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Evaluation for change, the decision maker's involvement in the development of Food Distribution to home living elderly people

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Findings from international research as well as from Sweden show that food distribution as a single intervention involves various professional groups on the various levels in organisation.

The present research is one of several Action Research projects initiated as a result of a resolution on the highest political level aiming at achieving improvements within the care and service through collaboration between different levels in the organisations.

The overall aim of this specific study is to describe the “top-down” perspective i.e. decision-makers involvement in identifying areas for the development of the food distribution chain.

Data was collected in two steps, firstly by individual interviews with decision makers (politicians n=21, one administrative manager and one medical responsible nurse) and secondly by evaluation dialogue in group (n=23) discussion. The group discussions were based on findings from individual interviews and results from two previous studies focused on interviews with various professionals and food distribution recipients.

The findings were that food distribution was seen as a multifaceted system that included three interrelated issues: the administration of work, the professional's competence in nutrition and the relationship between various professional groups. To achieve a change, the central component of complexity needs to be clarified. When the issues are multifaceted the solutions need to regard the whole picture rather than its parts.

Keywords: action research, decision-makers, food distribution in Swedish context, “top-down” perspective

The short paper and presentation would fit in the key theme Health Care Management of the congress.

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