24th August 2016

IFH News alert (www.ifh-homehygiene.org)

Domestic kitchen hygiene project – can you help?

A project team drawn from the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and the University of Surrey is carrying out a Systematic Review (FS101098) of the prevalence of food-borne illness due to poor food handling practices in the domestic kitchen.

Although commissioned in the UK by the UK Food Standards Agency, it is agreed that data should be drawn from wherever in the world food is prepared in a manner similar to the UK. Consequently, this excludes countries where there is lack of access to a safe water supply and/or sanitation.

Chris Day, a member of the project team, is currently searching out the 'grey literature' (i.e. studies or reviews not published in peer-review journals). He says, "as one who, in my professional life, has followed-up many sporadic cases of suspected food-borne illness, the 'failure' to establish an association between cases has meant that a number of 'family outbreaks' were simply filed away and never reported.

He goes on to say, "my appeal to you is for anything you might have on family incidents – where two or more people in the same household had concurrent symptoms – suggesting that a common food was responsible, and that a shortcoming in handling or preparation of that food might have been responsible.

If you produced a report, or know of material produced by others, that highlighted a family outbreak/s, or could recollect an investigation in which you were involved and could summarise this briefly, I would really like to hear from you.

Naturally, I would respect patient confidentiality, and honour any wish for anonymity, but I should be pleased to acknowledge any assistance provided in the final report.

Since this phase of the project is drawing to a close, I should be most grateful to receive any contribution from you by **Thursday, 15 September 2016, ideally by e-mail: c.day@cieh.org** , though please feel free to call me on: 07884-549130 if you would prefer to discuss this first.

Dr Chris Day is an Environmental Health Officer, and was formerly a Lecturer at Kings College London. He is now Education Manager at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.