

Food and You - Secondary Analysis - Waves 1-2

Area of research interest: [Food and You](#)

Study duration: 2013-11-01

Project code: FS409012

Conducted by: NatCen

Background

This project involved a quantitative and qualitative peer review of the re-developed Index of Recommended Practice (IRP) - our composite measure of food safety behaviour, using data from Waves 1-2 of the Food and You survey. Findings from the peer reviews informed a deliberative workshop, which led to a number of revisions to the IRP.

Food and You is a biennial, random probability survey providing information on reported behaviours, attitudes, and knowledge relating to food safety and other food-related issues. [Food and You wave one](#) was conducted in 2010, [Food and You wave two](#) in 2012 and [Food and You wave three](#) in 2014.

A composite measure of domestic food safety practice – the Index of Recommended Practice (IRP) – was developed at Wave 2, which was subsequently re-developed internally as a tool for tracking progress across different waves. This peer review of the re-developed IRP was commissioned in 2013 by our organisation, using data from Waves 1-2 of the Food and You, in order to specifically evaluate it against the stated aims of tracking progress towards improving public awareness and use of messages about good food hygiene practice at home, and gathering data on domestic food safety practices in order to inform future policies on food safety.

Research Approach

The specific research objective for this project was to peer review our redeveloped composite measure as a tool to track progress towards our strategic objective to 'improve public awareness and use of messages about good food hygiene practices at home', and also as a tool for increasing our understanding of domestic food safety practices in order to inform policy and communications strategies.

The peer review of the redeveloped IRP consisted of both a quantitative and qualitative review. The quantitative review considered the technical construction of the IRP, whether the construction was fit for purpose, and considered how weighting of different variables would affect the IRP, and the conclusions which can be drawn from analysis using this tool. The qualitative review considered whether the questions included in the composite were the most relevant questions, and also whether questions should be weighted in terms of food safety 'importance'.

Findings from the peer reviews informed a deliberative workshop, which was held to consider further amendments to the IRP.

Results

Following the deliberative workshop, a number of changes to the IRP were recommended in response to the reviews and recommendations from the workshop, the main changes were:

- Questions that measure knowledge should either be removed from the new IRP entirely or combined with the related behaviour, in order to address the issue of ascribing high scores to respondents who self-reported knowledge of Recommended Practice but who did not report the associated behaviour
- Groups or pairs of questions that measure the same form of behaviour should be combined to reduce the duplication of information
- A threshold should be applied for the number of questions a respondent must answer before a score can be derived, in order to facilitate comparisons between respondents

The new (revised) IRP is now constructed using 16 questions from Food and You. These questions can be used to measure 10 domestic food safety behaviours. Each item is scored 1 for RP responses or 0 for non-RP. Respondents answering less than half (five) of the 10 items do not receive a score.

With the changes made to the construction of the index following the review, we can have confidence that the IRP is a robust tool which can be used to explore domestic food safety practices and track changes in these practices over time. The new IRP has been used as analytical tool for a number of further secondary analysis projects using data from Waves 1-2 of Food and you, including:

- an exploration of variation in reported food safety practices by demographic, socio-economic and other variables
- investigation into the relationship between food safety and nutrition

This was also a key analytical tool for future waves and secondary analysis papers including [wave three of Food and You](#) and [wave four of Food and You](#).

The revised dataset, including syntax for constructing the revised Index of Recommended Practice (IRP) will be archived on the [Essex Data Archive](#).

Research reports

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

[View Understanding domestic food safety practices as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (1.33 MB)

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

[View Measuring domestic food safety A review of the Index of Recommended Practice as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (857.13 KB)

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

[View Eating safe and well links between nutrition and food safety practices as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (1.13 MB)

Team Contacts

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