

CAFÉ - Key messages

- ★ Nearly all the women in CAFÉ were continuing to experience changes in their lives, which they were actively managing in creative ways
- ★ Women made choices around shopping, cooking and eating that helped to maintain and enhance their socialising and enjoyment of life.
- ★ For many women shopping is more important in maintaining quality of life than cooking.
- ★ All the women in CAFÉ shopped if they were able to – even if they didn't enjoy it a great deal. Shopping got them out, allowed them to meet friends and family, and enabled them to stay organised and in charge.
- ★ Some women chose to cook from scratch less often, so they could spend more time on social or enjoyable activities. They often used ready meals, lunch clubs, day centres and meals out with friends instead.
- ★ Other women would have preferred to cook from scratch but found it difficult due to disabilities.

Women need better information on services to support their shopping and cooking, greater transport choices and more food suitable for those buying individual portions. This message will be fed back into policy and planning in Norfolk.

For information about support with cooking and shopping in Norfolk please contact:

- ★ Age Concern Norfolk - 01603 787111
- ★ Norfolk County Council Adult Services - 0844 800 8014



CAFÉ, a study of food and older women: Results

As women get older, we may cook or shop less and begin to use services and products to support our shopping, preparing, cooking and serving of food.



- ★ Does it change how we live our lives and socialise with others?
- ★ What services and products do women use?
- ★ What services do women need?



This leaflet will tell you what the CAFÉ (Changes Around Food Experience) study found.

Who were the CAFÉ participants?

40 women took part in CAFÉ in Norfolk in 2007/8. Twenty women had individual interviews with Kathleen Lane, the researcher, with follow-up interviews about 5 months later. A further twenty women took part in group interviews. All of the participants were aged 65 to 95 (average 82), half lived in sheltered accommodation and half lived independently.

How did the CAFÉ women cook and shop?

All of the women had been responsible for shopping and cooking, often for themselves, a partner and family in the past. Within the past few years most CAFÉ women had started to cook from scratch fewer than 3 main meals each week.

About half of CAFÉ participants used ready meals regularly, half attended a lunch club or day centre, and 5 used meals-on-wheels. Almost half of CAFÉ women relied on others for their main shop.

Thanks to all the women who participated in CAFÉ (whose chosen pseudonyms are overpage), the women who modelled for the cover photos, and all those who helped us contact women who might be interested.

Thank you for your interest in CAFÉ.

March 2008

What shopping methods were used?

Most women used a variety of methods to get their shopping. These included:

- * Walking, public transport, taxi, own car to local shops
- * Shopping with someone else who has a car (son or daughter, friend, neighbour or husband)
- * Voluntary transport services or shop-based buses to supermarket (often with help carrying the shopping)
- * Local shops delivered, ordered in person or by phone
- * Relatives, friends and neighbours picked up shopping
- * Paid carers did all the shopping
- * Doorstep milk deliveries
- * Helper and wheelchair provided by supermarket
- * Relatives ordering shopping by internet

What cooking support was used?

CAFÉ women obtained their main meal in a variety of ways. In addition to cooking from scratch less than 3 times a week, they used several of these methods:

- * Meals at lunch clubs or day centres
- * Meals-on-wheels
- * Ready meals (bought locally or from companies that deliver two weeks' worth at one time)
- * Sharing homemade meals with family and friends (often reciprocal)
- * Eating out (often sharing with family and friends, at café, pub, sheltered housing café or restaurant)

For more about CAFÉ see www.cafeproject.co.uk or phone Lee Hooper on 01603 591268
Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.