

FUSE Award – best abstract in public health



Cassey Muir is a research assistant at Newcastle University working across two teams, public health nutrition and SPARKS (supporting prevention and care for alcohol and other risk behaviours). Her background is in Health Psychology, with particular research interests in intervention development, public health behaviour, and supporting young people. In October she will be starting an NIHR School for Public Health Research funded PhD at Newcastle University. The aim of this project is to co-design an intervention to promote resilience in children and young people affected by parental substance misuse. She has also volunteered with different community organisations over the past 5 years, including Children North East as a peer mentor and worked as an assistant psychologist in cardiopulmonary transplantation.

Developing a co-designed intervention for young adults, supporting healthier eating and safer alcohol use, to reduce risks associated with obesity and risky drinking.

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Background: Unhealthy eating and risky alcohol use can contribute to weight gain both directly and indirectly. Intervening in early adulthood, when these linked unhealthy patterns emerge and are prominent, may prove beneficial in reducing the risks associated with obesity and heavy drinking.

Aims: This study used co-design techniques to develop intervention principles and core intervention concepts to support healthier eating and safer alcohol use amongst young adults.

Method: Data derived from this study were situated within a broader research project focused on understanding the links between unhealthy eating and alcohol use in early adulthood. Qualitative data were collected across two co-design workshops. Twenty-two young adults and thirty-six other stakeholders were recruited to confirm the projects' earlier findings including how young adults' eating practices change before, during and after alcohol consumption, and the socio-cultural links between food and alcohol intake. Data were analysed using a thematic framework developed deductively based on formative stages of the project.

Results: Intervention principles included the need to be accessible, personalised, social and mindful of young adults' lifestyles and resources. Core intervention concepts encompassed the importance of intervening in community settings with group-based approaches and to personalise the motivational hook, key messages, and goals to the young adult.

Conclusion: Further work is planned to explore emergent issues and act as an authenticity check on initial analysis. The final output will be a prototype intervention, with the aim to reduce heavy alcohol consumption and/or unhealthy eating behaviours associated with excess body weight amongst young adults.