

Bridging the Gap

The Lived Experience of Isolation and Insecurity

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Social Café Meals Program



Acknowledgements

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TERMINOLOGY

Café staff: Includes the café proprietors and other café staff members

Categories: Groups of codes of similar meaning or concerned with a similar topic

Codes: Words or small phrases used as an initial step to interpret the data gained from the in-depth interviews

Criterion Sampling: Selection of cases which meet a predetermined specific criterion that is crucial for the research.

Inductive coding: The process by which a researcher creates codes, regardless of previous theory, aiming to explain the current data

Intensity Sampling: Selection of excellent or rich examples of the phenomenon of interest, but is not a highly unusual case

Members: Individuals on the Social Café Meals Program i.e. receiving the meal subsidy

Participants: Includes all individuals involved in the evaluation, the members of the program and the café staff

Participants 1-6A: Inner East members

Participants 1-6B: Inner South members

Participants 1-6C: Café staff

Socio-Economic Indexes for Area (SEIFA): A product developed by The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) based on data collected in the 2006 Census. It includes four indexes that can be used to rank geographic areas across Australia in terms of their relative socio-economic conditions. The lower the SEIFA, the less disadvantaged.

Snowballing Sampling: Requires researchers to initially select a few research participants and ask them if they know of others who might meet the criteria of the research and be interested in participating.

Themes: Broad ideas to explain the data, created by grouping categories that relate to one another.

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Abstract

Bridging the Gap – The Lived Experience of Isolation and Insecurity

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Background

There are nine Social Café Meals Programs currently running in Victoria however evaluation is limited, therefore creating difficulty in sustaining current projects and securing funding to expand to other communities. This research aimed to conduct process and impact evaluation of the programs at Inner East and Inner South Community Health Services to determine its effectiveness in addressing social isolation and food insecurity.

Method

The evaluation focused on gaining the lived experience of individuals involved in the program. 18 in-depth interviews were conducted and qualitative thematic analysis was employed to interpret the data. Repeat five-pass 24-hour recalls were used to conduct a qualitative nutritional analysis of program members' diets.

Results

Four key themes emerged: improving food security in vulnerable groups, creating community cohesiveness, role of environment in facilitating program use, and rewarding community contribution. These qualitative evaluation data identify the ability of the program to address food insecurity and social isolation. 24-hour recalls highlighted inconsistent meal patterns and a high reliance on convenience foods in program members.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The evaluation indicates that Social Café Meals is an effective initiative in reducing food security and social isolation in vulnerable groups. 24-hour recalls were also used successfully in this group. Recommendations included generation of an evaluation tool for all programs, café screening criteria, electronic member database, assignment of a key worker to each member and branding of the program. This will assist to develop an evidence-based approach to enable future programs to be implemented, and ensure sustainability of current programs.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Biases

This research was conducted by fourth year Dietetic student researchers from Monash University. These researchers were on program planning placement at Inner South and Inner East Community Health Service. Given these facts the researchers acknowledge that there may be some biases as their aim was to produce a high quality report to assist in generating in funding for future programs. However, the students were immersed in the program and community services and therefore had a thorough understanding of how the program works and how it fits into the values of the organisation. Being affiliated with Monash University meant they were able to employ a novel approach. This provides significant strengths towards a fair analysis of the data.

Background

i. Food Insecurity

Food security is “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” [1]. Food security is achieved when these needs are met through an environmentally sustainable food system and without reliance on emergency food relief or other socially unacceptable ways of obtaining food, such as stealing or scavenging [2]. Thus, food insecurity is the limited availability of safe, nutritionally adequate and culturally acceptable food or limited ability to acquire food in a sustainable and socially acceptable way.

Food security is a complex international issue. Action must be taken at a global, national, state and community level to successfully improve food security. The three building blocks of food security are availability, accessibility and use of food [1]. The National and State governments have the capacity to address the availability of food through ensuring the safety and sustainability of our food supply. However it is only at the community level where food access can be addressed. The Social Café Meals Program addresses the food access component of food security by providing resources to obtain appropriate foods. It also targets many of the determinants of food security. These include price, quality, variety and promotion of food and social isolation.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights acknowledges adequate food as a basic human right [3]. However, approximately 5% of Australians identified themselves as food insecure in the 1995 National Nutrition Survey [4]. This measure of food insecurity only articulates economic access to food and not other factors such as appropriate cooking facilities. Therefore it is likely that a higher proportion of Australians are food insecure. Everyone can be vulnerable to food insecurity at some point in their lives, although the prevalence of food insecurity is much higher in ‘at risk’ groups [5]. These groups include rooming house residents, the elderly, meals on wheels recipients, people with mental illness, adults with

disability, single parents and those from non-English speaking backgrounds. Eligibility for the Social Café Meals Program targets these groups.

Inability to access adequate, safe and nutritious food has short and long term health implications including hunger, fatigue, malnutrition and illness [6,7]. Furthermore, research indicates that a poor diet is responsible for 7-20% of the total burden of chronic disease in Australia [5]. Throughout Australia, obesity is most prevalent in groups at highest risk of food insecurity [8]. Food insecurity has been shown to have detrimental effects on mental health through social isolation, lack of power, anxiety and stress related to inability to access food [9].

ii. Food Insecurity and Social Isolation

Research has shown a convincing link between social isolation and mortality: those who are socially isolated experience higher mortality from most causes of death than their socially connected counterparts [10]. Social isolation has been defined as “the existence of barriers which make it difficult or impossible for people to participate fully in society [11]”. These barriers include low income, discrimination, unemployment, housing status and physical or mental condition [12]. They affect vulnerable groups such as those mentioned above. A strong link between social isolation and food security has been identified. When comparing those with similar finances and food resources those who are less socially connected are more likely to experience hunger [13]. In the cities of Boroondara, Stonnington and Port Phillip social isolation and food security are priority areas as despite being affluent municipalities there are segments of the population at risk of social isolation [11, 14]. This affluence can cause social isolation to be masked and can mean that there are less services available than in municipalities where disadvantage is more prevalent [14].

iii. The Cities of Boroondara, Port Phillip and Stonnington

In recent times Stonnington, Port Phillip and Boroondara have all experienced significant gentrification whereby affluent people have moved to the area and residential redevelopment has ensued, leaving the disadvantaged vulnerable to social isolation and food insecurity [15, 16, 17].

The cities of Stonnington, Port Phillip and Boroondara are all ranked low on the Socio-Economic Indexes for Area however significant disadvantage exists in some areas [18]. An analysis into household incomes shows that a large proportion (56.2% of Stonnington, 54.5% of Port Phillip and 30.6% of Boroondara) of people living in these areas are high-income earners (\$1,000 or more per week), however many (approximately 12%) are receiving significantly less than this (less than \$399) [15, 16, 17]. As these disadvantaged groups live amidst high-income earners, the social gradients in these districts are more pronounced than the state average and social isolation more extreme. As a result these disadvantaged groups experience greater difficulty participating in civic life.

In regards to food security, the Community Indicators Victoria report found that 2.8% of people living in Stonnington, 5.5% of Port Phillip and 1.8% of Boroondara have experienced

some form of food insecurity compared the state average of 6% [19, 20, 21]. Whilst these figures are relatively low, living expenses in these areas are significantly higher leaving less money to spend on food. Transport is also an issue for residents in Port Phillip with many experiencing transport limitations (23.7%) when compared to the rest of the state (20.3%). This may impact on their ability to access and carry food, as well as increasing their risk of social isolation [20].

iv. Inner East and Inner South Community Health Services

Inner East and Inner South Community Health Services are dedicated to reducing food insecurity through addressing key issues like social isolation within their respective communities. These organisations believe access to affordable and nutritious diets, participating in community life and having supportive relationships are essential for physical and mental wellbeing. They consider health promotion and building community capacity, in conjunction with other health agencies, as fundamental in dealing with the social, emotional and physical factors that lead to good health and wellbeing.

Inner East Community Health Service currently has a Strategic Integrated Health Promotion Plan in place that began in 2009 and will run until 2012. This strategy has three priority areas that are in-line with both the state and Inner East Community Health Services health promotion initiatives. These are promoting mental health and wellbeing through social inclusion, promoting access to affordable food and capacity building [22]. These priority areas all have links to the Social Café Meals Program demonstrating the commitment of this organisation to meeting the needs of their community.

Inner South Community Health Services Health Promotion Plan began this year, 2011, and will run until 2016. Social Café Meals is a new action plan for this organisation and addresses primarily the organisation's vision for a healthy and inclusive community. The strategic plan has the following strategies under this vision of: developing a more comprehensive primary health care service, delivering more accessible and responsive services, reducing the health equity gap and supporting and resourcing our staff to deliver our vision [23].

The Social Café Meals Program within Boroondara focuses on people in rooming houses as this group are disenfranchised, socially isolated and their living environments are not conducive to food utilisation. Whereas Inner South Health Service targets the socially isolated within the community as this program can create social connections to overcome the physical environment they live in and improve health. Both organisations are dedicated towards their integrated health promotion plans and support the Social Café Meals Program which empowers users to take control of when and where they eat, enabling them to be more socially connected and have positive outcomes on health and wellbeing.

v. The Social Café Meals Initiative

The Social Café Meals Program is a food security and social inclusion initiative. It provides vulnerable members of Victorian communities with an incentive and opportunity to dine at one of several designated cafés for a subsidised price. Inner East and Inner South

Community Health Services are currently running two of these programs. Inner South members are eligible to join the program for up to six months after which they are encouraged to continue to be actively involved in the community, while Inner East has no exit point. Program members are entitled to 2 to 3 subsidised meals per week for a maximum of \$10 and are only charged \$2.50, with the remaining \$7.50 paid for by the community health services. Each time the members visit a cafe on the program they have their membership cards stamped when they purchase a meal. Once these cards are filled, members may be eligible to have it renewed and continue their participation in Social Café Meals if they make contact with the health services. The program aims to promote social interaction between members of the community and cafe proprietors, through the experience of sitting in a non-threatening environment and enjoying an affordable meal. It also targets food insecurity by making it easier for members to access nutritious and socially acceptable meals for only a fraction of the actual cost. As a result it reduces the reliance on emergency food relief. By breaking down the barriers of poor food access and social exclusion, program members are able to become more involved in the community and eat in socially acceptable ways. The Social Café Meals Program is not considered an emergency food relief service as members contribute to the cost of the meal. Instead it intends to supplement emergency food relief by providing subsidised meals in a social environment.

vi. Program Evaluation

Evaluation of a program is vital to determine its effectiveness. It is also required to secure funding and assist to create evidence-based guidelines for the successful implementation in other community services. There is little evidence to support new Social Café Meals Programs being implemented. Evaluating the Social Café Meals Program at Inner South and Inner East Community Health Services will provide valuable evidence to address the above issues.

vii. Pre-existing program evaluation up to 2011

Currently there are nine Social Café Meals Programs running within Victoria. Of these, North Yarra Social Café Meals is the only program that has had evaluations published. Therefore a significant knowledge gap exists making funding and expansion of these projects difficult to secure.

There have been three publications [24, 25, 26] of the evaluation of the North Yarra Social Café Meals Program conducted by RMIT University. This evaluation was a 12-month follow up of the program and involved examination of the sustainability, outcomes and impacts of the program. It included interviews with 21 key informants involved in the implementation of the program (the program manager, four café proprietors and referring workers) and six clients of the program. It also included observation of the program during site visits.

The evaluation found that Social Café Meals was an effective way of providing affordable meals to the homeless community of North Yarra whilst allowing autonomy in choosing when, where and what they want to eat. Some of the outcomes for members included:

- Improved nutritional status
- Improved frequency of meals
- Social inclusion
- Economic benefits

The evaluation also highlighted findings at the organisational level, including:

- Stakeholder satisfaction
- Personal fulfilment for café proprietors
- Potential of program to raise community profile of the café, and
- No major issues with the program arose

Finally, the findings at the municipal policy level concluded that:

- The program is an effective and sustainable way to address the determinants of food security
- The program framework would be of use when implementing a food security intervention in another area

viii. Current program evaluation as of 2011

To gain a broader sense of the benefits of the Social Café Meals Program and build upon these findings researchers have conducted in-depth interviews with program members and café staff. This eight-week evaluation will strengthen the evidence from North Yarra Community Health, showing a link between the Social Café Meals Program, social inclusion and food security. Furthermore, the programs differ greatly across the nine sites and so establishing an evaluation approach that can be replicated would be beneficial to improve outcomes across all programs.

This project aims to evaluate the Social Café Meals Program incorporating both a process and impact component, to determine its effectiveness in addressing social isolation and food insecurity in the inner suburbs of South and East Melbourne. It's objective is to elicit and understand the lived experience of those involved in the Social Café Meals Program, whilst also identifying whether the Social Café Meals Program impacts on members' nutritional intake. The process component of the evaluation provides evidence to support whether the program is being delivered as planned. Specifically if the program is reaching the desired target group, whether the members enjoy the program and if the cafés involved are appropriate. The impact component of the evaluation provides evidence to support whether the Social Café Meals Program is achieving its objectives such as increased participation for Social Café Meals members in community life, increased capacity of cafés to support socially isolated community members and increased confidence and knowledge in accessing local services. The evidence collected therefore will investigate whether the Social Café Meals Program is an effective initiative in reducing food insecurity and social isolation in the target group.

Theory and Sampling

i. Phenomenology

Research was conducted to explore the methodology techniques that could be selected for the qualitative evaluation of the Social Café Meals Program. Phenomenology was chosen as the methodology for the qualitative analysis conducted. It was selected as it is derived from philosophy and seeks to capture phenomena's as they are experienced [27]. This allows for the judgements, perceptions and emotions to be collected in an expressive form that could not be obtained through quantitative methods.

ii. Sampling

Sampling techniques were researched and selected for all three groups, café owners and staff, Inner South members and Inner East members, involved within the study. A total sample size of 18 was selected (comprising 12 café members and six café staff). This number was chosen on the basis that qualitative research focuses on descriptive data in relatively small samples rather than on the size or number of cases. Phenomenological research highlights sampling is about quality, not size, with the aim of deeply understanding a phenomenon through adequate exposure to those living it [28].

Recruiting cafe owners and staff

Both criterion and snowball sampling were used for café owners and staff members. Criterion was selected with the cafe owners as these individuals met predetermined specific criteria, owning a participating cafe, necessary for the research [28]. Snowball sampling was used with the selection of the one cafe staff member interviewed as this enabled the café owner to determine which of their staff would be appropriate and interested to participate [28].

Recruiting Inner East Members

Intensity sampling was selected for the Inner East members. This allows the selection of excellent information rich sources that are not highly unusual [28].

After selection of the sampling techniques the café staff at Bacio Dolce, La Porchetta, Zappa, SpareChair and Bunyip were approached in person or via email and interview times were scheduled and organise when they were available to interview. Café staff were then questioned as to members' names they thought would be interested in taking part in the study. The researchers asked for member's who frequently used the cafes, and whom they thought would be willing to participate. Each café owner then provided a list of member's names and numbers.

Recommended member's phone numbers were collected from the Inner East membership records and distributed to the researchers to contact. Numerous Inner East members were contacted and six of these agreed to participate in the study. A number of members contacted did not want to participate due to lack of interest and personal reasons and many members contact details were outdated and they were as a result un-contactable. This resulted in our project time-line being extended for this section however the flexibility of the timeline allowed this to occur. Those that agreed to participate were introduced to the project and the researchers explained themselves as students from Monash University undertaking a project to gain the lived experience of the Social Café Meals Program.

Recruiting Inner South members

Criterion sampling was selected for the Inner South members. This sampling method is used for cases which meet predetermined specific criterion, as seen in appendix 1 crucial to the research and allows for rich information to be provided [28].

Inner South members were recruited through their initial orientation to the program and it was explained that a study was being conducted by Monash University students regarding the programs commencement and were asked whether they would be interested in partaking in this. Six newly recruited members agreed and the researchers were assigned a member each.

Sampling Limitations

These sampling techniques do create an extent of bias in that members are not randomly selected. Given time restrictions for this project, only a small sample of the population using the Social Café Meals Program could be interviewed and included in this study. The sampling was purposive as it created the deliberate selection of specific individuals within a setting due to the rich information they could supply, which could not be obtained through other means. Selection of these participants allowed for the greatest depth of information to be gained on the lived experiences of those involved within the program [29].

This study looks at the population experience from only two of the nine Social Café Meals Programs currently running. Current partnerships between Inner East and Inner South Community Health Services mean that this evaluation was possible between the two sites. There is currently a Social Café Meals network group and findings would need to be distributed through these connections to expand the evaluation of the projects. It is possible that similar themes will be noted between programs, however results will depend on client demographics.

CHAPTER 2 – INDEPTH INTERVIEWS

Methodology

To evaluate the process and impact of the Social Café Meals program, all participants (n=18) took part in an individual, semi-structured, in-depth interview. In-depth interviews were selected to examine the perceptions of the participants and give meaning to their experiences while overcoming the issue of low literacy in a section of the target group [30]. A semi-structured format was used as it provides exploration of a pre-determined set of issues but allows flexibility in the deliverance of the questions and gives the interviewer opportunity to probe for richer responses [29]. Researchers, independent of the organisations responsible for running the Social Café Meals Programs conducted the interviews, as it decreased the likelihood that participants may only report positive aspects of the program in order to please the interviewer.

Two sets of interview questions were developed; one for the Social Café Meals Program members and one for the café staff. The questions were generated on the basis of phenomenology and therefore aimed at gaining the lived experience of those involved [27]. Both sets of questions followed a similar logic with the aim of obtaining different perspectives on the same aspects of the program. See table 1 (page 11) for the interview schedule.

Interviews were conducted between September and October 2011. All interviews were conducted face-to-face and took place in one of the cafes involved in the Social Cafe Meals Programs. They were conducted individually to prevent inter-participant bias [28]. Cafés were chosen as the location for the interviews as they provided a safe and neutral environment, and placed minimal transport burden on the participants due to their convenient location. Written consent was obtained from all participants which included permission to have the interviews audio recorded, see appendix 3 for an example of the consent form. The duration of each interview was approximately 20 minutes. After completion of each interview the same researcher who conducted the interview also transcribed the audio recordings verbatim to allow further emersion into the data and better interpretation of what was said [28]. Each participant was assigned a code to ensure confidentiality, for example 1-6 A for Inner East Members, 1-6 B for Inner South Members and 1-6 C for café staff.

Multiple researchers meant there might have been inconsistencies with the data collection. Different personal techniques may mean a variation in the quality of data that was collected from participants. However, researchers standardised techniques to ensure the process was explained the same way to participants and to standardise probing questions. Interviews were cross-checked to ensure interviewers had a thorough understanding of all participants experiences.

Some café owners expressed that they would have been able to give better information if they have been given time to think about the questions prior to the interview. As a result some data from the café staff may be limited and not show their full experience of the program. The busy environment of cafes may have also impacted on the quality of data received from the café staff as some staff appeared distracted and did not have much time for the interview. Another limitation is that the Inner South café staff interviews may have been conducted too soon after initiation of the program therefore not enough opportunity was given for the program to operate.

The qualitative data obtained from the in-depth interviews was manually analysed. Inductive coding was employed to allow generation of codes without regard to any pre-existing theories or codes [31]. Each café staff transcript was doubly coded, that is they were initially coded by two individual researchers. The researchers then came together to cross check the codes, ensure codes were applied correctly and that none were missed. Once this process was completed for all café staff transcripts researchers then compiled into a code list. All researchers then grouped the codes into categories. The above method was then repeated for program member transcripts. Synthesis and analysis of categories was then conducted to generate themes, refer to appendix 2. Expressive quotes relevant to each theme were selected to elucidate the findings. Quotes were chosen from a range of participants to ensure that they were representative of the entire sample.

Table 1: In-depth interview schedule evaluation measures and justification

| | Question | Prompts | Evaluation | Justification |
|------------|---|--|--|---|
| Members | Can you tell me how you became involved in Social Café Meals? | - How long have you been participating? | Process – Program Reach | To elicit the influences on joining the program |
| | Why did you become involved? | - What are your reasons for becoming involved in the program? | | |
| | Can you tell me about your experience of participating in the program? | - What do you like about the program? - What benefits (social, nutrition, economic) have you received by participating? - What could be improved in the program? | Process – Program Satisfaction Impact – Outcomes of the program | To elicit the lived experience of the program |
| | If you had to describe Social Café Meals to someone, what would you say about it? | - Nil | | |
| | Before becoming involved in the Social Café Meals Program were you involved in any other community activities/programs? | - Has this changed since participating in the program? - Why and how? | Impact – Outcomes of the program | To elicit the influence of the program on social connectedness |
| | Can you tell me about the cafes you visit as part of the program? | - Why do you go there? | Process – Program satisfaction | To elicit the attributes cafes possess that appeal to the members and to assist in choosing cafes in the future |
| | Is there anything else you would like to comment on about the program and your experiences? | - Nil | Impact – Outcomes of the program | To uncover any unexpected viewpoints about the program |
| Café Staff | Can you tell me how the café became involved in the program? | - How long has the café been involved in the program? - How long have you worked here? - What is your role in the program? How do you find it? | Process – Program Reach | To elicit influences on joining the program |
| | Why did you become involved? | - What are your reasons for becoming involved in the program? | | |
| | What were your expectations of becoming involved in the program? (Proprietor only) | - Did you have any concerns/preconceptions? | Process – Program Satisfaction | |
| | Can you tell me about your experiences of participating in the program? | - What do you like about the program? - What benefits (social, economic, personal) have you received by participating in the program? - What could be improved in the program? | Process – Program Satisfaction Impact – Outcomes of the program | To elicit the lived experience of the program |
| | What would you say to another local business considering participating in the program? | - Nil | | |
| | How do you interact with the members of the program? | Is this different to how you interact with other customers? | Impact – Outcomes of the program | To elicit influence of the program on social connectedness |
| | Is there anything else you would like to comment on about the program and your experiences? | - Nil | Impact – Outcomes of the program | To uncover any unexpected viewpoints about the program |

Results and Discussion

All 18 participants completed an in-depth interview. The data collected revealed four key themes relating to the lived experience of the Social Café Meals Program. The key themes included; improving food security in vulnerable groups, creating community cohesiveness, the role of the environment in facilitating program use and rewarding community contribution.

i. Improving Food Security in Vulnerable Groups

The participants reported that the members of the Social Café Meals Program are disadvantaged, on a low income and have mental or other health issues. These factors have contributed to the members becoming socially isolated and having poor access to food. A need for a program addressing these issues has been highlighted, especially as people from vulnerable groups are at a higher risk of engaging in harmful behaviours. Some of these behaviours including high alcohol intake, being overweight, smoking and a high salt intake place them at greater risk of health problems [32]. Many of the vulnerable characteristics reported by the program members influence their ability to prioritise nutrition, placing greater need on their addictions, bills and medications than food and their own health, therefore leading to food insecurity. This is consistent with the literature, which describes those on a low income finding cost as a major barrier to healthy eating. Money put aside for food is often sacrificed for expenses they consider more pertinent [33].

“Some people go without food rather than give up smoking, if they’re mentally ill or disadvantaged smoking is far more important to them than food...I know just from experience of people I know and myself.” - Participant 5A

Most of the participants reported that by offering a meal subsidy, the Social Café Meals Program makes eating out more affordable. It reduces the financial barriers to food security, such as being on a low income due to unemployment, disability and alternative priorities as mentioned above. Consequently this improves food access and food security, enabling a decreased reliance on emergency food relief. It has been shown that individuals with a mental illness, like many of the program members who have found themselves socially isolated, are more likely to self-report suboptimal eating behaviours. This includes having fewer than two daily meals and difficulty obtaining and cooking food [34]. By providing subsidised meals, it can be assumed that meal frequency will increase along with nutrient intake in vulnerable groups.

“I used to go three times a week to the Salvos in Camberwell but I’ve been going there once or twice now...this has changed it a lot because I come here (Bacio Dolce) now”- Participant 3A

Some members reported that finances drive their decision to use the program; acknowledging that without the program they may not be able to afford to eat out. In contrast, the financial benefits that the café owners receive as a result of the program, such as increased business, does not drive their decision to participate. Rather the social and

community benefits provide a greater influence for their involvement as described in themes two and four.

“It does help us but that’s only a small amount ... it wouldn’t be two percent of our turnover”- Participant 4C

While the program does give members the opportunity to make more nutritious meal choices at a reduced cost, most members did not report good nutrition as a driving factor behind their involvement; rather it is often an indirect consequence. Several members highlighted a decreased reliance on convenience foods as a result of their inclusion in the program. This is emphasised within the literature with people who are financially constrained focusing on quantity rather than the quality of food [35].

“It’s helping those people who are at one particular time less fortunate and they require a certain amount of...well based nutritional foods. You’re not going to get that from going to your local 7/11 or ... to the Coles and getting a pie or a pastie and living on that daily” - Participant 6A

However a few of the members reported that weight management and healthy eating were important for them. They felt social cafe meals program facilitated their ability to make healthier meal choices.

“(I became involved)... so I could lose weight and also for affordable prices” - Participant 1B

Many of the members perceived that the program allows them to access a more nutritious meal. ‘Nutritious’ was often described as large, home-style meals available at the cafes. While unhealthier foods included convenience items such as pies and chicken nuggets from places such as convenience stores and the supermarket. However not all options available at participating cafés are of high nutritional quality therefore giving members the opportunity to choose less nutritious options. Members associated meals at the cafés as healthy regardless of food preparation, cooking styles or portion sizes potentially illustrating the members’ limited knowledge around nutrition and healthy food options. Having healthy meals available at the participating cafés provides an opportunity to make more nutritious food choices. Some members did not grasp the concept of the program allowing them a subsidised meal that is also nutritious. A possible explanation for this is because they are in the habit of making poor nutritional choices because these foods are often perceived as cheaper than healthier options. Literature suggests that those of a lower socioeconomic status would be more likely to seek energy-dense food options such as fast food because of cheaper prices [36].

“There could be more cafes around Glenferrie like Grill’d or the schnitzel place or McDonald’s cos everyone loves McDonalds” - Participant 2A

By addressing the issue of food access and financial disadvantage the Social Café Meals Program enables members to become more food secure by reducing reliance on emergency food relief and giving members the option of healthier food choices. This reduces the risk of

the negative health impacts associated with food insecurity such as hypertension and hyperlipidaemia [37]. Actually being able to access the cafes and get out of the house, either due to less financial burden or decreased social withdrawal, gives members an opportunity for social interaction, which they otherwise would not have.

ii. Creating Community Cohesiveness

In addition to targeting food insecurity, another key aim of the Social Café Meals Program is to address the issue of social isolation. While all participants highlighted a number of nutritional and economic benefits, the program also benefited participants socially and psychologically. Although economic benefits are initially the reason for members participating in the program, it emerged that the social benefits such as feeling accepted in society, being part of the community and making friends were key reasons for continuing with the program.

“Social benefits are more important (than financial)” - Participant 5A

It has been shown that people suffering from mental illnesses often experience greater degrees of social isolation due to the nature of their illness [38]. The social withdrawal that is associated with many mental illnesses reduces participation in community activities consequently amplifying their sense of social isolation [39]. Social anxiety through fear of discrimination can lead to social exclusion as a result of decreased self-confidence [40]. Many of the participants expressed feelings of social anxiety that made initial use of the program daunting. However the positive attitudes of café staff enabled these feelings to be overcome.

“I feel a little bit nervous and anxious when I am by myself but not too bad and its getting better with each time that I come here (Cafe Zappa).” - Participant 4B

Unemployment, debt, homelessness and worsening health that have been linked with low socioeconomic status can result in a social exclusion cycle [40]. This was evident with many of the participants reporting feeling socially disconnected, lonely and not included in normal society prior to joining the program. The program provides an opportunity to increase members' confidence to get out in the community. It gives them a comfortable environment that can facilitate breaking this cycle enabling them to feel accepted into normal society.

“...being part of normality. When you're by yourself you tend to social isolation and having a place to go where ... you can join in the activities with other people and feel as though you're part of it, is very um uplifting to the spirit and good for mental health and so forth” - Participant 6A

Members from Inner South are linked in with a key worker who remains in contact with them. This consequently makes these members more accountable, compared with the members from Inner East who do not have a key worker. Many of the Inner South members eluded that because of this greater accountability, together with the fact that there were only a small number of members involved in the program since the beginning, they had a greater sense of ownership and felt proud of it. This could potentially make the program

more successful, create confidence in the members and increase their sense of value of the program.

All of the café staff understand the need for a program like this as they recognise there is a proportion of the community that is disadvantaged. They gain a sense of personal satisfaction and fulfillment by creating a better lifestyle and community for these individuals. So while the café staff feel as if they are contributing to the community by supporting the less fortunate, it engenders a feeling of belonging to the community in members of the program who are marginalised. These community benefits are the driving force behind cafes participation.

“I like the whole idea of it helping people that are disconnected to try and sort of become involved in ... what you and I and most of us ... would just consider average daily life.”- Participant 2C

The program is a catalyst for establishing new relationships and building interpersonal skills. Many members repeatedly visit the same cafés and become regulars by doing so. Most participants feel as if they are able to develop relationships and in turn increase social connectedness. This is consistent with literature that highlights that access to resources, opportunities for social engagement and meaningful social roles are provided through social networks. Supportive relationships also encourage healthier behaviour patterns. [41].

“They like coming here, we’re like their friends. Trying to be close to them about their lives and stuff. So, I have a couple of friends now. They are good people, they are nice people.” - Participant 5C

Some members reported the ability of the program to extend its social benefits past those who are directly involved and to reach other individuals within the community. These individuals include people with whom members have either developed relationships with or had previous connections to. Highlighting the ability of the program to bring together members of the community and therefore increase social cohesiveness.

“I have around one friend here (in this area). She is (an) old lady. She is always alone and things like this. So I ask her to come.” - Participant 6B

By helping to establish social connections the program equips members with skills and opportunities to become more involved within the community. Some members feel they have increased confidence and an increase in disposable income to try out and experience new opportunities, whereas others have developed a sense of how a business operates and the skills required to work. This improves their ability to integrate and function within normal society.

“(I’m) experiencing different cafes in the area and also got um different trams. Different trams in the city.” - Participant 1B

“I’ve been coming in here I’ve learnt about if I was to get a job here. I see what they’re doing and you sort of catch on” - Participant 3A

However, some members do not understand the fundamental vision behind the program in terms of its aims at increasing social connections and creating greater community cohesiveness. It appears that community activities and other programs are either not being pitched or promoted to members or that this group needs to develop better skills and motivation to become involved so as to increase community connections. Often community activities are targeted at those who are marginalised therefore continuing to socially isolate these individuals from the rest of society. A needs assessment could be undertaken to uncover why members are not actively involved within the community.

A small number of members only see the program as a handout and that they want more than what they are being given presently. This includes more meals, more cafés involved and more community programs targeted at this group. However other members can see what the program aims to do and that it has enabled them to become more greatly immersed into the community and break out of poverty cycle through contributing to mainstream community.

“We just eat and run, that’s all we do”- Participant 2A

“There are many benefits to the whole program it’s not just cheapness and nutrition, it’s getting yourself back into being part of the general activity of normal people.” - Participant 6A

By addressing the social exclusion cycle and its components the Social Café Meals Program has the ability to create community cohesiveness. It provides an opportunity for cafe staff to help those in the community who are marginalised and in doing so makes those people feel like they belong and are part of society. The cohesiveness created can also have positive effects on the health and wellbeing of the community, as being a part of social networks has been shown to improve physical and mental health [38, 39, 40, 41]. While the program has the ability to improve community cohesiveness, the environment plays an important role in encouraging the continued return of members and ongoing involvement from the cafes. Without a welcoming cafe environment that promotes inclusion this cohesion would not be possible and the social exclusion cycle would continue.

iii. The Role of Environment in Facilitating Program Use

The café staff’s roles and qualities along with members perceptions contribute to the environment of the participating cafés and are integral to facilitate members’ use of the program and its success. Prior to commencing the program, the cafés are an unfamiliar and intimidating environment for many members. They often felt embarrassed and that they did not belong.

“When I first came here I was embarrassed because I thought...I just wouldn’t be a valued customer” - Participant 5A

Staff qualities, such as being open, friendly, caring, empathetic and inclusive create an inviting atmosphere in the cafés and over time members reported feeling more comfortable.

The staff's personal qualities and values are essential to the success of the program. The qualities of the staff involved in the Social Café Meals Program are consistent with recommendations for cafés and restaurants to deliver good service that ensures customers are satisfied and promotes return. Making customers feel welcome, being sensitive to the needs of individuals and creating a positive dining experience is crucial to elicit these outcomes [42].

"I've always wanted to make everybody feel welcome at the café...I've always wanted people from all walks of life to be able to come [here]" – Participant 1C

Along with staff qualities there are other aspects of the cafes that facilitate member use and return, making them appropriate for this program. These include the location and type of café. As the members often have no car and limited transport, the importance of the cafés being accessible by public transport and close to where they stay was highlighted. Furthermore, the café needs to be casual and have lenient conditions of entry, as members may not be well presented. Many participants eluded that, because of these factors, not all cafés are appropriate for participating in the program. Literature has demonstrated that the physical environment of cafes significantly influence a customer's perception and satisfaction of service, increasing their likelihood of return [43, 44, 45].

"I like the fact, just the way they are set out, they're not the trendy (cafés) ... it's a very comfortable environment." – Participant 5B

Some members identified predominately using a particular café on the program as they had become comfortable there and developed rapport with the staff members and other regular customers. It becomes a safe space where they know they are accepted as part of that community setting.

Many of the café staff highlighted that their role in the program is to provide good meals and encourage maximum utilisation of the program by members. The staff are encouraged to continue their role as the members often express gratitude and appreciation of their efforts. This illustrates that both the staff and members believe in and value the program.

"...on my birthday there were 3 participants from the Social Café Meal Programs they like gave me cards ... you can see, like, there is a relationship." – Participant 5C

The environment of the cafés provides a contrast to the atmosphere of emergency food relief centres, which members may more heavily rely on if the program did not exist. Some members highlighted this contrast and noted feeling marginalized and uncomfortable at food halls, whereas, the welcoming and friendly atmosphere of the cafes makes members want to return. One member described the food halls as "an abnormal situation" (participant 6A) where people approach being fed as a race, compared to a café where you have normality.

"When you go to a place like Carlisle Street or Sacred Heart everyone harasses you for cigarettes, money, this that and the other and it can be quite difficult. And it can also

be quite aggressive you know, when people are going off. It's a completely different environment" – participant 3C

As mentioned in theme two, the environment of food halls continues to isolate members from 'normal' society as they are interacting within a defined social group of other vulnerable people. Furthermore, eating at a café promotes greater autonomy with members being able to choose what they eat, when they eat and at what pace.

Some members identified ideas for program improvements, such as introducing a screening process to ensure café owners share the program philosophy, are in a convenient location and have a variety of healthy meal options. This illustrates that some members have insight into the program vision, however others were merely grateful for a subsidised meal.

The environment created at cafes participating in the Social Café Meals Program is conducive to facilitating program use and return. Cafe owners are encouraged to maintain a welcoming and friendly environment in which members feel accepted as they gain rewards from the community in doing so.

iv. Rewarding Community Contribution

Ensuring the cafés and café staff possess characteristics to promote an open, friendly and inclusive environment, the rapport between café staff and program members will grow. This establishment of relationships between café staff and program members, as well as the satisfaction of giving back to the community, ensures that the benefits of Social Café Meals surpasses that of the members only to reach café proprietors in compelling ways. There is substantial evidence to suggest that helping others elicits positive psychological benefits for the helper [46, 47]. Many café staff supported this statement, reporting a sense of contentment after interacting with program members and offering them an enjoyable dining experience, something that they would not have had, if not for the program.

"They're wrapped when they come in and get whatever they want and it fills their tummy so just seeing them being satisfied, being happy, it's a benefit for a personal note just seeing the customers being happy" - Participant 3C

Through their involvement in Social Café Meals the café staff are able to give back to the community. This has been shown to improve individual's mood, alleviate feelings of guilt and support feelings of self-worth among donors [46, 47]. The effects of giving are immediate and are instrumental in the sustainability and expansion of the program.

"As soon as you help someone who really really needs help, you're helping two people."
– Participant 1C

Recruiting cafés for the program can be difficult due to the complex characteristics of the members mentioned in theme one. However through evaluation researchers discovered that almost all cafés interviewed find the program easy to operate and have encountered minimal problems, illustrated by one café staff member, "never had trouble with anybody" (participant 5C). Furthermore, Social Café Meals is a convenient and effortless way to

contribute to society without detracting from business revenue or taking up too much time and resources.

“It doesn’t interfere with the rest of your business which is the best part, you’re doing something good without leaving the shop” – Participant 4C

Although one café did express an increased effort and time spent through taking part in Social Café Meals, they believe that the reward from participation outweighs these constraints.

“It’s just a little bit time consuming...having to write it up and...then whether they’re prepared to give credit til the end of the month...We like doing it because we know it’s for a good cause.” – Participant 6C.

As Social Café Meals does not involve a permanent monetary donation by the cafés, they incur no out of pocket costs from being involved in the program. Some cafés even feel as if they are not contributing enough to the program and want to give more. They have a strong desire to give back to the community and some expressed an interest in providing a monetary donation to the program.

“I like people to feel warm and welcome anyway so (the program) was almost an extension of that...I personally think that the businesses should be contributing in a small way...maybe the businesses should be contributing 10% of the value of the meal in terms of a donation to the program”- Participant 2C

Most café owners expressed interest in being recognised for their community contribution, either to assist in generating revenue or to increase awareness of their good deed. This is in line with the literature, which describes how people who give donations generally prefer their actions to be known by others [46]. Having this sort of publicity in papers or through branding may help to increase interest in more café owners and help to expand the program.

“They did an article in the local papers last year and a lot of people saw that in the progress press...so its good that people saw that and said its good that your helping out” – Participant 4C

Branding of the Social Café Meals Program may help increase business for café owners. If the public are aware that businesses are doing a good thing and helping out marginalised community members, through their involvement in the program, they may choose to support these businesses. Giving back to the community is highly respected, and those who are charitable receive recognition and approval from others. Furthermore, giving by reducing inequality in the community is viewed as a positive thing to do and may increase community support for these businesses. [46]

Some café staff have already found that being part of the program increases their sales. Other than the point mentioned above this may also be because the members hold the participating café staff in high regard. Some participants expressed high praise for cafés, as

they understood the owners were doing more than just assisting to provide members with a subsidised meal.

“Jim [from Bacio Dolce] deserves the community award...cos he has been here a long time and he helps a lot of people more than anyone else knows.” – Participant 4A

Café staff from an established program appeared to develop good relationships with the members. The perception of the café staff appeared important in determining whether participants would go back to the same cafe. If the staff were perceived as genuine and doing good for the member then this would encourage member return. Furthermore, it appeared that some regular members would recommend cafés to their peers if they had good experiences there. Some members also continue to go to the cafe on a non-cafe meals day, hence increasing business.

“...the people that come in they’re appreciative of that fact that they can come here and get a meal so they speak highly of us ... that’s a benefit, they’re obviously spreading word of mouth, good vibes about our restaurant” – Participant 3C

Being a café that is part of the Social Café Meals Program also means that new business is generated. The cafés are creating more business opportunities as they are attracting more customers who would not otherwise dine at the café. Some owners expressed that business was increased as members were coming in during quieter periods, but also business for cafés may be increased through increased community recognition.

“So because they like to come here when there aren’t too many people it’s good for business because it means it fills up those quiet periods.” Participant 1C

Café staff may need to care about the program and the values it portrays to have the best impact. All café staff involved appeared to rate community involvement highly and were looking for a way to give back. Some wanted to become involved as the member characteristics were already present in their clientele or they knew someone who was disadvantaged.

“They’ve got to weigh it up in terms of whether...it satisfies their own beliefs...for those who feel strongly about the sort of issues involved (in the program) I wouldn’t hesitate in recommending to become involved”- Participant 2C

Choosing café owners who can align themselves with the vision of the program appears to be important in the success of the continuation of the program. The community recognises cafés contribution to those less fortunate in the society and reward these efforts with increased business and publicity.

Social Café Meals Program Recommendations

i. A Café Screening Process

Rational

To implement a screening process of the cafes which are being considered for recruitment to the program. Factors to consider include:

- Location: access to public transport, distance from rooming houses/accommodation
- Type of cafe: family style with outdoor seating available
- Staff qualities and values
- Food variety including healthy meal options

It was found that many of the driving factors of the member's continued use of the program included the accessibility of the cafes in terms of distance and location. All members highlighted the personal qualities and values of the staff that contributed greatly to their enjoyment of the program and their feeling of inclusion, which is consistent with the literature that states making customers feel welcome, being sensitive to the needs of individuals and creating a positive dining experience is crucial to elicit these outcomes [42].

As many members felt the cafes provided them with a more nutritious meal than they would usually be able to access and that many members are regulars to a particular cafe it is vital that the cafes have a variety of foods to choose from which are affordable for this group. Having nutritious options for members is also an objective of this program.

Constraints

Making the cafe selection criteria too rigid may limit the number of cafes available to participate. It may also make the cafe selection process more time consuming and thus be less viable. However as discussed environment of the cafe is key in facilitating use of the program and so choosing the right cafes is crucial. A practical number of selection criteria therefore needs to be created that prioritises the key characteristics the cafes should have without creating unrealistic expectations.

ii. Create an Electronic Database with Participant Contact Details

Rational

It was observed that members from Inner South appeared more connected to the health service and had a greater feeling of ownership to the program than members from Inner East. As Inner East has a much larger membership base than Inner South it is suggested that an electronic database could be created. It could be used to update members' details each time they attend the service to pick up their membership card; as well as notifying the Health Service when a member has not been in to collect their new card. This way, a courtesy phone call could be made to follow them up. By making members more accountable to the program and health service they may feel more ownership of the program and it helps to keep them linked into the Health Service. Through our recruitment process it was also found that members seemed to simply 'disappear', becoming disconnected from the program without any follow-up. Regular updating of member details would help to overcome this.

Constraints

The transient nature of the members may mean that they in fact do not have a phone or internet connection and are therefore unable to be contacted. It would require condensing the current electronic database with the hard copy induction forms, which may be time consuming. In addition it would require buy in from reception staff who give the cards out and also increase EFT (equivalent full time) in the program to follow up participants. However this would enable much easier contact with the members and make future evaluation much easier.

iii. For all future members of the Social café Meals Programs to be linked with a key worker

Rationale

The Inner South Community Health Service's program has the inclusion of a key worker being linked to each of the members in their program. This key worker remains in contact with that member and consequently that member is more accountable, as well as having more social support to encourage greater social inclusion within the community. They provide the initial support when members commence the program, breaking down the barriers, which prevented members from engaging within the community prior to joining the program such as social anxiety [40]. Inner East Community Health Service's program does not have key workers linked to its members and has problems with contacting, tracking down and keeping up to date with members. Having key workers would facilitate in preventing these issues and allow for a more effectively run program with greater supports and social contact. Additionally, contact details could be regularly updated through key worker interactions, which would facilitate keeping track of members.

Constraints

Implementing an initiative such as this would require time to allocate and hire key workers and funding to pay for their hours. This initiative appears to work well through a Health Service, however there is no evidence to support whether a program such as this would be effectively applied through a council service when the program at Inner East merges across. The new HACC funded pilot program for Inner East includes a key worker who reviews members very eight-weeks and if successful members will be migrated over to the new model. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of this recommendation.

iv. Greater promotion and community recognition of cafés involved in Social Café Meal style project

Rationale

As discussed in theme four many cafe staff highlighted their desire for further promotion and recognition of the program within the community. One of the cornerstones of communities that are well connected and giving, is helping those who are less fortunate integrate into the community. Many members of the community recognise, value and support any contributions towards increasing community connectedness. Being generous and charitable is greatly admired and in turn can create more business and encourage the person giving to continue to do so in the future [46, 47].

The creation of a brand which community members could distinguish as one which signifies a particular café is involved with an initiative which helps less fortunate people, including those who are marginalised in the community, could increase community based recognition and generate promotion of cafes involved. This could potentially increase profitable turnover as community members may be inclined to give business to these cafes over others.

Providing more promotion of the program within the community through the media such as the local newspaper, and social media streams could inform the local community of the program and its benefits to members. Cafe staff felt the program should be better publicised as it would be beneficial for people in the community to know which cafes participate so they can support the cafes. In turn this may raise awareness that some people using these cafes are potentially socially isolated and benefit from friendly behaviour.

Constraints

Those involved with running the program often have a lot of responsibility. Time is therefore an issue, as writing up media releases and contacting newspapers can be time consuming. However this will be of significant benefit to café owners and encourage new cafés to be involved in the program.

CHAPTER 3 – 24-HOUR RECALL

Methodology

A five-pass 24-hour recall was used to collect information about the nutritional intake of the Social Café Meals program members [48]. The five steps included 1) The quick list, 2) The forgotten foods list, 3) Time and occasion, 4) The detail and review cycle and 5) The final review probe. After the five-pass recall the members were asked four more questions relating to their dietary intake and their participation in the Social Café Meals Program. A template was designed, based on the five-pass 24-hour recall method. See appendix 4 for a description of the five-pass 24-hour recall method and the template designed to collect the data.

Researchers intended to conduct two 24-hour recalls for each member to compare the diets of new members to those who have participated in the program for many years. For the Inner East members the first was conducted at the end of the in-depth interview and a follow-up phone call two weeks later. For the Inner South members the initial 24-hour recall was conducted at their program orientation and the follow-up two weeks later at their in-depth interview. However, two members from Inner East were lost to follow-up, giving a total sample of 10 for the repeat 24-hour recalls.

Once all dietary data was collected it was entered into FoodWorks for analysis [49]. An Excel database was then created with a summary of the main nutrients under investigation. Qualitative analysis of member diets was also undertaken, using measures such as meal frequency and food choices, this data can be found in appendix 5.

A qualitative description of the group's diet was chosen to give an indication of food habits and trends in this group. This was done as the sample size and number of repeat 24 hour recalls conducted were inadequate to provide sufficient data to represent the mean quantitative intake of macro and micro nutrients, at the individual and group level. It was not possible to increase the sample size or obtain a larger number of repeat recalls due to recruitment and compliance issues [50, 51, 52]. Despite entering the members' diet into FoodWorks the analyses were abandoned as it was not a viable assessment tool for the number of participants in this study [49]. Data collected still provided researchers with good insight into the dietary patterns of the program members. With this information it was possible to qualitatively assess their intake and identify nutritional issues. 24-hour recall is an effective nutrition assessment tool in research with vulnerable population groups as it is quick, has a low participant burden, and gathers enough detail through probing. While this research had an insufficient sample size to conduct a quantitative analysis of the groups mean intake, with a larger sample size and using two repeat recalls this is possible in vulnerable groups as shown by Tarasuk et al [53].

Limitations of 24-hour recall include that the method was dependent on the respondent's ability to recall intake accurately [54]. Some participants were unable to recall the previous days intake and so the day of recalls intake was used. Furthermore, there is a possibility of recall bias where the individual may selectively recall food items, as with all self-report methods. Participants may have not accurately reported intake in household measures, as

the five-pass method requires, and so data collected may be inaccurate. Under reporting was also an issue, in that reported consumption did not correlate with the weight of the member. Under reporting is common when conducting 24-hour recalls [54]. However, the 24-hour recall was the best method to use in this population group as using a 24-hour recall has a relatively low burden on participants, does not alter food intake patterns and the interview process is quick [55]. This is particularly important for the target group as there are often difficulties contacting them, for example due to transient housing, phone accessibility and lower literacy levels limiting written communication. Asking the members about the previous day will give a more accurate reflection on their diet as the target group is unlikely to have a regular meal pattern which makes recalling their average intake difficult [34].

Results and Discussion

Analyses of the 24-hour recalls revealed several key findings. These include: a high consumption of convenience and processed foods, irregular meal pattern, and a low fruit, vegetable and cereal consumption. The most recent Australian National Nutrition Survey carried out in 1995 found that there were some significant differences in nutrition intake amongst disadvantaged groups in comparison to the wider community. Adults living in the most disadvantaged areas had the lowest intakes of most nutrients with the exception of alcohol intake, which was highest for those with a low socio-economic status like all members on the Social Cafe Meals Program [57]. This is consistent with the findings of this study. Whilst there were no marked differences between the first and second 24-hour recalls of program members, there were still some noteworthy comparisons. Members reported a healthier intake on the days that they ate at a cafe as opposed to non-cafe days. In particular fewer processed foods, convenience foods and more fruit and vegetables were consumed.

i. Convenience Foods

Few members regularly prepared homemade meals instead opting for convenience items such as meat pies, hamburgers and take-away bought from outlets including convenience stores, milk bars and fast food restaurants. Almost half of the meals consumed by the members over the assessment period were prepared by the sources mentioned above with one member purchasing six out of seven meals from convenience stores. Possible reasons for this trend include a belief that buying pre-packaged foods is cheaper than cooking it themselves, poor cooking skills and food knowledge, disability, challenges of cooking for one person, motivation and taste preferences [36]. One member was on the 1500 calorie Lite n' Easy meal plan for weight management reasons.

The high prevalence of processed foods in the members' intakes means that their diets are likely high in sodium and saturated fat. Canned foods, pre-packaged chips, bread and processed meats were some significant sources of sodium highlighted by the 24-hour recall data. In addition to processed foods many members used additional table salt. Although sodium intake is difficult to quantify, it can be assumed that with high amounts of processed foods and added salt, the members' diets would be high in sodium. Fat should constitute less than 30% of total energy intake with saturated fats comprising less than 10% [58]. Most

of the members' diets would have exceeded these recommendations as they were consuming large amounts of energy dense foods such as pastries, chips, chocolate bars, fatty meats, full fat dairy and fast food. Diets high in sodium and saturated fat have been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, placing the members at greater risk of adverse health outcomes [59].

ii. Meal Pattern & Frequency

Erratic meal patterns were another characteristic uncovered from the 24-hour recalls. Some members ate their first meal of the day in the late morning and continued eating well into the night. There was little structure to their day perhaps caused by irregular sleeping patterns due to unemployment, medications, high caffeine and alcohol intake and mental health issues [33, 34, 36]. Furthermore, many members consumed large amounts of caffeinated soft drinks and coffee, which may have contributed to this. Kilbourne *et al* also found that those with low socio-economic status often have irregular meal habits [34].

The number of meals consumed by the members per day ranged from two to seven however this did not necessarily predict energy intake. Some members who only had two meals a day, still had adequate or excessive energy intake due to the high energy density of these foods.

iii. Fruit, Vegetables and Cereals

According to the Australian Guide to Healthy eating adults should consume two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables every day [60]. Four out of 10 Social Café Meals members did not eat any fruit at all and two members only drank fruit juice containing high amounts of added sugar and inadequate fibre. Two members consistently ate at least two serves of fruit a day over the assessment period while the remaining three consumed fruit on their first 24-hour recall but not the second. Vegetable consumption amongst members was also low however only one member did not eat any at all. The average number of vegetable serves was 2.4 per day. Few were cooked from fresh vegetables, many were frozen, canned or from emergency food relief. Furthermore, recommendations that individuals consume approximately five serves of breads and cereals per day were rarely achieved. Only one member reported having five serves and the others had a range of only one to three serves of wholegrains in a day. This may be due to the fact that members often opted for energy-dense foods which are considered as extras and are therefore likely to substitute these for bread and cereal products. This poor fruit, vegetable and cereal intake may mean that the members are at risk of multiple micronutrient deficiencies and inadequate fibre consumption.

The National Nutrition Survey found that adults living in the most disadvantaged areas had the highest average intake of vegetable products and dishes, particularly potatoes and cabbage, cauliflower and similar brassica vegetables but a lower mean intake of cereals and cereal products [57]. This is consistent with findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey conducted in 2008, which found that there are a higher proportion of disadvantaged individuals that do not meet the Australian guidelines for adequate fruit and vegetable

intake when compared to the rest of the state. This report also discovered a socio-economic gradient whereby the proportion of people who did not meet these guidelines decreased as income increased [61].

Recommendations

i. Three-pass 24-hour recall for vulnerable groups

Rationale

A five-pass 24-hour recall method was used, however in this sample group the researchers found the extended method was less effective. The five pass method proved to be too long for some members of this group as some became agitated when repeatedly asked similar questions. A better method would be to use the three-pass method as it gathers the data more efficiently and requires less backtracking [53,62].

Constraints

Training on how to perform the three-pass 24-hour recall would be required for the researchers, however this training would be less labour intensive than training for the five-pass recall method. It would also require the development of a new three-pass recall data collection template, however this would require minimal time and effort.

ii. Use of food models or a pictorial serve guidebook

Rationale

Some participants from Inner South were interviewed with the aid of a pictorial serve guidebook. This enabled a more accurate result as participants were able to be asked whether they had eaten more or less than the picture. Portion size models have been shown as a way in the literature to prompt accurate recalls of food quantities [62]. This suggestion would be particularly helpful in the sample group as participants were often unable to quantify accurately in household measures such as cups.

Constraints

Availability of resources could limit this recommendation, however a simple prop such as household measuring cups could be used instead.

iii. Voice record for the 24-hour recall if collecting other qualitative data

Rationale

Sometimes the interviewers found that when the qualitative questions had been answered the participants would tell rich data during the 24-hour recall. This may have been because the participants had built more rapport with the interviewers or because the 24-hour recall acted as a prompt for more data.

Constraints

Location of the interview is a limitation when recording any interview, recording in a quiet position is preferable.

iv. Large sample size

Rationale

Due to limitations around time, a smaller than ideal sample size was interviewed. Having a sample size of at least 20 may mean that data would become saturated and eliminate discrepancies. Furthermore, a larger sample would have enabled quantitative data analysis of the 24-hour recall data and a statistical analysis [53].

Constraints

Recruiting a large number of members to participate in the study may prove to be difficult in these population groups. However offering an incentive such as purchasing a coffee for participants may help overcome this. Moreover, making participation in the evaluation mandatory when members join will help to increase the sample size. This was done with the implementation of the Inner South program and researchers were more easily able to conduct the analysis on these members.

CHAPTER 4 - IMPLICATIONS

Future Research and Implications for Future Practice

- i. **The generation of an evaluation tool with two elements; a Part A component which can be used for all Social Café Meal style programs and then a Part B which can be made specific to each of the programs**

Rationale

As has been identified throughout this report there is a lack of thorough evaluation within the existing nine Social Café Meals style programs currently running in Victoria. All these programs are reaching vulnerable groups in the community with the key aims ranging between food security and social isolation. Therefore validation of these key aims being met with evidence the program is working, is necessary for the continued funding and expansion of programs. A universal evaluation tool would enable this evidence to be collated in addition to comparisons being attainable between programs. The generation of comparisons between programs would allow for continual improvements to be made, through learning about successes or weakness existing in other programs.

Part A of the evaluation tool would involve elements that are broad enough to evaluate all the programs and could include; a set of in-depth interview questions to gain the lived experience of participants, a survey with questions regarding food habits, financial status and social interactions as a result of the program in addition to collecting records of frequency of use of the cafes. The in-depth interviews could then undergo a thematic analysis similar to that used within this project and the survey questions and frequency of use records could be used to develop statistics. Part B would be the organisations own personal inclusions into their evaluation, for instance those programs that specifically target social isolation could include more questions around community connectedness, as compared to those with a greater emphasis on targeting food insecurity having more questions regarding food security.

This evaluation tool would allow flexibility within evaluation of programs due to the inclusion of Part B which would make it more specific to the program being evaluated and its key aims, while the Part A section would provide a valuable foundation from which the evaluation can stem and allow comparisons between all programs currently in place.

Constraints

The creation of a universal evaluation tool would require a team approach from all key people involved in the Social Café Meals Programs. As these programs exist throughout Victoria, team meetings would be difficult to organise as well as being time and labour intensive. In terms of undertaking thematic analysis not everyone would have conducted these before and hence training would be required. Issues with ethics could potentially arise due to the people involved within each program, such as children or people with mental disabilities, and funding for resources, including researchers and people to develop the tool would be difficult to obtain.

ii. Development of a survey tool

Rationale

The new HACC funded program at Inner East will require an evaluation; therefore there is a need for the development of a survey tool to use during the 12-month pilot of this new program. The development of a survey which could be conducted at baseline, the sixth month point and the ending of the pilot after 12months would enable a thorough evaluation of the positive and negative experiences, any problems incurred, potential improvements and an overall sense of how the program has run. Evaluation is essential within this pilot project to ensure that the program's success can be documented through clear evidence to support its continued operation and funding.

The survey would need to contain questions that covered the elements of social, psychological and financial benefits, food security and frequency of use. The answers of these questions can be then used to develop statistics, which can be used as an evidence base once the 12-month pilot is completed. Having the surveys conducted at baseline, 6months and at the end would allow for trends to be recorded and potentially linked to the effects of being included within the program.

The evaluation outlined in this report will enable the development of more targeted survey questions to be generated and used within this pilot program.

Constraints

As the new program is being implemented by the council there would need to be a worker from Inner East's existing program involved in the creation of the survey to give more depth and understanding of the program's characteristics. Developing a survey would incur time, resources and funding, all of which may be difficult to obtain. Contacting members on this program can be difficult due to their transient lifestyle therefore the completion of three surveys from all members could be hard to obtain.

iii. Evaluating whether Social Café Meals is meeting its overall goal

Rationale

Research conducted either through employed workers at organisations or student based projects would enable an evaluation on whether the Social Café Meals Projects are meeting their overall goals.

At Inner South Community Health Centre an evaluation on whether the Social Café Meals is meeting its goal of increasing social cohesion amongst the wider Inner South Community and improving the physical health amongst these individuals. This would be measured through its objectives of increased participation for Social Café Meals participants in community life, improved community attitudes towards marginalised community members, increased capacity of cafes to support socially isolated community members and increased confidence and knowledge in accessing local services. At Inner East Community Health Service the evaluation would be centred around whether the Social Café Meals improves social isolation, food access and food security amongst rooming house residents in Boorondara.

These evaluations would provide rich information about whether these programs goals and targets are being met and allow for future improvements and adjustments to be made so that these goals are met. It would also provide additional evidence towards the continuation of current projects and the programs expansion to other areas.

Constraints

Completing research projects is complex and requires time, resources and funding. These three elements can be challenging to attain. The goals of these programs are broad and may be difficult to measure without strong guidance and adequate background knowledge of the program and its participants. Furthermore working with vulnerable groups can create difficulties with obtaining ethics approval due to the nature of the research. Using students is preferable with research projects such as these as they do not have a bias objective as workers from with health services may hold.

Conclusion

This qualitative evaluation gained the lived experience of people involved in the Social Café Meals Program and provides new evidence supporting the positive impacts of this program. The findings build on literature and previous studies conducted into the program. Social Café Meals benefits program members by increasing access to food, bringing about social cohesion and improving community connectedness. Members involved within the program have difficulties in prioritising their health and many experience an inability to access food, hence the program enables these members, who are vulnerable in the community due to financial barriers and social isolation, to have increased food security. This includes decreased reliance on emergency food relief rather offering a more sustainable solution. It emerged that all participants in the program felt more connected to the community as a result of their involvement and enabled members to gain greater confidence and break out of the social isolation cycle, facilitating return to normal society. The program was found to be a catalyst for developing new relationships and increasing overall social connections. The cafe environment, including staff qualities, layout and location, was apparent in having a major role in encouraging the return of members to cafes. In addition the café staff also benefited by being part of the program. Café staff found their involvement to be personally rewarding with recognition of their work from the community improving business and encouraging their continued involvement. This research will provide an evidence base for guidance in communities considering implementing a project similar to this and promote the continual running of current program.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Eligibility

Eligibility for Inner South's program (Social spoons)

Socially isolated individuals living within the ISCHS catchment area (in the Cities of Port Phillip and Stonington). These may include people living in rooming houses, people who receive delivered meals, people living with mental illness, people with a disability, single parents and individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Eligibility for Inner South's program (Social Café Meals Program)

Individuals living in rooming houses in Boroondara.

Appendix 2 – Code, Category and Themes List

| Theme 1: Improving Food Security in Vulnerable Groups | | |
|---|---|--|
| Categories | Codes | |
| Nutrition | Quality meals | Poor quality intake |
| | Hunger | Encourages nutrition |
| | Healthy meals | Opportunity to eat |
| | Healthier alternative | Provision of nutrition |
| | Nutritious | Poor nutrition |
| | Malnourished | Reliance on convenience meals |
| | Good food | Possesses cooking skills |
| | Nutrition as a priority | Cooking as a social activity |
| | Nourished | Providing well based nutritional foods |
| | Underweight | Better/healthier alternative |
| | Acquiring nutrition knowledge & skills | Supplements other intake |
| | Broadening nutrition choices | Nutritious food |
| | Good meals | Food not a priority |
| | Encourages good eating | Delicious food |
| | Less bingeing | Substantial meals |
| | Wanting to make healthy choices | Program supplements diet |
| | Considering nutritional value of take out | Other priorities - food not top |
| | Improving nutrition | Quality meals |
| | Consequential healthy eating | Health reasons for restaurant choice |
| | Changing food habits/making healthier decisions | Healthier food- difficult to make healthy choices on own |
| | Confident in own food choices | Good food |
| | Healthier meals | Food variety |
| | Health reasons | Good portions |
| | Perception of healthy food at cafe | Variety of meals |
| | Food choices | Enjoying consuming a meal |
| | Increased variety of food | Don't have to cook |
| | Regular meals | Not enough meals a week |
| | Poor diet | Enjoys food |
| | Poor nutritional intake | Improves nutrition |
| Economics | Economic benefits | Cost of food |
| | Economical | Perceived value for money |
| | Profits from inclusion | Financial difficulties |
| | Encourages return | Low income |
| | Small monetary contribution | Running out of money |
| | Financial incentive | Good value |
| | Money trends | Good value for money |
| | Decreased burden | Understands the economy |
| | Reduced cost | Affordable |
| | Cheaper alternative | Saving money/discount |
| | Increased earnings | Financial benefits |
| | Increased customers | Helps with budgeting |
| | Cost of living (value for money) | Meal subsidies |
| | Affordable meals | Indefinite participation |
| | Affordable food | Financial help |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>Economical benefits not important</p> <p>Cheap meals</p> <p>Money pressure alleviated</p> <p>Financial hardship</p> <p>Decreased economic burden</p> <p>Small budget</p> <p>Reduce % of \$ on food in budget</p> | <p>Money wise</p> <p>Breaking out of poverty cycle</p> <p>No more hunger</p> <p>Alternative to emergency food relief</p> <p>Emergency relief abnormal situation</p> <p>Uncomfortable at food halls</p> |
| Access | <p>Location</p> <p>Decreased cost facilitates access</p> <p>Easier to go to cafe than make own food</p> <p>Location to home</p> | <p>Transport</p> <p>Local to area</p> <p>Carer transport (can drive to cafe)</p> <p>Closer to home (member prefers cafes cth)</p> |
| Member Characteristics | <p>Disadvantaged</p> <p>Behaviour of members</p> <p>Social anxiety of members</p> <p>Low income</p> <p>Social isolation</p> <p>Low confidence</p> <p>Well behaved</p> <p>Appreciation</p> <p>Self-conscious (about being malnourished)</p> <p>Low income</p> <p>Mental illness</p> <p>Involved in programs</p> <p>Free time</p> <p>Isolated</p> <p>Insecure</p> <p>Concerned with nutritional status</p> <p>Lack of motivation to cook</p> <p>Spare time</p> <p>Embarrassed</p> <p>Has had financial difficulties in the past</p> <p>Nervous</p> <p>Disadvantaged group</p> <p>Good participants</p> <p>Changed perception of members</p> <p>Surprise</p> <p>Members blend in</p> <p>Bachelor habits/lazy</p> <p>Low motivation (Group mentality)</p> <p>Impoverished</p> <p>Require nutrition</p> <p>Need meals</p> <p>Social Isolation</p> <p>Poor nutrition knowledge</p> <p>Some members have bad attitudes/wrong message</p> | <p>Disability/mental illness</p> <p>Targets marginalised</p> <p>In need</p> <p>Significant life event/disability</p> <p>Frequently uses</p> <p>Health services</p> <p>Involved in other activities</p> <p>Frequent Use</p> <p>Regular customer</p> <p>Negative about non-users</p> <p>Takes advantage of program</p> <p>Past issues</p> <p>Lack of community involvement</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Lonely</p> <p>Depression</p> <p>Embarrassed at the beginning</p> <p>Little community involvement</p> <p>Moved</p> <p>Transient</p> <p>Other priorities</p> <p>Not alone - in situation</p> <p>Lack of power</p> <p>Unemployed</p> <p>Able to self care</p> <p>Responsible</p> <p>Lack of knowledge</p> <p>No transport</p> <p>Isolated</p> <p>Mental health issues</p> <p>Health problems</p> <p>Trying to make a normal life</p> <p>Doesn't understand program goal</p> |
| How Participants Became Involved | <p>Approached</p> <p>Staff decision</p> <p>Need for program</p> | <p>Easy - Minimal trouble</p> <p>Community connection</p> <p>Existing contacts</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | Linked to healthcare centre Referred Program suggested by health care worker Encouraged to participate Encouraged Recommended Experience Location of cafe Inclusive staff Alerted Referral (from service) Applied/application | Contacted IECHS Initiated participation Approached Introduced Word-of-mouth Recommendation Links to services Offered program Commitment to program Community BBQ Links to IECHS |
| Theme 2: Creating Community Cohesiveness | | |
| Categories | Codes | |
| Psychological Benefits | Happier Motivating (to take care of diet) Lifts spirits Nerves and anxiety associated with going out is decreasing Alleviates stress of social interactions Psychological connections Psychological benefits Social anxiety (prior to program) - improves with each visit | Uplifting spirits Improved mental health Raise spirits Decreased stress Sense of belonging Increased quality of life Greater confidence |
| Social Benefits | Social benefits Social inclusion Friendship Relationship Communication Encourages return Conversations with members Relationships with members Friends Support system Members enjoyment Belonging Social interaction Exploring more places Civic engagement Community connection Meeting people Improves communication Social aspects most important Meeting new people Increased social interaction | Accepted into society Helping to get involved in the community Opportunity to get out of the house Improve isolation Acknowledges social benefits may take time Confident relationships will build over time Provides place to meet &/or make new friends Wants to contribute to community Concerns for others (on the program) Social inclusion Social interaction Social connection Cooking as a social activity Dislike of cooking for one Social interaction Friendship Relationships Meeting place Opportunity to meet friends Opportunity to meet new people Community involvement |

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| | <p>Lack of strong relationship with staff</p> <p>Wants social connections</p> <p>Wants community involvement (outside SCMP)</p> <p>SCMP fosters community involvement</p> <p>Increased community connections</p> <p>Lack of strong relationship with staff</p> <p>Wants social connections</p> <p>Wants community involvement (outside SCMP)</p> <p>SCMP fosters community involvement</p> <p>Increased community connections</p> <p>Breaking out of social isolation</p> <p>Positive about possibility of meeting new people</p> <p>Place to bring friends</p> <p>Increased social connections</p> <p>Meeting people (cafe staff and users)</p> <p>Face-to-face contact</p> | <p>Being like the rest of society</p> <p>Conversing</p> <p>Part of normality</p> <p>Sense of belonging/normality</p> <p>Being part of society/community</p> <p>Social benefits</p> <p>Social contact</p> <p>Sense of living</p> <p>Peoples company</p> <p>Greater social connections</p> <p>Connections</p> <p>Not socially interactive with others (-ve)</p> <p>Relationship with owners</p> <p>Social interaction everyday</p> <p>Involvement</p> <p>Place to meet up with friends</p> |
| Personal Benefits | <p>Satisfaction</p> <p>Fulfillment</p> <p>Personal gratification</p> <p>Proprietor satisfaction</p> <p>Good experience</p> <p>Eye-opening experience</p> <p>Meeting new people</p> <p>Something different</p> <p>Enjoyable experience</p> <p>Improves communication skills</p> <p>Learning new skills</p> <p>Self-developing skills</p> <p>Funds social activity</p> <p>New food experiences</p> <p>Pushing comfort zone</p> <p>Independence</p> <p>Therapeutic</p> <p>Inspired</p> <p>Personal sense of fulfillment/ happiness</p> | <p>Doing good</p> <p>Contributing to society</p> <p>Sense of well-being</p> <p>Lifestyle improvements</p> <p>Accepted into society</p> <p>Way of introduction back to normal society</p> <p>Being part of society</p> <p>Valuing their own contribution</p> <p>Less reliance on own cooking</p> <p>Increased ability to function</p> <p>Greater Physical Activity</p> <p>More functional capacity</p> <p>Personal satisfaction</p> <p>Easier lifestyle</p> <p>More time</p> <p>Contribution aids sense of belonging</p> <p>Meeting expectations</p> <p>Ease of process</p> |
| Outcomes of Program | <p>Helping community</p> <p>Helping less fortunate</p> <p>Giving</p> <p>Helping others</p> <p>Supporting community</p> <p>Opportunity to help</p> <p>Contribute to community</p> <p>Convenient opportunity to help</p> <p>Supporter of community</p> <p>Community orientated</p> <p>Target disadvantaged</p> <p>Connections to target</p> | <p>Encourages good eating behaviours</p> <p>Wanting to give back to the community</p> <p>Wants to go out more regularly</p> <p>Welcoming attitude improves social anxiety</p> <p>Expanding transport knowledge</p> <p>Exploring new areas</p> <p>Experiencing more culture</p> <p>Community interaction</p> <p>Exercise</p> <p>"Fellow pts" separate from friends</p> <p>New experiences</p> <p>Good for business</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>Opportunity</p> <p>Meeting needs</p> <p>Community involvement</p> <p>Social interactions</p> <p>Connections</p> <p>Linking services</p> <p>Increasing connections</p> <p>Community links</p> <p>Promotes regular attendance</p> <p>Relationship between services</p> <p>Meeting new people</p> <p>Improves communication skills</p> <p>Utilising program (from start)</p> | <p>Increase business in quiet times</p> <p>Personal gain</p> <p>Decreased reliance on program</p> <p>Understands the process of work</p> <p>Allows eating out</p> <p>No change- community involvement</p> <p>Trying to return to normal</p> <p>Distances self from people with problems</p> <p>Incentive to come back</p> <p>Proprietor recognition</p> <p>Community recognition</p> <p>Eating out</p> <p>Increased motivation to participate in community activities</p> |
| Theme 3: Role of environment in facilitating program use | | |
| Categories | Codes | |
| Environment of Café | <p>Suitability of restaurant</p> <p>Welcoming</p> <p>Suitable location</p> <p>Variety of customers</p> <p>Creates comfort</p> <p>Inviting</p> <p>Openness</p> <p>Accommodating</p> <p>Convenience of location</p> <p>Location</p> <p>Travel and transport</p> <p>Enticing</p> <p>Availability</p> <p>Access</p> <p>Comforting environment</p> <p>Ample supplies</p> <p>Time intensive*-ve</p> <p>Delayed payment*-ve</p> <p>Expansion issues (suitability)</p> <p>Limited member visits (location, trading hours)</p> <p>Uncertain</p> <p>Friendly staff</p> <p>Welcoming/Welcomed</p> <p>Familiar</p> <p>Friendly café</p> <p>Negative environment at EFR centres</p> <p>Comfortable</p> | <p>Comfortable environment</p> <p>Friendly café</p> <p>Charming staff</p> <p>Friendly staff</p> <p>Appropriate cafes</p> <p>Welcoming</p> <p>Larger cafes</p> <p>Nicer environment of cafe (zappa)</p> <p>Good atmosphere</p> <p>Good environment</p> <p>Good ambiance</p> <p>open/inclusive/friendly environment</p> <p>Friendly environment</p> <p>Natural setting</p> <p>Just like any other cafe</p> <p>Good service</p> <p>Equally treated</p> <p>Atmosphere</p> <p>Meeting place</p> <p>Appropriately behaved people- socially inclusive</p> <p>Not marginalised</p> <p>Having company</p> <p>Easy</p> <p>Flexibility</p> <p>Uncomfortable at food halls</p> <p>Philanthropic cafe</p> |
| Role of Staff | <p>Serving customers</p> <p>Provide meals</p> <p>Organise</p> | <p>Facilitate</p> <p>Supporting role</p> <p>Facilitating role</p> |

| | Reconcile Communication | Management |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Staff Qualities | Encouraging maximum utilisation Understanding Generous Charitable Creates comfort Inviting Openness Accommodating Caring Friends Lenient Teaching Assessment of behaviour Perceptive of members Reading customers Caution Concern | Considerate Judgment of members Welcomed program Interest in program Commitment to program Happy to help Providing additional Helpful Promotes regular attendance Increasing members experience Equity Not discriminating Cafe staff recognise him Welcoming and inclusive Friendliness of staff Non-judgmental |
| Program Improvement s | Low variety of foods None needed Need more cafes on program (better locations) Convenient locations desired Wants more meals More staff at cafes Occasional bad experience Values not in line with program Poor customer service Management perception Inadequate commitment Lack of help Lack of understanding Not the right attitude/poor attitude Not meeting particular qualities Need to be more in line with program vision | Screening process required Better attitudes required Selection criteria Poor/unsuitable behaviour from cafes Being in line with program Philosophy Need better understanding (of program values) Expanding use to all Cafes/spreading meals out Better promotion required Expand program More cafes Better location required Convenient location Some members need more Encouragement Lack of enthusiasm for community activities Community activities need more promotion |
| Participants Perceptions | Satisfying criteria (meeting aims) Supporting local business/community Brilliant program Believe in and value program Satisfied with program (Sad if discontinued) Fond of staff Enjoys program Highly recommend program Well run Effective program | Equity Caring attitude (something cafes should have) Grateful to proprietor Appreciating effort Accepted Welcomed Friendly staff Feels he is a burden/doesn't Belong Discriminated Ostracised |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | Trust (relationship with cafe owner) Good program vision Helping unfortunate Program achieving aims Convenient program | Good service Fantastic program Challenge Excited Satisfied with program |
| Theme 4: Rewarding Community Contributions | | |
| Categories | Codes | |
| Program Characteristics | Minimal trouble No problems Expectations of members Not imposing on business Flexible program Minimal burden No preconceptions Adaptable program | No expectations Time availability Effort Smooth running Perceives program as positive Aligned with values Immediate results |
| Recognition of Involvement | Publicity Word of mouth Advertisement of café Recognition of proprietor work Promotion of cafe Promotion of services Expanding client base Incidental promotion | Promotion of activities Wanting more participants Needs advertisement More promotion Limited member visits Has greater reach Recognises the contribution of the program (cafes giving) Feels privileged to be on program |

Appendix 3: Explanatory & Consent Form

3.1 Explanatory Statement

Title: Community Health Service Social Inclusion Project

My name is <?> and I am a student dietitian at Inner South / Inner East Community Health Service. Together with Liza Wallis and Anthony Bernadi from <?> and Dr Claire Palermo from the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at Monash University we are collecting information on your experiences of participating in the social café meals program.

You have been identified as a participant of the social café meals program of Inner South or Inner East Community Health Service. We have obtained your details from the register of the social café meals program. We are interested in hearing the stories of your experiences of participating in the social café meals program and talking to you about your usually food intake. We believe that your views and experiences will be able to improve this program into the future.

While I know your name, your name or any other personal, health or sensitive information will not be recorded or asked of you during this interview. All information collected will be anonymous. If you experience distress as part of participating in this interview you can contact the LifeLine on 13 11 14 or Community Health free Counselling Services on Inner South – **Phone: 9690 9144** or Inner East – Phone: 9818 6703.

The study will involve audio taping the interview. Responses from interviews will then be sorted, analysed and interpreted. The results of in-depth interviews will then be compiled into a report by November 2011 which you will be able to access by contacting <?>.

Participation in this interview is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw prior to the data from your interview being transcribed. Every attempt to maintain the confidentiality or anonymity of participants will be maintained. Your participation in this interview implies your consent. The data collected from the interview will be anonymous and your responses will not be able to be identified. Whether you participate or not in this research does not in any way influence whether you can access our services. According to university protocol the surveys will be kept in a locked file for five years and will remain confidential.

| | |
|---|--|
| If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator: | If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research is being conducted, please contact: |
| <?> | Human Ethics Officer Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH) Building 3e Room 111 Research Office Monash University VIC 3800 Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Fax: +61 3 9905 1420 Email: scerh@monash.edu |

Thank you
<?>

3.2 Consent Form – Social Café Meals participants

Title: **Community Health Service Social Inclusion Project**

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researcher for their records

I agree to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

| | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I agree to be interviewed by the researcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw prior to the interview being transcribed without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party.

I understand that data from the interview will be kept in a secure storage and accessible to the researcher. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research.

Participant's name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix 4 - Template for five-pass 24-hour recall

4.1 – Description of the five-pass recall method

A method of dietary analysis, which involves five steps of collecting information about the food and drinks consumed within the 24-hour period of the previous day. The 5 steps are:

1. Quick list – the individual is asked to list all of the foods they remember eating the previous day
2. The forgotten foods list – asking the individual about specific foods and drinks they may have forgotten from a specified list
3. Time and occasion of food and drinks
4. Probes about the foods eaten – amount, kind, brand, fat used, form, whether it was homemade or commercial, preparation, type and ingredients
5. Review and final probe – individual is asked if there is anything else they have not yet mentioned

These five steps are followed with a few final questions regarding whether it is a usual days intake, water source and use of salt

4.2 Five-pass 24-hour recall template

| Step 1 - Quick List | Step 4 – Detail (Kind, brand, fat used, form, source, prep, type, ingredients, quantity) and Review (Of meal and between meals) |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Step 3 - Meal (Occasion): -Time: | |
| Step 3 - Meal (Occasion): - Time: | |
| Step 3 - Meal (Occasion): - Time: | |
| Step 3 - Meal (Occasion): - Time: | |
| Step 3 - Meal (Occasion): - Time: | |
| Step 3 - Meal (Occasion): - Time: | |

Step 2 – Forgotten Foods List

| Food Group Examples | Items omitted in the quick list |
|--|--|
| Beverages – coffee, tea, soft drink, milk or juice | |
| Other Drinks – Beer, wine, cocktails, or other drinks | |
| Sweets – Cookies, lollies, ice cream, or other sweets | |
| Snacks – chips, crackers, popcorn, pretzels, nuts or other snack foods | |
| Fruits, vegetables, cheese | |
| Breads – Breads, rolls or tortillas | |
| Anything else | |

Step 5 – Final Review Probe

Ask one more time if they can remember anything else they ate or drank in the previous day.

Other Questions

1. Is the amount of food and drink you just reported usual, less than, or more than usual?
2. Do you use salt at the table or in your cooking? How frequently (rarely, occasionally or very frequently)?
3. How often do you get a meal using the Social Café Meals Program (How many times a week)?
4. Do you ever visit the cafés involved in the Social Café Meals Program more than the three times per week (the amount of times you can get a subsidised meal with the card).

Appendix 5 – 24-hour recall data

Table 5.1 Number of serves of each food group from each Social Café Meals Members interviewed

| Participant | 1A | 2A | 3A | 4A | 5A | 6A | 1B | 2B | 3B | 4B | 5B | 6B |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|-----|----|-----|----------|----|
| Fruit (initial) | 2.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Fruit (repeat) | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 1 | 1 | 4 | | 0 | 0 |
| Veg (initial) | 5.5 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Veg (repeat) | | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | | 4 | 2 | 0 | | 4 | 1 |
| Bread (initial) | 3 | 3 | 0.5 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Bread (repeat) | | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | | 5 | 1 | 0 | | 2 | 4 |
| Dairy (initial) | 1 | 1.5 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2.5 | 1.5 | 1 |
| Dairy (repeat) | | 2 | 1.5 | 2 | 3 | | 1.5 | 1 | 3 | | 0.7 5 | 1 |
| Meat (initial) | 0 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3.7 5 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1.5 | 1 |
| Meat (repeat) | | 2 | 5 | 0.5 | 3 | | 3 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 |
| Extras (initial) | 2 | 4 | 8.5 | 8 | 1.5 | 0 | 4 | 1.5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Extras (repeat) | | 5 | 7 | 4 | 1 | | 4 | 1 | 4 | | 0 | 1 |
| No. Meals (initial) | 7 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| No. meals (repeat) | | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| No. snacks (initial) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| No. snacks (repeat) | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | | 0 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| No. non-water beverages 250ml (initial) | 2 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 3.6 | 11 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| No. non-water beverages 250ml (repeat) | | 4 | 8 | 4 | 7 | | 2.4 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 3.5 | 3 |

Note:

- Most meals were eaten out of the home or pre-packaged
- Participant 1A and 6A were lost to follow up hence there is no data for the repeat recall