

Nutrition North – Regional Nutrition Research Collaborative

Tuesday 23rd April 2024

9.45am - 3.30pm

University of Leeds

School of Food Science & Nutrition

Willow Terrace

Leeds, LS2 9JT

Agenda

Item	Topic	Led By
	<i>Reception and Coffee</i>	BM/KT
	<i>Tour of Food Science in Leeds</i> Led by Miles Ratcliffe (MR), Technical Manager, University of Leeds.	BM/KT/MR
	<u>General Council Meeting</u>	
1	Welcome and structure of the day	BC
2	Update from NHSA and opportunities for Nutrition North	SH/AD
3	Report on Nutrition and health in North of England: Update and recommendations	AL/IB
4	Update on NutSoc Regional SIG	AL
5	Developing interactions with IFST and BDA	All
6	Opportunities for P2P and P2B interactions via NHSA	BC/SH/AD
7	Formalising Nutrition North structures and reporting	BC
	<i>Lunch & Networking</i>	
8	Workstream activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NutSoc and Nutrition North Engagement Careers Event Feedback	BC/AL IB/JP
9	Project Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School/Children's diet Fibre and breast cancer outcomes Feedback	CE KT
	<i>Coffee and Close of Meeting</i>	

Meeting Notes and Actions

In Attendance:

Chair: Bernard Corfe (BC), Newcastle University
Paul Gately (PG), Leeds Beckett University
Iain Brownlee (IB), Northumbria University
Charlotte Evans (CE), Purple Nutrition
Jenny Paxman (JP), Sheffield Hallam University
Amelia Lake (AL), Teesside University
Swarnim Gupta (SG), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Bernadette Moore (BM), University of Leeds
Kieran Tuohy (KT), University of Leeds
John McLaughlin (JM), University of Manchester
Ruth Boston (RBo), Senior Communications Manager, The NHSA
Alexis Darby (AD), Senior Public Affairs Manager, The NHSA
Sarah Hill (SH), Project Manager, The NHSA

Apologies:

Charmele Ayadurai (CA), Durham University
Carolyn Summerbell (CS), Durham University
Julie Abayomi (JA), Edge Hill University
Tom Butler (TB), Edge Hill University
Nicola Calder (NC), Food Active
Heather Brown (HB), Lancaster University
Bruce Hollingsworth (BH), Lancaster University
Leo Stevenson (LS), Liverpool Hope University
Richard Webb (RW), Liverpool Hope University
Ian Davies (ID), Liverpool John Moores University
Frances Hillier-Brown (FHB), Newcastle University
Fiona Malcolmson (FM), Newcastle University
Marti Vitale (MV), Northumbria University
Aliya Porter (AP), Porter Nutrition
Kevin Williamson (KW), Rotherham, Doncaster & South Humber NHS FT (RDaSH)
Lucie Nield (LN), Sheffield Hallam University
Jo Smith (JS), Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS FT
Jibin He (JH), Teesside University
Helen Moore (HM), Teesside University
Bojlul Bahar (BB), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Marena Ceballos Rasgado (MCR), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Stephanie Dillon (SD), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Nicola Lowe (NL), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Victoria Moran (VM), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Jan Mei Soon-Sinclair (JSS), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

Carol Wallace (CW), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Basma Ellahi (BE), University of Chester
Sohail Mushtaq (SM), University of Chester
Emma Boyland (EB), University of Liverpool
Charlotte Hardman (CH), University of Liverpool
Masoud Isanejad (MI), University of Liverpool
Robert Akparibo (RA), University of Sheffield
Samantha Caton (SC), University of Sheffield
Liz Williams (LW), University of Sheffield
Farzad Amirabdollahian (FA), University of Wolverhampton
Maria Bryant (MB), University of York

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome & Introductions

BC opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. BC also thanked MR, BM and KT for an excellent tour of the Food Science department and facilities in Leeds.

2. Update from NHSA and opportunities for Nutrition North

Ruth Boston (RBo), Head of Communications at the NHSA and Alexis Darby (AD), Head of Public Affairs at the NHSA introduced themselves to the group. SH explained that the NHSA update and the opportunities for Nutrition North were related to the Nutrition North Report publication and could therefore be discussed as part of the next agenda item.

3. Report on Nutrition and health in North of England: Update and recommendations

IB updated the group on the progress of the report which uses an evidence-based approach to look at what the key problems are in the North of England (NoE).

Topics included: Food landscape, Health challenges, Food environment and production, Overarching recommendations

IB noted that they were obviously keen to not repeat any other reports.

IB further noted that this would be very general paper but could set the ball rolling on more specific projects and publications e.g. Dentistry, Y6 obesity

i. Summary of report content:

Dietary habit in the NoE is generally worse than the England average.

Fibre intake is worse across all 3 regions.

NoE has High Sodium and Low calcium diet

Most health indicators are in the bottom third across the NoE

Link between poor diet in the NoE and poor health outcomes in the NoE.

ii. What the report needs:

Further content ideas and volunteers to write this content.

Must remain in scope (relate to problems affecting the north)

Case studies that align with the content to date, from the NoE, council-led, food industry, research informed.

Eg. What has been done at council level, research level or industry level in attempt to deal with problem (eg obesity)

Eg. Gateshead, fast food, published example. This is an example of what can work.

What does the food industry landscape look like and what is food industry doing – re-formulation etc.

BM suggested some small community-oriented case studies. IB agreed that these would still show success in NoE and would act as direct evidence of what could be solved.

ACTION (IB/SH/All): IB and SH to email group and request submission of case studies for the “Nutrition in the North” report

iii. NNSA Communications

RBo commented that the report sounded great and advised the group from an NNSA Communications perspective:

- The BBC would be interested as long as it is strongly linked to health
- From a media perspective case studies are definitely important. The case studies can be small but they need to show a solution. Multiple case studies across the region would be preferable.
- Local media outlets will like region specific data.
- Topics that could come up in an interview (eg. The group had mentioned Ultra-processed foods) would need answers prepared in advanced.
- The Labour party conference (September 2024) would be an important timeline.

iv. NNSA Public Affairs

AD added that the NNSA Public Affairs team can help inform who to send this report to (e.g. Local MPs, ministers and shadow ministers).

She spoke about how things are done for “The Child of the North” and recommended 4 areas of interest to local MPs:

- Reducing food insecurity is topical
- Improved dietary monitoring at regional level
- Improving health outcomes for North. Link to devolution
- Improving nutritional quality of foods in north

BC agreed with the need to anticipate likely criticism.

AL further agreed that the group wants media interest and political interest.

BC asked for volunteers to help move the report draft to a more final stage.

BM happy to help, MB has previously offered help, Michelle Morris was also suggested by the group as a good person to contact.

ACTION (BM): To connect AL and IB with Michelle Morris to help move report from draft stage to final version

v. The Labour Party Conference

AD added that if an event focused on one of the 4 recommendations mentioned above was held at the Labour party conference, then a lot of councils would attend and pay attention. All the Northern mayors should be interested in this. Oliver Coppard (Mayor of South Yorkshire) particularly wants to improve healthy life expectancy.

AD suggested that when the report was ready enough to pull out recommendations then the NHTA Public Affairs team can break it down into practical proposals for mayors, parliament etc.

AD also explained the NHTA **Labour Party Conference** plans in more detail.

Last year the NHTA event was a big success, so events will be held on 2 days this year: 22nd and 23rd September 2024. It is a great opportunity to start building relationships.

ACTION (BC/AL/IB/JM): To consider holding an event at the labour party conference in Liverpool in September 2024 – the NHTA has venues booked for 22nd and 23rd September 2024.

ACTION (AD): to contact the group with the costs of labour party conference event packages once they are finalised.

ACTION (BC): to explore whether the Nutrition APPG would want to be involved.

vi. A collective message

The group agreed on the importance of crafting a message as a collective.

They discussed advertising to children. JP is currently working with industry to produce sugar and salt low food to provide for school meals.

PG commented that there are several big food companies in North and we need to engage with them better. Economy is primary driver. Working with Sainsbury's on food insecurity and shopping habits has produced very helpful data. The factories of big food companies are working to explore their place in food community. Food manufacturers in the NoE feel under fire. We know it is more complicated than just a binary view of good and bad food so how can we balance this. Big economic opportunities balanced against healthy eating. Food economy aligned with healthy diet would be a good line to follow.

BC suggested that this could be a second report: **“Structural holistic change in the region that would attract investment and improve health”**.

PG agreed with BC. The food system is not right but saying it is all bad is not helpful. Nutrition North could be the pipeline for improving this in a helpful way.

vii. Report Timeline

RBo confirmed a report timeline. If Nutrition North wanted to be ready for the Labour Party Conference this year, then (to allow for report design and printing) the finished draft would need to be ready by the beginning of July 2024.

IB observed that, with the short timeline, the group would need to rationalise what they want to achieve in the first report and use it to set the scene for future reports rather than over-reach.

AL also commented on the House of Lords event where a number of northern nutritionists were speakers – AL asked whether any publicity around that was worth doing in advance of the report publication.

AD and RBo responded that it would be good material for a blog or could go in the NHSA newsletter.

ACTION (AL): To discuss House of Lords event with NHSA comms team for possible blog or article in NHSA newsletter

BC thanked IB/AL and AD/RB for their work and contributions.

4. Update on NutSoc Regional SIG

AL reported that the first regional group for NutSoc had been set up. The core working team includes Charlotte Evans (CE), Fiona Malcolmson (FM), Liz Williams (LW), Iain Brownlee (IB), Amelia Lake (AL) and Bernard Corfe (BC). The aims of the group overlap strongly with Nutrition North, but also include plans to train Early Career Researchers (ECRs). AL commented on the challenges communicating with membership across a region because it has never been done before within NutSoc.

5. Developing interactions with IFST and BDA

6. Opportunities for P2P and P2B interactions via NHSA

The group left these discussions for a future meeting and moved onto the next agenda item.

7. Formalising Nutrition North structures and reporting

BC addressed the group and commented that the structure of Nutrition North had been a very loose and informal process so far. It has however, now become quite a large group and so a structure needs to be formalised in order to manage future work and meetings. Nutrition North has an executive committee for central decision making and then a general council where each member institution nominates 2 people to attend and represent their organisation. These council attendees then take issues from the general meeting back to their colleagues.

The group approved of the overall model and discussed navigating and expanding membership to include organisations such as:

- Non-Higher Educational Institutions
- NutSoc
- Corporate individuals
- Industry members.

The group concluded the morning discussions and adjourned for lunch

8. Workstream Activity

BC introduced the discussion on workstream activities and added that the proposed careers events and webinar series are about generating revenue and raising profile.

viii. Webinars

BC explained that Sohail Mushtaq (SM) had done lot of work initially but then lost Kevin Williamson (KW) from the group. BC asked for volunteers to support SM to generate a portfolio of webinars and potentially also look for industry sponsorship (which would be discussed properly at a general council meeting)

ACTION (KT/BM): To support SM with webinar work programme. KT and BM also nominated Sarah Gu & Christine Bosch.

ACTION (SH): To add Sarah Gu and Christine Bosch to the Nutrition North mailing list

ix. Careers

IB/JP gave an update on the progress of the careers event programme but commented that they need to know what the offer is for industry before they can go any further. A general plan exists but it needs more established relationships with employers, and we need to more widely understand what industry wants.

The group discussed the challenges and what might be needed and whether a new government might make a difference.

A list of northern employers was suggested.

KT noted that if the webinars were industry sponsored then this relationship with industry could flow through to a careers event.

The group also suggested NHSA mediation between Nutrition North and Industry – to help match industry funding and areas of nutritional need.

ACTION (SH): To speak about NHSA industry mediation to Dr Ben Martyn, Executive Lead for Investment and International Partnerships at the NHSA and invite him to the next general council meeting.

9. Project Activity:

BC opened the discussion on Nutrition North meta projects, done at a regional level, that aim to lead to compelling change and investment in the region. Two projects reflect themes that have also been identified in the Nutrition North report:

x. School & Childhood Nutrition

CE explained the idea of research into food environments that children occupy. There is a huge amount of expertise on this in the north. The quality of school meals has been in the news again recently. Fast food marketing and advertising are also very topical. These topics can be covered easily and historically have been covered well in the North.

Need to isolate 2 or 3 main areas that we could build on and put together a strong funding application as a northern body.

3 pillars of health and inequalities and sustainable diets. The North could be a leader in transition to greener and healthier nutrition.

AL remarked on the Gateshead Millennial cohort. Free school meals, holiday club meals. IB and Prof Greta Defeyter have been working on standards that no school currently meets.

IB need to think more holistically about what would be ideal.

xi. Fibre and Breast Cancer Survival

KT spoke about possible projects on Fibre intake and Breast cancer survivorship.

Discussion included: Microbiome and the breast, Epidemiology, UK Biobank, Patient population, identifying cohorts, Pre-clinical models.

Potential PhD projects and NIHR grant applications were also discussed.

10. Closing discussion

BC thanked everyone for coming and for all their contribution.

With no further business, the meeting was closed.

List of Actions

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2. **ACTION (BM):** To connect AL with Michelle Morris to help move report from draft stage to final version
3. **ACTION (BC/AL/IB/JM):** To consider holding an event at the labour party conference in Liverpool in September 2024 – the NHSA has venues booked for 22nd and 23rd September 2024.
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