

Kitchen Life 2 Proposition

Behaviours and Practices

Summary

This paper is for information and discussion. It sets out some initial ideas for an ACSS working group exploring working practices in the FSA, and consumer behaviours in kitchens. The Committee is invited to discuss options to best support and inform the FSA's work in these areas.

Background

The FSA is currently embarking on work in two key areas, both focusing on human behaviours and practices.

Firstly, we are embarking on a large programme of work (over the next 3 years) exploring behaviours in kitchens (both domestic and commercial). Estimates indicate that the burden of foodborne disease in the UK is £9.1 billion, and 2.4 million people suffer from a foodborne disease every year. Human behaviour around handling food is one of the key factors in the risk of foodborne disease. This research will use a practices approach to examine peoples' attitudes, behaviours, the role of the kitchen itself, and how these are all interconnected.

Secondly, we are conducting research into working practices – in particular, focusing on manager and staff behaviours in terms of working more innovatively, flexibly, and, in light of increased working from home, how we can use digital technologies to our best advantage. This includes how we might increase the use of video settings on calls.

Objective/Scope

The main objective of the working group will be to provide impartial advice, peer review and steering on both of these projects. In particular:

For “behaviours in kitchens”, potential areas where the working groups’ expertise will be required might be:

- on the most appropriate theoretical framework for the study
- on the methodologies used for the study (including initial literature review and scoping work, primary research including ethnographic approaches, and behavioural interventions)
- on reviewing the research materials and outputs of the research
- on engaging with policy and ensuring the research has impact

For “working practices”, potential areas where the working group’s expertise will be required might be:

- on appropriate search terms for a literature review
- on potential case studies of effective working practices
- on reviewing the outputs of the research
- on designing an internal trial to explore the impact of using video vs. voice call

Potential impact

Both pieces of research will have wide-reaching impact. The “behaviours in kitchens” project will enable us to understand what really happens in practice and how often, where and why and with whom, and to develop and test recommendations for how we might change food hygiene practices. This will provide data for risk assessment modelling, which is currently based on reported (rather than actual) behaviour, and on research conducted overseas. We hope that this research will enable us to conduct field trials, which will enable us to better understand how to change consumer and business behaviour and improve food safety.

The “working practices” project will enable us to understand the behaviours necessary for improving working practices within the organisation. Although there is much evidence in existence about what constitutes effective working practices, we want to understand how to apply theory to practice and how to make real changes in the organisation. This could have impacts on both productivity, wellbeing in the workplace, and relationships between colleagues.

Discussion

The Committee is invited to discuss:

- whether the ACSS has the knowledge/skill base to fulfil the overall objective of the working group;
- whether an ACSS working group would be a good model to provide the advice required by the FSA, and whether it would be more suited to 2 separate working groups

Update: Following presentation of this paper at an ACSS meeting on the 15th October 2020, the committee agreed that a new working group be created to address 'Behaviours in Kitchens' and the group was subsequently set up to guide the Kitchen Life 2 project.