Conference Abstract

Casserole Club

Ingrid Karikari, *FutureGov, United Kingdom*

Correspondence to: **Ingrid Karikari,** *FutureGov, United Kingdom, E-mail: ingrid@wearefuturegov.com*

Abstract

Introduction: Casserole Club is a free, community, food-sharing project that matches people who love cooking (Cooks) and want to get to know their neighbours, with older locals (Diners) who would appreciate a home-cooked meal delivered to their home.

Casserole helps people share extra portions of food with others in their area who might live alone and have difficulty cooking for themselves. Casserole Cooks serve up home-cooked meals and deliver them to their neighbours, getting more people cooking and sharing fresh food while also strengthening local relationships.

Casserole is supported by a website www.casseroleclub.com which handles sign ups and matches pairs of Cooks and Diners. But for those who aren't on the internet, Casserole helps offline by pairing up local people and helping them to share meals.

Casserole was developed as an idea by FutureGov. Our aim was to explore how people could become more actively involved in social care in their own community. Through research we discovered one of the biggest barriers to volunteering was time. The time that people have spare tends to be in small parts, and at odd times. So we decided to create a service that intertwines these slivers of time with something people are already doing - cooking dinner - to easily enable people to fit giving into their lives.

Since then we have worked with three councils (Surrey, Barnet and Tower Hamlets) and through funding from a variety of sources (councils, TSB and the Design Council) have run pilots to test out and develop the idea further.

Aims and objectives: Casserole is a heart-warming idea which aims to tackle some of the challenges we face as people live longer. We aim to:

1. Combat social isolation and decrease malnutrition among older people

2. Help older people stay independent for longer (pre-eligibility prevention)

3. Alleviate food poverty

4. Strengthen connections between the generations within communities

5. Provide a flexible (micro) approach for people to volunteer their time and skills locally

Social isolation, malnutrition and food poverty are growing problems. Recent Age UK research suggests that people over 52 years who are isolated from family and friends, have a 26% higher death risk over a seven-year period.

Here in the UK it is estimated that nearly three million people either live with, or are at risk of, malnutrition because they don't eat enough. One million of those are older people living in the community.

Results: Casserole is now live in three UK councils where more than 600 meals have been shared. Across the UK over 4000 Cooks have signed up to join the project. This year Casserole will launch in Staffordshire, Cumbria, Cheshire, Whitstable, Scotland and Victoria, Australia.

But there is much more to Casserole than sharing food. Our cooks and diners tells us they have made new friends and connections which have enriched their lives.

Conclusion: Casserole is a working example of how to use social technology to rekindle neighbourhood connections and in doing so meet some of the health and social care challenges of the day.

Keywords

older; people; food; poverty; community

PowerPoint presentation:

https://www.conftool.pro/digital-health-care-2014/index.php?page=adminPapersDetails&path=adminPapers&form_id=69

International Digital Health and Care Congress, The King's Fund, London, September 10-12 2014.