



Heart  
Research  
UK



# HEALTHY HEARTS COOKING PROGRAMME

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## OUTCOME REPORT



Nutrition  
Scotland



## THE PROGRAMME

Healthy Hearts was a cooking programme developed by Nutrition Scotland, that aimed to improve knowledge and skills with heart-healthy practical cooking classes and nutrition information sessions. Supported by our partners at Pollock United and funded by Heart Research UK, the programme hoped to raise awareness of risk factors for cardiovascular disease (CVD) and help participants to better understand the role our diet plays. The programme was offered to residents in the Corkerhill area of Glasgow, and was targeted towards those experiencing disadvantage, whether that be social, physical and/or mental.



### What the Programme Involved

Healthy Hearts was a 6 week programme, where participants learned about a different nutritional topic each week. Topics were linked to a heart-healthy recipe that participants would cook during each 2 hour session at Corkerhill Community Hub. Participants each had their own cooking stations, equipment and ingredients and would cook along with a Nutrition Scotland team member who helped to demonstrate and guide them through. We discussed and provided resources around eating a healthy diet, reducing salt intake, reducing red and processed meat, increasing fibre, including healthy fats and the benefits of cooking from scratch. We also created 6 short animated videos on each topic in order to both support course participants and to expand the project's reach.



### Programme Cohort

We ran **5 courses** between January and November 2022

**26 participants**  
from Corkerhill took part  
in the programme



## PROGRAMME AIMS

The programme aimed to increase knowledge around nutrition and health, increase confidence in cooking from scratch and making heart healthy choices, and increase social connection following the Covid-19 pandemic.

We did this by:

- developing simple, affordable healthy recipes and demonstrating how to cook them from scratch
- giving participants the opportunity to learn about cooking and nutrition at each session from a Public Health Nutritionist
- creating an inclusive and supportive environment in sessions to encourage learning, discussion and relationship building
- creating educational resources, such as factsheets and videos to support learning

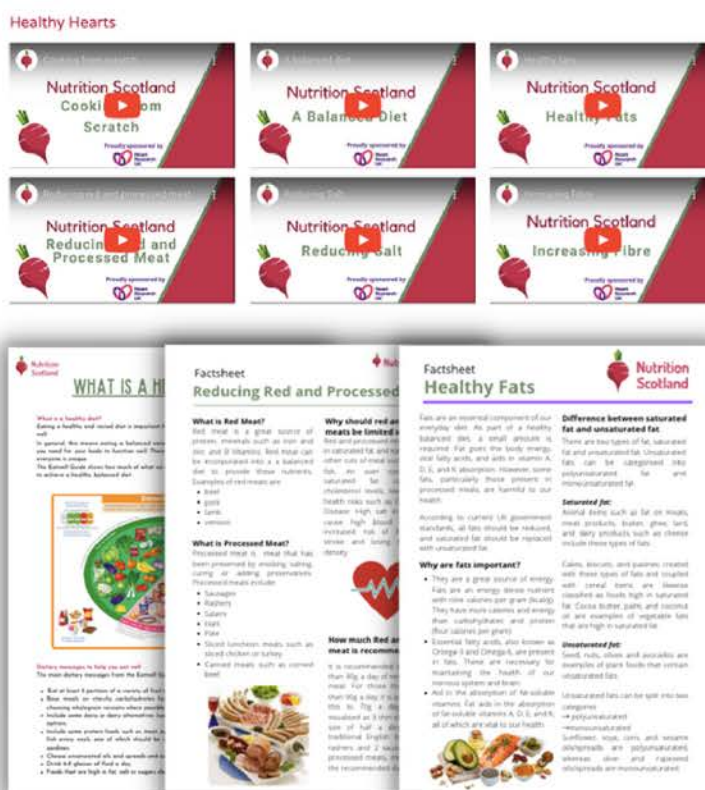




## RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Animated videos were developed to support participants' learning around the programme's 6 nutrition topics. The videos were designed to convey heart-healthy food messages in an engaging and simple way. The videos were made available on the video page of Nutrition Scotland's website ([www.nutritionscotland.org](http://www.nutritionscotland.org)) and the Heart Research UK website ([www.heartresearch.org.uk](http://www.heartresearch.org.uk)). Additionally, we promoted the videos through our social media channels to engage a wider audience.

Hard-copy factsheets with more detailed information around each nutrition topic were developed and given to participants at each session to further support learning. Digital copies of these factsheets were also made available to download from the Nutrition Scotland website.



## RECIPE DEVELOPMENT

Recipes were developed to compliment the 6 key nutrition messages of the programme: eating a healthy diet, reducing red and processed meat, including healthy fats, reducing salt, increasing fibre and the benefits of cooking from scratch. Recipes were costed to ensure they were affordable, analysed to ensure they were nutritionally balanced and tested to ensure they were tasty. Recipes were tailored in sessions to meet participants' dietary requirements.



Recipes from left to right; top to bottom: Tomato pasta, vegetable chilli, salmon noodles, vegetable burritos, sweet potato and chickpea curry, lentil bolognese.



## PARTNERSHIP WITH POLLOCK UNITED

Pollok United are based in Corkerhill, operating out of the Community Hub, and they have close links with Glasgow Housing Association. After reopening their hub following Covid, they were offering events and activities for the local community. They held sessions promoting health and wellbeing and physical activity that helped address the effects of the pandemic and lockdowns. As such, adding our Healthy Hearts programme to the hub's list of services and working in partnership with Pollock United was a good fit.



Having strong community links in the area, Pollock United were responsible for recruiting participants to the Healthy Hearts programme. This allowed us to ensure we were inviting the people that would benefit most onto the course. We felt the social connection and group learning would help motivate individuals that may be struggling with their mental and/or physical health and that may be at increased risk of CVD. Pollock United were able to help us reach these individuals.



## WHY THE PROGRAMME IS IMPORTANT

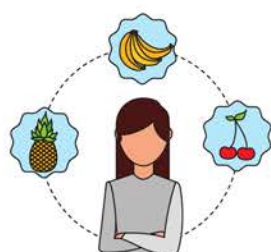
Glasgow is the most deprived city and local authority within Scotland. Poverty is a strong determinant of health.<sup>1</sup> For example, in the most deprived areas of Glasgow, male and female life expectancy from birth is 13.5 and 10.7 years lower respectively than the least deprived areas. Corkerhill is in the 2nd decile in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) with 1st being the most deprived and 10th being the least deprived. CVD is a major cause of death and disability in Scotland, people living in the most deprived areas are at greater risk of early death and reduced healthy life expectancy.<sup>2</sup>

A healthy diet can help reduce the risk of CVD. The Scottish Dietary Goals were developed to promote healthier eating and improve health outcomes within Scotland.<sup>3</sup> However, high levels of deprivation remain a significant barrier to achieving these goals.<sup>4</sup> Addressing these health inequalities within Glasgow is vital for improving the health and wellbeing across all generations. Cooking skill interventions can have a positive effect on food literacy, particularly in improving confidence in cooking and fruit and vegetable consumption, with vulnerable, low-socioeconomic groups gaining more benefits.<sup>5</sup>



## BARRIERS TO HEALTHY EATING

At the beginning of the programme, we asked participants what the main barriers to healthy eating in their household were. The responses from the survey are expressed below.



45%

Motivation



30%

Cost



30%

Kitchen  
skills



25%

Taste



25%

Fussy Eating



15%

Nutrition  
knowledge



0%

Time

We used this information to inform how we delivered the programme. We wanted to reduce barriers to healthy eating and cooking from scratch by motivating participants through the face-to-face sessions, increasing their confidence through developing kitchen skills, and improving their nutrition knowledge through information sharing and education. We were able to help address barriers like cost by providing ingredients and equipment, and taste and fussy eating by providing tailored recipes and advice and giving participants the chance to try new things.



## PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Cooking meals from scratch can be healthier and can help to reduce salt, sugar and saturated fat content which is good for heart health.

83%

said that the programme helped them to make more heart-healthy choices



100%

said the programme helped to reduce barriers to cooking from scratch

## PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Out of the 20 participants who completed the post-programme survey...



86%

said that they felt more **confident** about cooking from scratch

83%

said the programme improved their **knowledge** of nutrition



100%

said the programme helped them to meet new people

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my classes learning to cook healthier options"

"I feel I have learnt a lot and I am very grateful for the programme"

"The course was outstanding"

"It has helped my mental health"

"I loved the easy learning nature of the course"

## What people liked about the programme...

"Swapping knowledge, meeting new people, trying new recipes"

"This class has helped me to cook more"

"I enjoyed that it brought people together and I gained knowledge in healthy foods"

"Learned lots, good fun, great tutor, tasty grub!"

"All of it!"

## REFERENCES

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