

Using co-design to identify intervention components to address unhealthy dietary and activity behaviours in New Zealand South Asians

Summary

There is an urgent need to develop sustainable and impactful interventions to mitigate the high risk of diet-related non-communicable diseases (diet-NCDs) in South Asians living in high-income countries. The current study using a co-design methodology aimed to identify community-led intervention components (solutions) to address barriers and enablers of disease-promoting dietary and physical activity behaviours in New Zealand South Asians. Data were collected from South Asian immigrants aged 25–59 years via three focus group discussions (n = 21) and 10 telephone or face-to-face interviews between 2018 and 2019.

The thematic analysis resulted in identifying 22 barrier and enabler codes and 12 solution codes which were summarised under five themes. The key solutions (intervention components) to mitigate the identified target behaviours were providing recipes for using local vegetables in South Asian cuisine, information on the nutritional quality of frozen vegetables and canned lentils, simple home gardening techniques, the saturated fat content of dairy foods, interpreting nutritional labels, optimal portion sizes of foods, and framing low-fat messages positively. Similarly, group-based activities with peer support such as walking, cultural dancing and community sports like cricket, football, and tennis were the identified solutions to increase physical activity levels. The identified solutions for health promoting dietary habits and physical activity levels could be part of any targeted multicomponent health promoting programme to reduce the risk of diet-NCDs in South Asian immigrants.