

Creating and running successful cook and eat courses

Led by: Andrea Redwood

Cookery clubs in Greenwich

- Started in 2003.
- Facilitators are placed on a 16-week training course.
- Follows the Luton model designed for the Asian community to deal with heart problems, diabetes and obesity.
- First assessed needs in Greenwich – many people didn't know how to shop, cook or budget in order to live more healthily.
- Run through the OCN – Open College Network – who are about to start a second course (including Bexley).
- GDCA – now running them throughout London (although some only want to take on 12-week courses).
- They can also be tailored for particular community groups such as women only (especially in Muslim areas), the elderly or those suffering from mental illness, as well as for particular ethnic groups e.g., Asian or Somalian.
- Now training trainers in Merton, Islington, Richmond and Bromley – anyone can sign up as it is free training through the PCT. Can pay £15 hour once trained. Course use continuous assessment and a final 20-minute practical exam to assess students.
- Cook and eat courses then last for 5-weeks. Lessons last 2 ½ hours and participants begin cooking straight away as the facilitator continues to talk about different aspects of eating healthily.
- Courses usually include 8-12 participants (although this depends on venue and equipment availability).
- Participants are recruited through their local doctors practice, hospitals, and schools and also through advertising on the local radio. They are also promoted at other food/healthy eating events in the local area.
- Courses cover main courses, deserts and seasonal foods as well as the benefits of organic food (although this is often to expensive to provide).
- For further information contact the PCT.

Aims

- Recognise the Eatwell plate and balanced diet.
- To deliver key messages on food components such as fats and sugars.
- To explain the benefits and impacts of good and bad eating habits.
- To distribute recipes and teach recipe adaptation.

Questions

Are recipe books available?

- PCT uses the Luton recipe books.
- Tutors have to bring in their own recipes at their own discretion.

- Greenwich now producing its own recipe books and attempting to theme them based on food styles and season.

Can trainers answer detailed health questions?

- No they are trained to only discuss broad health issues and not personal conditions and must recommend visiting their GP or a health practitioner.

Who pays for the food to be used during the course?

- Trainers are provided with £80 to purchase ingredients for the 5-week course.
- They usually begin with a fruit salad or soup in the introductory session.
- In weeks 2,3 and 4 they interactively create 3-4 dishes.
- In week 5 participants are asked to bring their own dishes from home and talk about how they cooked them.

Do you have to worry about health and safety at public events and demonstrations?

- Yes, the area has to be closed off so that no one can walk behind you.
- Also use electric woks (£25, John Lewis) to avoid using gas canisters in public places.

Is Hygiene part of the course?

- Yes both the training trainers and cook and courses cover basic hygiene.

If you had more volunteers could you run bigger class groups?

- Yes, but you have to be careful as it is important that volunteers understand their role and can take instructions.
- But if two trained facilitators worked together you could have bigger groups.

Is there a way of monitoring whether courses are successful?

- Yes, use monitoring forms at entry and exit to the course in order to assess how eating habits have changed.

What is the retention rate?

- Over 50%.