

Developing a Cystic Fibrosis Mindful Eating Practice (CFMEP) to support healthy eating and weight self-regulation

Helen Egan¹, Michail Mantzios¹

1. Dept. of Psychology, School of Social Sciences, Birmingham City University, Birmingham, UK

Objectives: The positive impacts of modulator therapies on health and wellbeing are changing the eating behaviours of many people living with CF, with over nutrition and obesity becoming more evident. The need for appropriate and relevant support to achieve and maintain healthy eating behaviours and weight, alongside good psychological wellbeing is clear. Any such interventions must also consider the unique prior experiences of eating with CF.

Method: Several eating behaviour studies with CF and obese patients identified key factors that impact the self-regulation of eating behaviours and weight. These included: Eating as medical treatment, (lack of) pleasure, difficulty responding to hunger and satiety cues, emotional eating, distracted (mindless) eating and fluctuating health status. The findings were synthesized to develop a “Guide to Mindful Eating for People with CF” and a “CF specific Mindful eating Practice (CFMEP)”, which helps people observe and record how and where they consume different foods. This information is used to identify ways in which eating behaviours can be adjusted to support self-regulation to match current nutritional needs for optimal health. The guide and the practice were produced in written and video format and were evaluated by people living with CF and by clinicians.

Results: Initial evaluations from patients and clinicians reported little or no current knowledge on mindful eating, and that the “Guide to Mindful Eating in CF” was very clear and useful. The CFMEP was evaluated by patients and clinicians as suitable to population needs, and patients suggested that it was implementable onto their own eating behaviours.

Conclusion: The CF Guide to Mindful Eating is a useful tool for supporting self-regulation and healthy eating behaviours and will assist in managing co-morbid conditions. Promising initial findings on the CFMEP warranted a current full intervention study to investigate the efficacy of the tool.