

Identifying Key Priorities for Research to Protect the Consumer with Food Hypersensitivity: A UK Food Standards Agency Priority Setting Exercise

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For which topic were research priorities identified?

food hypersensitivity

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

Europe - United Kingdom

Why was it conducted at all?

Food hypersensitivity (FHS) - a term which encompasses food allergy (both IgE-mediated and non-IgE-mediated mechanisms), coeliac disease and food intolerances - continues to be a major issue in terms of the supply of safe food for consumers. According to the UK's Food Standards Agency, around 1 in 20 of the UK population report a FHS. Food allergy is the commonest cause of potentially life-threatening allergic reactions (anaphylaxis), a serious systemic hypersensitivity reaction that is usually rapid in onset and may cause death.

What was the objective?

to identify and prioritise the current knowledge gaps in providing safe food to individuals with FHS (food hypersensitivity) in the UK from key stakeholder perspectives, including (but not limited to) consumers (both allergic and non-allergic), healthcare professionals, regulators, industry and wider stakeholders

What was the outcome?

a list of 5 research topics

How long did the research prioritization take?

No information provided.

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

JLA method

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: initiation and identification of potential stakeholders: steering group was formed. Step 2: identifying knowledge gaps: online survey, participants asked to identify unanswered questions and knowledge gaps relating to the provision of safe food to consumers with FHS, resulting in 295 submissions. Step 3: analysis and formulation of research questions: refinement of responses generated to formulate summary questions, resulting in 17 broad themes and 70 sub-questions, steering group reviewed sub-questions and excluded out-of-scope questions, resulting in 15 indicative questions that were taken forward. Step 4: prioritization workshop: summary questions were prioritised through consensus with the input from representatives of the various stakeholder groups, resulting in 10 priority indicative uncertainties. Step 5: development of research questions based on the identified priorities: from 10 indicative uncertainties 16 research questions were developed which were summarized under 5 themes

Which stakeholders took part?

Survey: 295 participants. Workshop: 32 participants.

How were stakeholders recruited?

No information provided.

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.