

**Executive Summary**  
**Food Train partnership with University of Glasgow,**  
**School of Education**  
**Part of the Eat Well Age Well Project (Big Lottery funded)**  
**February 2019- February 2020 (12 months)**

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***Title of Project: Assessing older adults' nutritional and wellbeing outcomes associated with ageing in place with supported food accessibility: A mixed-methods, biopsychosocial analysis***

Project Summary

Despite significant changes and improvements in awareness of malnutrition, as well as in nutritional screening practice, older age malnutrition is common in the UK (BAPEN, 2014). The latest community-based data estimates 1 in 10 people over 65 are at risk of or suffering from preventable malnutrition, and is one of the key issues affecting the health of older people in Scotland and increases risk of unplanned or emergency hospital admission (Malnutrition Task Force, 2017)

University of Glasgow and Eat Well Age Well Project are working in conjunction with Food Train (grocery shopping, meal making social enterprise) in order to better explore the impact of the Food Train service for older adults at home, as they relate to outcomes spanning nutritional (malnutrition), physiological, mental wellbeing and social domains.

The research study aligns with the Eat Well Age Well (EAWW) big lottery funded project, where risk and prevalence of malnutrition for older people living at home (ageing in place) in Scotland can be tackled through research and evaluation, as well as other identified EAWW project strands such as informing policy and practice.

This research study offers a mixed method, cross-sectional design utilising both secondary and primary research data, where the receipt of food train services, primarily food delivery and meal making service, facilitated through a large volunteer network, is the primary comparator. We will compare older adults receiving the food train service (specifically food delivery and meal making service) with matched samples of older people who are not currently in receipt of Food Train delivery services.

We will survey older adults, in their own homes, across relevant bio-psycho-social domains, in particular 1) food insecurity, 2) physiological indicator of malnutrition (nutritional risk/MUST score), 3) Mental wellbeing and 4) Social connectedness and perceived loneliness. We will complement the standardised measures with a sub-sample of in-depth qualitative interviews (from the perspective of members of the service and volunteers who enable the service to operate) in order to explore the perceptions and experiences of food accessibility and the role of food in shaping, enabling and sustaining healthy ageing in place.

## Research Questions

The main research questions are;

1. What is the prevalence of **malnutrition** and perceived **food insecurity** for older age adults in Scotland, and what differences exist (if any) between those who a) live independently but receive weekly service from Food Train, b) live independently at home but do not received weekly service from Food Train, c) live in sheltered accommodation or other housing arrangement with access to food preparation services
2. How do measures of **well-being** and **social connectedness** vary across the sample and what differences exist (if any) between those who a) live independently but receive weekly service from Food Train, b) live independently at home but do not received weekly service from Food Train, c) live in sheltered accommodation or other housing arrangement with access to food preparation services?
3. What is the **lived experienced** for older people around food access and how does food access link to social isolation and loneliness within their lives

## Research Outcomes

1. Explore the impact of the food train service on key outcomes related to health and wellbeing for older persons utilising its services and incorporate comparison samples with older age adults who do not receive Food Train services
2. Cascade research findings directly to Food Train/EWAW and more widely within established networks & Scottish Government to inform and strengthen ongoing policy, service support and potential for onward expansion of Food Train services to areas not presently covered
3. Establish standardised systems for accurate and consistent data capture including GDPR complaint data management (useful for evaluation) of the impact of Food Train beyond the lifecycle of the research project
4. To establish an evidence base from which to build onward proposal for larger scale evaluation of the food train service