

What are the project's key objectives?

- To generate longitudinal, qualitative and quantitative scientific data on the relationship between food intake, nutritional well being, health and quality of life among older people.
- To understand the specific food procurement and consumption requirements of older men and women living alone as compared to those living with others.
- To compare data from two age groups (65-74 and over 75).
- To undertake active dissemination and consultation with stakeholders, thus enhancing older people's nutritional well being, health and quality of life through food and service provision.

What are the project's key deliverables?

- Comparative information (the role of foods, food acquisition, meal planning, meal preparation skills, social networks) between men and women living alone and with others; and in eight different countries in Northern, Southern and Eastern Europe.
- Consumer friendly tools to allow manufacturers and caterers to understand food choices and food procurement preferences and to enable health professionals to assess food-related quality of life in older people.
- New targeted ranges of food products and food services for older people, according to identified preferences.

The project workpackages

The work programme is divided into a series of components called workpackages (WPs) which are interrelated and interdependent. The project runs over a period of three years.

The results of the data collected in WPs 2-6 form the basis for the development of a tool to measure food related quality of life.

This tool will be used in a cross-sectional sample of older people from the eight participating countries to examine the relationship between food, nutritional well being, health and quality of life (WP7).

WP1: Project Management

WP2: Food selection in later life

WP3: Procuring foods and planning/preparing meals in later life

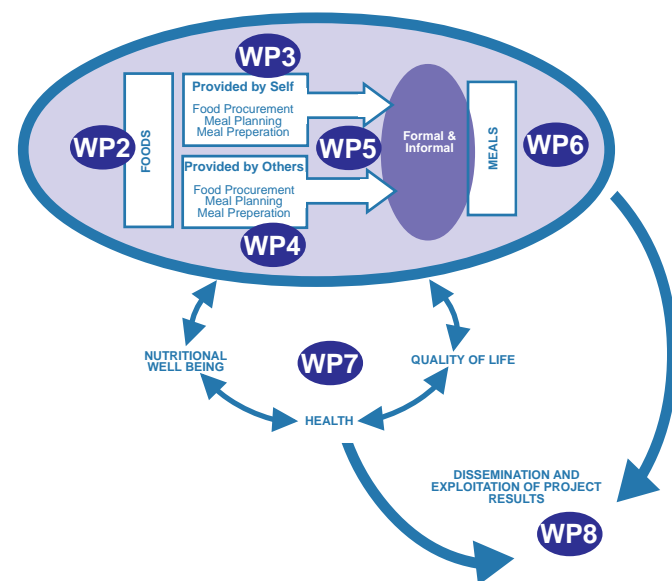
WP4: Satisfaction with food-related services available to seniors

WP5: The role of formal and informal networks in food procurement, preparation and consumption

WP6: Determining the role of meals in later life

WP7: Assessing senior's food-related quality of life

WP8: Dissemination and exploitation of project results



Contacting us

Address: University of Surrey
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7XH
UK

Tel: +44 1483 689431

Fax: +44 1483 689553

Email: m.raats@surrey.ac.uk or
m.lumbers@surrey.ac.uk

Web: www.foodinlaterlife.org

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Web: www.foodinlaterlife.org



Work-package 6 Leader Profile

Department of Public Health and Caring Sciences (PHCS) and the Department of Domestic Sciences (DDS) at Uppsala University

The research at the Department of Public Health and Caring Sciences (PHCS) at Uppsala University is multidisciplinary, and food and meal research is one important area. At present, the Department is carrying out studies on younger peoples' perceptions and attitudes to organic food, on older peoples' meal habits and on nutritional status in hospitals and wards.

The food and meal research at the Department of Domestic Sciences (DDS) at Uppsala University is multidisciplinary and focuses on peoples' food habits and dietary intake and how food, meals and food related activities are organised, perceived, valued, and included in daily life among people in private and public households.

PHCS and DDS are responsible for WP6 and are involved in all other WP's.

Birgitta Sidenvall is WP 6 leader and belongs to PHCS and also to Jönköping University, School of Health Sciences. Her main research interest is to understand food and meal habits from a cultural and caring perspective. She is involved in all WPs. Kerstin Gustafsson has studied food and meals particularly among older women from a cultural perspective. She is responsible for the qualitative and statistical analyses in all WPs. Christina Fjellström is the WP leader at DDS. Her main research interest is to understand food and meal habits from a cultural and social perspective. She is involved in all WPs.



Birgitta Sidenvall & Christina Fjellström

Ylva Mattsson Sydner has studied food and meals especially in the public sector care of the elderly. She is mostly responsible for the qualitative analyses in all WPs. Jenny Andersson has studied dietary intake and meals, particularly among older women. She is especially responsible for the statistical analyses in all WPs. Margaretha Nydahl has studied dietary and health aspects in older peoples' food. She is involved in all WPs. Further doctoral student Permillia Lundkvist is studying especially food and meals among older men in the project.

Focus on WP6: The meaning of meals

The overall objective of this WP is to study the role and meaning of meals from cultural, social and individual perspectives. As human beings we combine different food items into dishes eaten at different meals. Most people prefer to eat meals together with other people, rather than eating a solitary meal; they also favour eating, sitting down at a table laid with plates, than standing and eating out of a tin can. How and why do we do this? What do different meals or non-meals mean to us?

The lead partner on this WP is the Swedish team based at Department of Public Health and Caring Sciences and Department of Domestic Sciences at Uppsala University, led by Birgitta Sidenvall. The team is responsible for the one WP that solely uses qualitative methods such as the qualitative interview to analyse people's beliefs, attitudes and perceptions on food and meals. The main analysis of the results will be carried out in Uppsala. The team will illuminate the main categories, codes and themes that can be associated with meals and older people. The analysis will result in a number of questions for the food-related quality of life questionnaire that will be developed at the end of the project (WP7). The team has long experience of studies on dietary intake, food habits and meal perceptions among older people.

Interviews with older people

The main topics that our interviewees will be looking at: The concept of a meal; most wanted meals; and meal habits during lifetime. We hope that old people are willing to tell us in their own words what eating alone and together with others means to them. For example, what kind of food does a dinner comprise of? Could it be yoghurt, or is that food item strictly associated with breakfast in Sweden for example? How have their meal habits changed during their life cycle? Did they have a more strict meal pattern when their children were young? Did their meal routines change when they retired, or was it when they lost their wife/husband? How would the senior consumer describe an ideal meal - a meal that is eaten out or a traditional family meal?

We are interested in peoples' experiences of meals in every day life, just as well as meals associated with feasts and specific events. Qualitative research about food and meals requires the researcher to go beyond description and definition to reach meanings and symbols that are understood by the participants. Therefore each interview will be recorded and transcribed in order to analyse it properly. When interviewing a person for about one hour, it is impossible to remember everything that is said. Qualitative interviews are useful when the aim is to study peoples' own experiences, feelings, ideas and beliefs.

Meetings

Warsaw, Poland (Spring 2005)
Guildford, UK (Autumn 2005)

Report of Progress Meeting in Uppsala, Sweden 28-30 April, 2004

Publication policy

The meeting was attended by representatives of all project partners. The publication policy was discussed. It was agreed that "Food in Later Life Project Team" should be used as the author of papers to reflect the work done by the whole team. Over 20 papers have already been suggested and partners were encouraged to write outlines for these papers and to suggest other possible papers.

Work Package 2 – Food Selection in Later Life

All the data for this work package has now been collected and work has begun on developing the categories from the constructs. There have been some difficulties in grouping the constructs into categories, particularly in determining whether terms are being used with the same meanings by partners. It was agreed that the UK would work with INRAN to help to simplify the categories in English.

Work Package 3 - Procuring foods and planning/preparing meals in later life

All the required participants have been recruited (320) and the shopping and home interviews are nearly completed. There was some discussion on the level of detail required for the coding and the development of the themes.

Work Package 4 - Satisfaction with food-related services available to seniors

A review of services available to aid food procurement for older people is in progress with information on how these services are measuring satisfaction. A list of review questions was presented including what services are available, what policies and service specifications are used, cost and does user satisfaction play a role in service delivery and policy formation.

Work Package 5 - The role of formal and informal networks in food procurement, preparation and consumption

Half of the project partners have begun collecting data for their work packages. Sample shopping diaries and food consumption diaries were distributed to practice coding. There was some discussion on the variation of meal names used in different countries and it was agreed that a table elaborating the meaning and use of each would be compiled.

Work Package 6 - Determining the role of meals in later life

The theory/concept behind this work package is ethnography – what is the culture of the people. Partners divided into four groups to discuss a sample interview led by a member of the Uppsala team. It was agreed that there should be some themes common to all countries and sub-set specific to each country.

Work Package 7 - Food related Quality of Life

Discussion focused on what aspect of quality of life was being addressed by this work package and how subjective/objective it needed to be. The reliability and validity of the Satisfaction with Food Related Life Scale was discussed.

Dissemination

Conor Delahunty gave a presentation on how the EU project Health Sense had disseminated their findings and what they had learned. The next newsletter will be devoted to the work of the Dissemination and Exploitation Panel.

Presentations to Conferences

Danowska-Oziewicz M, Slowinska M, Cichon R, Szymelfejnik E, Walus A, Wadolowska L (2004) Economic restrictions and products intake structure by elderly people. Pilot study - SENIOR FOOD QOL project. Oral presentation at 2nd Congress "Food, Nutrition and Health in Poland integrated with European Union", Warsaw, Poland. 23-26 June 2004.

Danowska-Oziewicz M, Wadolowska L, Slowinska M, Cichon R (2004) Choosing foods, eating meals: sustaining independence and quality of life in old age. Poster presentation at Brokerage Event at 1st International Conference on Folate-Analysis, Bioavailability and Health, Warsaw Agricultural University, Warsaw, Poland, 11 February 2004.

Lumbers M, Raats M (2003) SENIOR FOOD QOL: a new European funded project. Poster presentation at the 5th Pangborn Sensory Science Symposium. Boston, Massachusetts, USA, 20-24 July 2003.

Lumbers M, Raats M (2003) SENIOR FOOD QOL: a new European funded project. Poster presentation at the ESRC Growing Older Programme Closing Conference. London, UK, 1 December 2003.

Mattsson-Sydener Y, Andersson J, Gustafsson K, Nydahl M, Sidenvall B, Fjellström C (2004) SENIOR FOOD QOL- Determining the role of meals in later life. Poster presentation at 8th Nordic Nutrition Conference, Tønsberg, Norway. 20-23 June 2004.

Nydahl M, Andersson J, Fjellström C, Gustafsson K, Mattsson Sydner Y, Sidenvall B (2004) Quality of life and management of living resources. Choosing foods, eating meals: sustaining independence and quality of life in old age - an EU funded project. Poster presentation at 8th Nordic Nutrition Conference, Tønsberg, Norway. 20-23 June 2004.

Raats M (2004) The role of food in older people's lives. Oral presentation at The BIG Food Debate - the Food and Health Conference for the South East, Lambourn, UK, 25 June 2004

Raats M, Lumbers M (2004) Sustaining independence and quality of life in old age through food and meals: An EU-funded project. Poster presentation at European Academy of Nutrition Sciences Conference 2004, Vienna, Austria, 14-15 May 2004

Roszkowski W, Brzozowska A, Kozłowska K (2003) Nutrition and the elderly - 5 European Commission. Poster presentation at the 7th Asia/Oceania Regional Congress of Gerontology. Tokyo, Japan, 24 - 28 November 2003 (abstract published in *Geriatrics & Gerontology international* 3(suppl.1): S129)

Slowinska M, Danowska-Oziewicz M, Cichon R, Szymelfejnik E, Walus A, Wadolowska L (2004) Meals-preparing skills and nutritional status of elderly people. Pilot study – SENIOR FOOD QOL project. Oral presentation at 2nd Congress "Food, Nutrition and Health in Poland integrated with European Union", Warsaw, Poland. 23-26 June 2004.

WP5: The role of formal and informal networks in food procurement, preparation and consumption

The overall objective of this WP is to determine the role of formal (e.g. food-related, social or health services) and informal (e.g. family, friends, neighbours) networks in enhancing health-promoting food provisioning and consumption among older people. The lead partner developed the Standard Protocol, of which the first draft was discussed at the second project meeting. The content of the Standard Protocol is in line with that described in the original proposal. Due to the data for WP5 and WP6 being collected in one interview with each participant, it was necessary for the lead partner to work closely together with the lead partner responsible for WP6. The two Standard Protocols need to form a coherent whole. Both teams carried out extensive pilot work to aid the development of the Standard Protocols. The techniques used include questionnaires (screening, background and SF-36), a 7-day food procurement diary, a 7-day food consumption diary, and interview at home which will elicit biographical information, e.g. family and friendship networks. A few adjustments are being made to the Standard Protocol and the final version was issued in early 2004.

Although there were some delays in producing the final version of the Standard Protocol we should be able to meet the deadline for data collection. In preparation for the data analysis phase of this WP, the lead partner, together with the WP6 lead partner, has been producing materials, giving demonstrations and leading workshops/discussions at project meetings to prepare all team members for the data analysis phase of the project. There are relatively few other projects from which we can draw experience of dealing with qualitative data sets the size of which we are collecting. To aid the process it has been agreed to use MAXqda, a computer programme for the systematic qualitative data analysis of textual data.

Work Package 7 leader profile

MAPP Centre for Research on Customer Relations in the Food Sector, Aarhus School of Business, Denmark

MAPP has conducted research on marketing-related problems in the food sector since 1991. Major areas of research have been consumer behaviour with regard to the purchase of food, decision-making of retailers, cooperation among suppliers and between suppliers and retailers in the food value chain, and the management of market-oriented product development in food companies. MAPP puts equal emphasis on academic excellence and practical relevance. In addition to aiming for academic excellence as mirrored in peer-reviewed publications, they therefore favour research in cooperation with companies and trade associations, and have conducted about 50 such projects since 1991. MAPP has also considerable experience in participating in EU framework projects, and is currently coordinating the consumer pillar for an Integrated Project under FP6 on seafood.

The MAPP team involved in the *Food in Later Life* project is led and supervised by Klaus G. Grunert, Professor of Marketing at the Aarhus School of Business and director of MAPP since its establishment. Assisting supervisor is associate professor Karen Brunsø. Both have done extensive research in the areas of consumer behaviour and market research methods, on how insight into consumer behaviour feeds into product development processes in food producing companies, and on competence development in the food industry. MAPP is also represented by Niels Asger Nielsen who is specialising in consumer behaviour research. His main area of responsibility is the *Food in Later Life* project and he will be working on all workpackages in the project. MAPP is the leader of WP7 which intends to integrate results from workpackages 2-6 in an extensive survey.



Members of the team enjoy a well deserved break during the Uppsala meeting