

# NHS (England) Hospital Food Review – FSA evidence package

Area of research interest: [Foodborne pathogens](#)

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced a review of food served and sold in hospitals in August 2019. The Review was undertaken by an independent panel chaired by Philip Shelly (Facilities Manager at Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust) with Prue Leith CBE (restaurateur and celebrity chef) acting as independent adviser. The scope of the review included the safety, nutrition, quality and production methods of food for patients, staff and visitors in NHS hospitals.

In January 2020, the FSA submitted a comprehensive package of evidence to inform the panel's consideration of the food safety element of the review. The evidence package comprises a report and supporting annexes and sets out key findings from detailed reviews of outbreaks of foodborne illness in hospitals and the FSA's advice on actions that should be taken to enhance food safety assurance.

Evidence gathered shows that some hospital trusts have not always recognised their legal obligations as food businesses operators, which has led to food safety failures. The increased vulnerability of hospital patients means shortcomings have contributed to a number of outbreaks of foodborne disease.

The Food Safety Risk Profile (Annex III of the package) shows that *Listeria monocytogenes* in sandwiches and salads was the most common factor in outbreaks of foodborne illness acquired in hospitals. It also indicates that premises with high Food Hygiene Ratings scores are less likely to be associated with cases of foodborne illness and highlights the potential risks associated with food products produced on and off site.

Behavioural insights (Annex IV of the package) shows that knowledge is not enough to change food safety behaviours. However, the literature highlights behavioural interventions which have successfully improved food hygiene compliance within NHS organisations.

The hospital food review panel's recommendations on improving food safety are largely based on this evidence provided by the FSA.

Research report  
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[View Report of FSA evidence to NHS food review as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (320.39 KB)

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[View Annex III - Food safety risk profile as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (305.41 KB)

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[View Annex IV - Behavioural insights as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (473.45 KB)