

### Improvement of food distribution to home living elderly people by using action research approach

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The study was performed in accordance with action research approach and included four phases: look, think, act and evaluate.

#### *Look phase was performed in the three steps:*

1. To gain insight into and describe the experiences of elderly home-living people who receive meals from municipality
2. To explore various professional's experiences of involvement in the food distribution process in order to get a comprehensive understanding of the organization and responsibilities and roles
3. To describe decision makers views on the food distribution service

#### *Think phase was performed in the three steps:*

1. To reflect on what was important for the elderly people relating to their receiving meals distributed by the municipality
2. To reflect on what the various involved professionals identify as most important to develop in the food distribution chain
3. To reflect over suggested developmental areas and choose one of them and reflect over how to perform action and evaluation

#### *Act phase was performed in two steps:*

1. The knowledge in nutrition as developmental area was chosen to focus action on
2. The way how to develop nutrition knowledge, the information letters, was chosen
3. The information letters were developed in collaboration with professionals and elderly people
4. The 1700 information letters were distributed

#### *The evaluation phase was performed in three phases:*

1. The preliminary outcomes were given as feedback to involved representatives from various professionals
2. The finally outcomes were given as feedback to decision makers
3. Final feedback resulted in three future actions

#### **Outcomes from look and think phase are:**

1. The food distribution receivers expressed feelings of: to not have influence over food products the meals were made from, to feel isolated and confined at home due to difficulties getting out of the house and expressed sincere gratitude for the meal service from the municipality.
2. The various professionals expressed that: food distribution is a fragmentary intervention where comprehensive perspective and roles of responsibility are lacking, the fragmented organization seemed strictly divided and limited by constraints regarding time and money, the necessary observations and structured following up of nutrition status for food distribution receivers is missing, and that knowledge in nutrition need to be continuously developed.
3. The decision makers found areas to require facilitation for change related to food distribution: the monitoring of the food distribution receiver's health and wellbeing, to focus on involved professional's competence in nutrition and to create a forum for inter-professional communication.