Implementation of the FSA Listeriosis Guidance: Chapter 8: Technical appendix on IFF survey

Sampling

The HSC (non-NHS Trust) sample for the study was drawn from four sources:

- Market Location provided settings in the social care category. This included nursing homes, day centres for the elderly/vulnerable, residential care homes, community meal provision (e.g., 'meals on wheels') and assisted living developments for the elderly.
- Wilmington Healthcare supplied IFF Research with settings in the healthcare category; this consisted of hospices, private hospitals and day procedure units.
- As Market Location did not have enough community meal provision in their database to reach our quota target in this category, desk research was conducted in order to 'top-up' the sample.
- IFF Research also utilised snowball sampling, asking those who completed the survey if they could give us contact details of the commercial meal providers they use. However, during fieldwork it became clear that very few HSC (non-NHS Trust) settings use outside caterers, with just 14 settings (3%) agreeing this was the case. With a number of interviewees providing details of the same meal provider, only a small fraction of the interviews in the study (two out of 445 completed interviews) are from commercial meal providers.

The sample was stratified by country and setting type to broadly reflect the underlying population, though some categories were overrepresented (such as healthcare settings and community meal provision) to give more robust base sizes for analysis.

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire for HSC (non-NHS Trust) settings was designed by IFF Research and the FSA to best meet the research objectives. It took the NHS survey as a basis, maintaining comparability where possible, but making refinements and additions where it was felt that this would collect more comprehensive or accurate data. The performance of the questionnaire was monitored during the early part of the fieldwork period and a few small improvements made.

Weighting

We used the amount of sample available from Market Location and Wilmington Healthcare in relevant categories as the most comprehensive available source of population data. We then adjusted these figures to exclude the proportion of each sector which had been found to be out of scope of the survey either because the settings did not sell chilled ready-to-eat food or because the settings did not ever cater for vulnerable groups.

The tables below show the proportions of each setting type we excluded from the scope of the research and the final unweighted and weighted proportions for each setting type (sample

definition), and by country.

As a note, we gave HSC (non-NHS Trust) settings the opportunity to tell us what kind of setting they are as part of the research. While we have used their self-definition for analysis purposes, the weighting was done based on the definition of their setting which was marked up on the sample records, as this felt the most directly comparable to the population data.

Table 8.1 Proportion of each setting that were excluded after being found to be out of scope

Setting type	Total number of settings who were asked screener questions	Number of settings who were excluded	Proportion of settings who were excluded
Antenatal clinic and/or centre	4	3	75%
Commercial meal provider	2	0	0%
Day and Care Centres	141	71	50%
Home Case and Help Services	146	67	46%
Home Care Service Providers	120	60	50%
Hospice	45	6	13%
Meals on Wheels	41	14	34%
Nursing Home	97	23	24%
Private hospital	60	18	30%
Residential Care establishments	158	53	34%
Rest and retirement homes			37%

Setting type	Total number of settings who were asked screener questions	Number of settings who were excluded	Proportion of settings whowere excluded
Grand total	934	359	38%

Table 8.2. Unweighted and weighted proportions of completed interviews

Setting type	Proportion of completes: Unweighted %	Proportion of completes: Weighted %
Commercial meal provider	<1%	<1%
Day and Care Centres	11%	4%
Home Case and Help Services	12%	9%
Home Care Service Providers	9%	7%
Hospice	8%	1%
Meals on Wheels	4%	3%
Nursing Home	13%	17%
Private hospital	8%	1%
Residential Care establishments	19%	41%
Rest and retirement homes	15%	16%

Country

Country	Proportion of completes: Unweighted %	Proportion of completes: Weighted %
England	92%	93%
Wales	4%	5%
Northern Ireland	3%	2%

Response rates

A total of 3,761 HSC (non-NHS Trust) setting records were eligible to be contacted over the course of the survey. As listed in Table 8.1, 359 sites were found to be out of scope due to not having ready-to-eat food available or because they did not provide food to vulnerable groups. A further 2,634 records were out of scope for fieldwork. For example, 162 had unobtainable numbers or the site was closed. Table 8.2 breaks down those who could not be reached during the fieldwork period and are thus not included in response rate calculations, since no firm contact was made.

This left 768 records in scope for fieldwork, of which 445 completed an interview. This equates to a response rate of 58%, as shown in Table 8.4.

Table 8.3. Setting outcomes of the total sample in scope of study

Setting outcomes	Total	Population in scope of study %
Total number of records in scope	3,402	100%
Setting not contacted	265	8%
Setting called but unable to reach target respondent	1,445	42%
Appointment made but not achieved during fieldwork period	595	17%
Unobtainable number/company closed	162	5%
Not available in fieldwork period/nobody at site available	65	2%

Setting outcomes	Total	Population in scope of study %
Out of quota - does not fit a category outlined in Table 2.1	107	3%

Table 8.4. Sample outcomes of the total sample in scope of fieldwork

Setting outcomes	Total	Population in scope of study %
Total number of records in scope of fieldwork	768	100%
Completes	445	58%
Refusals	273	36%
Breakdown during interview	6	1%
Preferred to complete online (but did not complete the survey)	44	6%