

Consumer Group Discussion Guide

Intro

We are conducting research on behalf of the allergy team at the Food Standards Agency who are seeking to improve upon the reporting and under-reporting of allergic food reactions and to improve upon collecting data that will help prevention of allergic food reactions in the future.

We'd like to ask you about your insights into the behaviours of people living with allergies from your interactions with them as well as understand what you know about the ways people are reporting allergic reactions and the challenges they face.

Your feedback and insights will help us to gain a better understanding of the needs of this service.

[Ensure scope is clear during discussion - fatalities OOS, only consumed food in scope]

[Confirm role of interviewee before the interview starts]

Interview questions

Can you tell us a bit about what you do...

1. What are some of the greatest challenges facing people living with allergies when it comes to reporting allergic reactions and near misses, in your experience?

Are members of the public reporting experiences of allergic reactions to food to you directly?

1. How are they contacting you (phone / email etc)?
2. Who tends to contact you, any noticeable trends (e.g. mothers of children)?
3. Are you their first point of contact? If not, who else do they contact? Why do they choose you?
4. Do FBOs ever contact you about an allergic reaction (or other reason)?
5. What kind of events are people contacting you about? (any beyond the 14?)
6. Do they ever contact you about near misses?
7. What is their motivation for contacting you?
8. What information are they providing you with (do you have any forms / templates)?
9. How long after the incident occurred are people reporting it?
10. What are their expectations from you? Are you able to meet these?

11. Where do you advise them to go to report the reaction or near miss?
12. How do you tell if it is an allergy or food intolerance - do you treat them the same?
13. How many reports do you tend to get on a monthly basis?
14. Do you keep track of reports like these?
 - a. If yes, why and what information do you keep track of?
 - b. If no, why, and would you want to?
1. Does the affected person ever get back in touch with you once something has been reported elsewhere, if so why, what do they need, do you support them further?
2. Any noticeable trends in food type reported - for example loose foods vs packaged foods
3. Any differences in who you refer them to based on the food type (loose, packaged etc)?

How do you manage reports like these from the public?

1. Do you triage reported incidents (severity / how is this determined)?
2. Who in your team deals with allergy reports (size of team / roles)
3. What works well and what doesn't in your current process?
4. What are your timeframes for responding (to non phone call contact)
5. Do you respond to all contact regardless of severity?

Technology

1. What systems are you using / where is information stored / any constraints?
2. How do you store their data, would you be prepared to share it with the FSA
3. Any systems that they use which may be of interest to us
4. Anything else they know of that others are doing here or abroad re reporting / data collection?

Insights

1. In your experience how aware are people of;
 - a. Their allergy
 - b. How to manage their allergy
 - c. Where to go and what to do to report an allergy reaction or near miss
2. What do you think would encourage more people to report an event
3. Are there any additional insights you can share with us from your experience of dealing with the public? [\[their likelihood of using a reporting service, needs, pain-points, expectations, preferred channels etc\]](#)?

Engagement

1. What do you see as your role / responsibility when it comes to helping people to report an allergic reaction to food or a near miss?
2. What is your understanding of the role of the FSA and the role of LAs when it comes to food allergy management and the reporting of reactions and near misses.

3. Would you want to be / continue to be involved in the reporting process, if so how?
[What would they be prepared to do?] could even be just spreading awareness of the service...
4. What benefits or constraints do you think there may be from having this kind of centralised public service that you can foresee?
5. What do you think needs to be in place for people to be able to report an allergic reaction to food or a near miss?
6. Is there any signposting on your website about reporting an allergic reaction, if not could there be?
7. Do you have any allergy research, stats or programmes that may be relevant to this research?