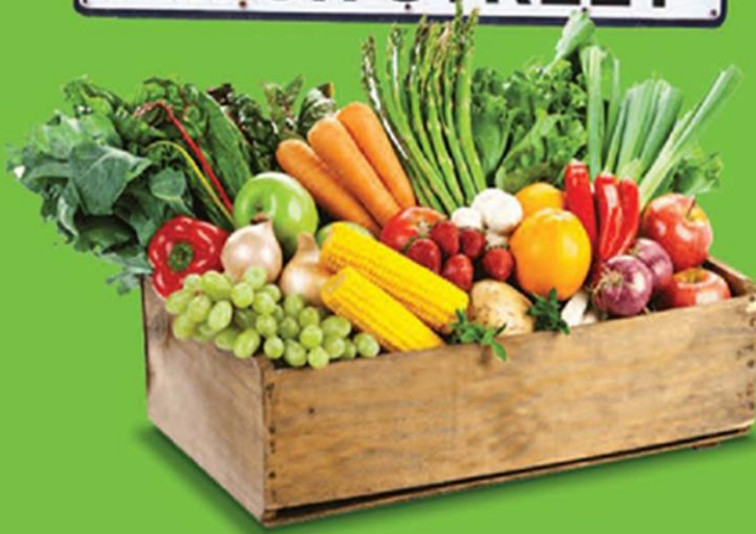


The Gateway

Mostly
young
families



FRESH STREET



VOUCHERS FOR LOCAL FRUIT
& VEGETABLES

*“The **more** fruit and veg we eat
(**especially veg**), the **healthier** we
are and the **longer** we **live**. **5**
portions of fresh fruit and veg a
day is good, **7** is even better!”*

Starting ...

- Four streets with 99 houses - 97 occupied
- Door knocked/ leaflets with information
- ... plus request to complete Health Questionnaire



- Barrier!.....

.... changing minds

- *neighbour at No.5 encouraged her to sign up*
- By week 8, 78 households joined
- People very positive
 - *‘brilliant’, ‘smashing’,*
 - *‘glad I was persuaded to sign-up’,*
 - *‘it’s a brilliant idea’,*

Extending the scheme

- Enough vouchers for 6 months



- Barnsley North Area Council

Households

- Four streets – 99 houses, 97 households
- 80 households joined
- Households included 141 adults & 63 children
- 32 two-person households (41%)
- 34 households (43%) with children under 18
 - one third were single-parent families

Vouchers

- 20,000 vouchers issued
- 89.3% redeemed
 - 70% Local shop
 - 30% Market stalls

Impact on spending and eating

- Many reported **eating & spending more**
 - *"never had as much"*
- Some reported **trying more varieties**
 - *N didn't buy veg before but now ...eats more veg and is open to new things.*
- **Increasing or subsidising?**
 - *saving money and eating a bit more veg*

Thinking, prompting, helping

- *Because it's free they get veg and because the veg is there they eat more.*
- *Vouchers are a big **help** to cost*
- *She kept saying it's not about the value of the vouchers, but the **vouchers reminded her buy FV** because she felt like she had to spend them.*
- *Having the vouchers got him thinking more - **spurred him on** to eat more veg*

Health

- Many mentioned **health conditions** (themselves or family members) (*diabetes, heart disease, acid reflux, stomach ulcer etc*) and **health related behaviours** (smoking, dieting, slimming world, dancing).
- Some describe how the **vouchers had helped them improve their health**.
 - *her hair is better, her nails are better. Doesn't get so many mood swings as used to. Keratin in veg helps.*
 - *Has **more energy** - puts that down to eating more veg*
 - *Vouchers got her thinking about the importance of eating healthily, so she decided to join slimming World and **lost over 2.5stone***
 - *He's lost 4kg in last few weeks since vouchers started. Thought they already had a healthy diet but this has made him **think more**.*

Supermarkets, markets and shops

- Many reported **new purchasing patterns** – local shops and FV stalls at Barnsley market instead of supermarkets.
 - *Spend vouchers at both markets and the FV shop, didn't shop there before.*
 - *Doesn't get FV from Asda anymore - it doesn't last.*
 - *Bought FV in supermarket prior to vouchers. Now going to market more and seeing more on display.*

Recipes

- Many mentioned using the recipes
 - *Has used some and a friend uses them as well.*
 - *Most recipes are not new to her but it makes her think "it's a long time since I did that"*
 - *Likes the soup recipes and shares them out*
 - *Has tried some - can't eat garlic and avoids spices*
 - *Made the Bacon and Cabbage but NOT the nettle soup!*

Sharing the vouchers

- Sharing with other family members
 - *£5 good amount, use them all up but can save some up too if needs too. Plans to give some to the family member hosting Christmas*
 - *£5 just right, but will share with daughter if has some leftover*
 - *...any spare she gives to daughter*
- Not sharing
 - *Uses all self, has not shared. £5 is about right - enough to make a difference*

Social interactions

- Helping others with cooking
 - *She has cooked with her son and made him more aware of the importance of fruit and veg*
- Shopping together, reducing isolation
 - *B at number 6 started taking her shopping in the car called at the greengrocer on the way back and spent £7.*

When the vouchers stop?

- Many said they would continue
 - *Will carry on buying the same amount of veg - used to getting vouchers and have got into routine of going to get veg.*
 - *"Never going back"- wants to carry on this healthy lifestyle and not put the weight back on*
- Others would cut back
 - *Won't buy as much fresh veg. Will use more frozen and buy fruit just for kids.*
 - *Will have to reduce the amount she buys*

Food desert



- Gleadless Valley - food desert



Veg bags

- *“It was delicious, especially the carrots which tasted like real carrots Fantastic flavour!”*
- Most preferred to **choose** their own fruit and veg. e.g.
 - *“got a veg bag at Christmas but didn't like some of the things in it. I prefer being able to pick myself”.*

Local Healthy Food System Resilience

Traditional food desert interventions focus on supply, giving tax incentives to multi-national vendors.

Low profitability on fruit and veg, because of shelf life. Without demand support, disappear from shelves.

But Fresh Street:

- Creates local demand for produce by increasing capacity of consumers to purchase fruit and veg. (demand driven)
- Creates a stable and consistent market for local vendors, keeping money in the region.
 - People in Sheffield described going to market to get F/V and then visiting other market traders.
- Area-based approach reduced stigma b/c no barriers to entry, everyone receives so doesn't single out.
- Builds community networks—With neighbors and vendors



NIHR | National Institute
for Health Research

- Cluster randomised controlled trial of the benefits of a place-based, household-level subsidy for fresh fruit and vegetables on diet, health and the wider environment
- <https://freshstreet.uk/>



Team

- Clare Relton (QMUL)
- Megan Blake (Sheffield)
- Jean Adams (Cambridge)
- Steph Taylor (QMUL)
- Rupert Suckling (Doncaster)
- Bobby Mihaylova (QMUL)
- Sally Kerry (QMUL)
- Chris Griffiths (QMUL)
- Jonathan Pauling (Alexandra Rose)
- Kevin Williamson (Doncaster)
- Esther Hall (East Riding)



Generate evidence

Broad range of interconnected challenges for UK public health nutrition

- diet quality
- consumption of FV and red meat
- food insecurity
- health, health related behaviours, life satisfaction,, health service use
- broader social and physical environment
- resources and costs
- impact on household total FV costs
- unintended consequences
- refine the logic model for the intervention
- Synergies



Challenges

- Scale
- Funding the vouchers
- Evaluation: impact on diet quality and health, and the resiliency of communities and food systems





Opportunities

- Explore ways to transition to healthier and fairer food system
- Support local community assets
- Strengthen community resilience
- Evaluation of public health interventions (including nutrition)
- Questions

