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Feasibility study of an online food and mood knowledge intervention to support health and wellbeing

Submission date
17/06/2026

Recruitment status
Recruiting

Registration date
17/08/2026

Overall study status
Ongoing

Last Edited
17/08/2026

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[ ] Results
[ ] Individual participant data
[X] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
There has been substantial progress in reducing stigma and improving treatments for mental illness. However, the prevalence of common mental disorders, such as depression and anxiety, is not declining and may even be increasing. The individual and societal burden of poor mental health is substantial, and new treatment approaches are urgently required.
Lifestyle modification, including dietary change, is a well-established intervention for metabolic disorders and other conditions. Despite this, nutrition and diet only began appearing in best practice guidance and United Kingdom (UK) government reports in 2005, and then largely in relation to physical health.
This lack of nutrition training contributes to the gap between evidence for lifestyle medicine and its integration into routine mental health care. Mental and substance use disorders remain the leading cause of disability worldwide, while poor diet is a major contributor to illness and early mortality.
Research from the Food & Mood Centre, which pioneered Nutritional Psychiatry, shows that diet and mental health are closely linked and that dietary improvement can be both effective and cost-efficient in treating common mental disorders.

The aim of the study is to determine whether the well-established, 3-week, self-directed, freely-available "Food and Mood: Improving Mental Health Through Diet and Nutrition" online course (hereafter referred to as the FOC) is an acceptable and feasible dietary knowledge intervention for adults with a range of diagnosed mental illnesses accessing NHS mental health secondary care services.

Who can participate?
Participants will be NHS patients aged 16 years or older, living in England, and accessing mental health treatment services through Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber (RDaSH) NHS Foundation Trust.

What does the study involve?
Patients will be invited to do an online course. The course will give them information about

healthy eating that may help improve mental health and mood. The course is based on an existing programme designed by the Food and Mood Centre at Deakin University, Australia. The course activities include reading some information and watching videos. The course offers you the chance to check your learning with some simple questions, but this is not recorded and just for your information.
Participants will complete a pre-course survey and a post-course survey.

Where is the study run from?
Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (UK).

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
March 2026 to December 2027.

Who is funding the study?
Food and Mood Academy, Deaking University, Australia.

Who is the main contact?
Dr Kevin Williamson, kevin.williamson@nhs.net

Contact information

Type(s)
Public

Contact name
Mrs Jeannie McKie

Contact details
Grounded Research,2 St. Catherine’s Close, Tickhill Rd Hospital Site
Doncaster
United Kingdom
DN4 8QN
+44 3000 212456
rdash.research-gov@nhs.net

Type(s)
Principal investigator, Scientific

Contact name
Dr Kevin Willamson

Contact details
Grounded Research, 2 St. Catherine’s Close, Tickhill Rd Hospital Site
Doncaster
United Kingdom
DN4 8QN
+44 3000 212456
kevin.williamson@nhs.net

Additional identifiers

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)
350600

Central Portfolio Management System (CPMS)
70640

Study information

Scientific Title
An exploration of the Feasibility and Acceptability of an online food and Mood knowledge Intervention to Support Health and wellbeing (FAMISH)

Study objectives
1. To determine whether the well-established, 3-week, self-directed, freely-available "Food and Mood: Improving Mental Health Through Diet and Nutrition" online course (hereafter referred to as the FOC) is an acceptable and feasible dietary knowledge intervention for adults with a range of diagnosed mental illnesses accessing NHS mental health secondary care services
2. To assess the feasibility of the 3-week FOC as a health promotion intervention for this population, as assessed by:
2.1. Conversion from interest to participation in the study (percentage recruitment rate)
2.2. Study retention rate (percentage completion rate):
2.2.1. Collecting data on any barriers to digital access of the course and study surveys from participants
2.2.2. The ability to collect pre and post study surveys from participants
2.2.3. Knowledge acquisition and the self-reported views on the studies potential influence on future food choices
3. To evaluate the acceptability of the 3-week FOC as a dietary knowledge intervention for individuals aged 16 years or older currently receiving mental health treatment in NHS secondary care services

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 07/01/2026, London - Westminster Research Ethics Committee (2 Redman Place, Stratford, London, E20 1JQ, United Kingdom; no telephone number provided; westminster.rec@hra.nhs.uk), ref: 25/LO/0859

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Non-randomized study

Study type(s)
Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Mental health

Interventions

This is a test study to see how easy it is to use and how acceptable the online food and mood course is for people with mental health problems. The study methods will be based on that outlined by Eldridge and colleagues (2016). The framework states that a test study (feasibility study) is done to help find out the best way of doing a larger trial, which will find out how effective the intervention is. Feasibility studies mainly use interviews and surveys, with some other types of information that can be used to tell us that the trial plan should 'work'.

Participants for the study will be people aged 16 or older, living in England who are patients accessing a range of NHS secondary care mental health treatment services, such as Early Intervention in Psychosis services, community mental health teams and Talking Therapies. The sample will be recruited from Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber (RDaSH) NHS Foundation Trust's services by the study team located in the Trust's Research and Innovation Team (Grounded Research).
The study team will work with clinicians in the clinical services to help identify participants that may be suitable for the study. Potential participants will be provided with a Patient Information Sheet (PIS) detailing the study procedures and provided with the opportunity to ask questions about the project and have them answered sufficiently before giving consent. Sufficient time will be allowed between giving the PIS and approaching the participant for informed consent to ensure thorough understanding of the information.

Taking part in the study will include a number of steps including:
1. Potential participants that have expressed an interest to a member of their clinical team will be sent a copy of the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and contacted by a member of the research team to have a discussion about the study
2. Once potential participants are happy with the study information, they will be asked to give informed consent by completing an online form
3. Participants will be asked to complete a pre-course survey. This will include questions about their background, health and understanding of food and mood before starting the course. It will also assess quality of life and dietary habits
4. Participants will be given access to the online course, which they will complete in a self-directed way. They will have 3 months to do the course. A support call will be made to them at the mid-point made by a member of the study team. This is to check if they need any additional support to complete the course
5. All participants that do not withdraw their participation will be asked to complete the same questionnaire at the point they complete it, or at the point that the maximum time has elapsed

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

1. Interest in study participation measured using Percentage of individuals registering an interest in the study recorded by the study team at Baseline (week 1)

2. Consent to participate in the study measured using Number of completed consent forms received by the study team at Baseline (week 1)

3. Demographic characteristics of participants measured using Baseline pre-course survey at Baseline (week 1)

4. Study retention rate measured using Proportion of enrolled participants completing both the pre-course and post-course surveys recorded from study records at Baseline (week 1), end of intervention (week 12)

5. Intervention completion rate measured using Self-reported intervention completion collected through the post-course survey at End of intervention (week 12)

6. Barriers to course access and use, including support requirements measured using Participant responses collected through the pre-course and post-course surveys and research team records of support provided at Baseline (week 1), end of intervention (week 12)

7. Acceptability of the course measured using Post-course survey at End of intervention (week 12)

8. Course completion measured using Total number of participants who complete the course recorded from study records at End of intervention (week 12)

9. Participant experiences and perceptions of the course measured using Narrative synthesis of qualitative data collected through the post-course survey at End of intervention (week 12)

10. Time taken to complete the course measured using Mean self-reported time to complete the course collected through the post-course survey at End of intervention (week 12)

11. Self-reported knowledge and skills acquisition measured using Pre-course and post-course surveys at Baseline (week 1), end of intervention (week 12)

12. Change in knowledge and behaviours measured using Comparison of participant responses between the pre-course and post-course surveys at Baseline (week 1), end of intervention (week 12)

Key secondary outcome(s)

Completion date
30/09/2027

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Are aged 16 years or older on the day of consent
2. Have sufficient capacity to provide informed consent
3. Can access the online course and surveys via a digital device (e.g., laptop, smartphone or tablet)
4. Are currently accessing mental health treatment via the study site NHS Mental Health Care Trust

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Mixed

Lower age limit
16 Years

Upper age limit
100 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
0

Key exclusion criteria
1. Diagnosis of dementia
2. Disordered eating diagnosis
3. Have a special diet for a medical condition
4. Insufficient English language to be able to participate in the course

Date of first enrolment
06/03/2026

Date of final enrolment
01/03/2027

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust
Woodfield House
Tickhill Road
Doncaster
England
DN4 8QN

Sponsor information

Organisation
Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Deakin University

Alternative Name(s)
Deakin, Deakin University in Australia, Gordon Institute of Technology, Geelong State College, Victoria College and antecedent institutions, Gordon Institute of TAFE, Universitas Deakinensis, Deakin University South Asia

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Universities (academic only)

Location
Australia

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date