**Cooking for One or Two**

Facilitator Manual


# Acknowledgments

This updated manual was prepared by Dr Catherine Chojenta, Professor Julie Byles, Ellie Gresham and Natalie Edwards at the Research Centre for Gender, Health and Ageing, University of Newcastle.

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Contents

Acknowledgments 2

Introduction to Cooking for One or Two 5

What is the Cooking for One or Two program? 5

How long does the Cooking for One or Two program run? 5

Who will run the Cooking for One or Two program? 6

Goals and objectives 6

How to develop a Cooking for One or Two program 8

Case study 10

Development of the Cooking for One or Two Program in the Hunter 10

Project partners 11

Cost to attend the Cooking for One or Two program 12

Preparing for the Cooking for One or Two program 13

Facilitator role 13

Safety and training 15

Additional information 17

Evaluation 18

Pre and post evaluation 18

Program preparation checklist 19

# Introduction to Cooking for One or Two

## What is the Cooking for One or Two program?

Cooking for One or Two is a five session cooking skills program that was originally designed for community dwelling men aged 65 years and over, from the Veteran community, who lived alone or cooked for only one or two people. However, the program is now designed to enable it to be used by Community Groups or individuals across the Australian population. In each session the group cooks an easy, quick and nourishing meal, including a main meal and dessert. It is not a cooking demonstration, but an opportunity for participants to develop their cooking skills in a supportive environment. The group then enjoys the meal together. A 30-40 minute healthy lifestyle discussion is included in each session, aimed at providing participants with information on healthy ageing.

The content of the sessions are outlined in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Session | Meal | Discussion topic |
| One | Beef stir-fry with riceApple bread and butter pudding | Food safetyPractical cooking tips |
| Two | Beef and gnocchi casserolePita pizzasPears with crusty crumble | Risk factors for malnutritionCreating a dinner from basics in your cupboard |
| Three | Vegetable casserole with steamed fish and crusty breadBanana berry split | Healthy Eating (Australian Guide to Healthy Eating) |
| Four | Rissoles with sweet potato mash and green saladFruit strudel with vanilla yoghurt | Healthy Lifestyle |
| Five | Pumpkin, potato and parsley soupQuiche with green salad Pear and sultana rice pudding | Healthy eating on a budgetSafe food storage |

## How long does the Cooking for One or Two program run?

The program consists of five sessions, which will run for approximately three hours each. The sessions will be held during the day so that the group members can eat the meal prepared for their lunch.

## Who will run the Cooking for One or Two program?

The program will require a facilitator and assistant who will be knowledgeable in group education, basic cooking skills, food safety and occupational health and safety prior to delivering the program.

## Goals and objectives

### Goal

Improved quality of life for older persons’ by providing lessons in basic cooking skills, nutrition and healthy ageing in an environment of positive social engagement.

### Program objectives

By the end of the Cooking for One or Two program participants will have:

* Improved basic cooking skills.
* Consumed a greater variety of foods.
* Consumed at least three meals per day.
* Partaken in one or two social interactions per week that involved food (either a meal or snack).

### Session one objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have:

* Demonstrated skills in safe food handing.
* Implemented safe food handling practices.
* Developed their food preparation skills through learning how to correctly hold a knife and chop ingredients.
* Enjoyed a meal with a group of new friends.

### Session two objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have:

* Understood their risk of malnutrition through completion of the Australian Malnutrition Screening Tool (MST).
* Learnt how to create a dinner using the food available in their cupboard.
* Continued to develop their food preparation skills.
* Enjoyed a meal with a group of new friends.

### Session three objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have:

* Identified whether they are meeting their daily recommendations of the five food groups, in line with the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
* Identified ways in which they can include more of the five food groups into their diet, and the importance of consuming three meals per day.
* Continued to develop their food preparation skills.
* Enjoyed a meal with a group of new friends.

### Session four objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have:

* Demonstrated an understanding of the importance of physical activity to maintain muscle strength and a healthy body weight.
* Demonstrated an understanding of safe alcohol consumption levels.
* Continued to develop their food preparation skills.
* Enjoyed a meal with a group of new friends.

### Session five objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have:

* Demonstrated an understanding of eating healthily on a budget.
* Demonstrated an understanding of food safety and ways to implement food safety in their home.
* Continued to develop their food preparation skills.
* Enjoyed a meal with a group of new friends.

# How to develop a Cooking for One or Two program

The following guide will assist you in developing a Cooking for One or Two program in your local area.

|  |
| --- |
| Find a suitable venue |
|  | Approach your local community halls, RSL or other established club. Make sure you use the Cooking for One or Two venue checklist to identify if the location is suitable (Appendix A). |
| Contact a University in your local area (optional) |
|  | Establishing contact with the Nutrition and Dietetics department at your local University could enable students to act as assistants for the program (see the following Case Study). This will help with the running of the program, as well as providing the students with a valuable learning opportunity. |
| Contact a dietitian in your local area (optional) |
|  | The Cooking for One or Two program includes both practical cooking skills and educational components. Some of the questions arising from the educational components may require a qualified dietitian to give appropriate answers and subsequent dietary advice. Contact your local hospital or community health centre to speak with a local dietitian. Alternatively, search for an Accredited Practicing Dieititan in your local area by visiting <http://dmsweb.daa.asn.au/dmsweb/frmfindapdsearch.aspx>. Depending on the availability of the dietitian, they may have half to a full hour of their time per week to devote to the program when it is running. Alternatively if the dietitian is short on time, they may be happy to attend the last session for an hour to answer all the questions from the first four weeks of the program. If the dietitian cannot attend any sessions, they may be willing to have email or phone contact at the end of the session to answer diet-related concerns.  |
| Enlist the help of others in coordinating the Cooking for One or Two program  |
|  | Running a Cooking for One or Two program is a big responsibility and requires many voluntary hours. Contact at least two community volunteers and ask if they would be interested in conducting the program with you. The program requires two volunteers to be present at each session (a facilitator and an assistant). Having an extra person will enable you to separate the workload. Some suggested places you might be able to find volunteers include Men’s Shed, Meals on Wheels, Rotary club or other local community organisations. |
| Develop your own Cooking for One or Two toolkit |
|  | The toolkit should contain all of the equipment required for the running of the program including all cooking utensils. See Appendix B for a list of the contents of the toolkit. |
| Set a start date for your program  |
|  | Consider how long recruitment of participants will take, establishing a strong volunteer network to run these groups, your personal commitments during this time, public holidays and other barriers to implementation. |
| Advertise your program |
|  | Create flyers or an email to circulate to potential participants. Class sizes should not exceed eight participants so that every member of the class gets an opportunity to participate. |
| Thoroughly prepare yourself for leading the program |
|  | Take the time to carefully read all of the materials contained in this manual. Consider practicing the recipes at home ahead of time to ensure that you are familiar with the content of the recipes and the techniques used. Practice using the equipment and delivering the material will also ensure that the program runs smoothly. Familiarise yourself with the food safety tips on the Food Safety Information Council website ([www.foodsafety.asn.au](http://www.foodsafety.asn.au)) to ensure you reduce the risk of food poisoning to yourself and group participants.Contact your local council to see if there are any community grants available to help with the purchase of the toolkit equipment to establish and support the program |

# Case study

The following case study of the development of Cooking for One or Two in the Hunter will provide you with some tips on how to run a successful program in your area.

## Development of the Cooking for One or Two Program in the Hunter

The Cooking for One or Two program is a Commonwealth owned program that was originally developed in Queensland, by Nutrition Australia, with funding from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). The program was based on the recipe book *Adding Life to Your Years* which was also produced by Nutrition Australia.

The program development in the Hunter was facilitated by the presence of three key agencies; DVA, Hunter New England Area Health Service and the University of Newcastle. These key agencies recognised the community need and saw the potential to minimise malnutrition in the local area, and create a sustainable program through incorporating the delivery of the Cooking for One or Two program in the Hunter with students from the Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics degree. A working party was established with the three key agencies and broadened to include other key community agencies, including representation from local Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs). DVA provided a grant to develop the Cooking for One or Two in the Hunter materials, with a successful pilot test taking place in the Hunter Area in 2005. In addition to the working party that met monthly, a Steering Committee was developed that met four times per year.

In 2012, due to the successful implementation of Cooking for One or Two in the Hunter, Professor Julie Byles from the Priority Research Centre for Gender, Health and Ageing, was awarded a DVA Veteran and Community grant. This grant provided the necessary funds for the research team to build on the existing Cooking for One or Two program and develop the ‘Recipes for Life’ Cookbook. The development of the cookbook was in response to Cooking for One or Two participants who identified a need for additional recipes to extend the program and learn new cooking skills. The cookbook includes 45 new nutritious recipes as well as other health tips for people aged 65 years and over, bringing together healthy eating and healthy living. The recipes and health messages are based on current health recommendations and were reviewed by health experts.

In 2013 further research was undertaken to update the Cooking for One or Two resource kit. Updates have included:

* Aligning the Healthy Eating delivery material with the 2013 Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
* Development of goals and objectives consistent with Cooking for One or Two evaluations.
* Adjustment of the manual to include one facilitator and one assistant to enable delivery outside of the university setting if necessary.
* Past reports, manuals as well as qualitative and quantitative feedback were also analysed in order to make necessary updates to this manual.

## Project partners

Project partners involved with the establishment of Cooking for One or Two included:

* DVA
* Newcastle District Council of RSL sub-branches
* Local ESOs
* Nutrition and Dietetics Department, University of Newcastle
* Hunter New England Population Health
* Research Centre for Gender, Health and Ageing, University of Newcastle

Project partner roles are outlined below, providing an understanding of their roles in the implementation of the Cooking for One or Two program.

### DVA

* Involved in the training of the facilitators and assistants.
* Support the ESOs, facilitators, assistants and volunteers.
* Attend and organise Network meetings.
* Transport and replace kit items between venue locations.

### Newcastle District Council of RSL Sub-Branches

* Support the ESOs and facilitators who are running the programs.
* Advocate the program at District Council meetings.
* Ensure facilitators and assistants have insurance coverage.

### ESOs

* Actively support the program.
* Source volunteers to assist with the program facilitation and organisation.
* Organise transport for members who require transport to the venue.
* Sanction insurance cover for the program volunteers.
* Ensure the rights and responsibilities of their representative volunteers are met.
* Provide a letter-stating provision of insurance to volunteers of the Cooking for One or Two partners.
* Provide weekly funds for the shopping, (Cooking for One or Two treasurer reimburses at the finalisation of the program).
* Carry out risk management activities including annual safety checks on electrical appliances of the Cooking for One or Two Cooking Kit and venue audits of both the equipment and venue.
* Administer the evaluations for participants

### Nutrition and Dietetics Department: University of Newcastle

* Actively involved in the training of the student facilitators.
* Support the students throughout their Community Nutrition Placement.

### Hunter New England Population Health (HNEPH), Hunter New England Health Area Health Service (HNEAHS)

* Actively involved in the training of the student facilitators.
* Ensure the students have read and signed the student agreement.
* Support and supervise the students throughout the running of the program.

### Research Centre for Gender, Health and Ageing (RCGHA)

RCGHA work closely with the Nutrition and Dietetics department at the University of Newcastle and have a role in value-adding to the project by conducting evaluations and expanding the program.

## Cost to attend the Cooking for One or Two program

The cost of attending Cooking for One or Two in the Hunter was subsidised by DVA. Each participant was asked to pay **$7.50** per session, that isa total of **$37.50** for the five session cooking program. This covered the cost of the food, as well as a recipe book. All participants were required to pay in full two to three weeks prior to the first session commencing.

# Preparing for the Cooking for One or Two program

## Facilitator role

### 1. Find a suitable venue

The venue will need to have a kitchen as well as enough space for your participants to enjoy their meal together. When looking for a venue it is important to use the venue checklist to make sure the venue is suitable (Appendix A).

### 2. Put together the toolkit

Using the checklist found in Appendix B, collect up all of the equipment required to run the program.

### 3. Promote the program to members of the community aged 65 years and over

It is your role to let suitable members know about the program (maximum of eight participants). You might like to create a flyer or handout that can be distributed to potential participants, promoting the program.

### 4. Act as a contact person for those interested in the program

You will be the contact person for the program. Your name and contact details should be provided to anyone interested in the program (whether this is written on promotional materials or by word of mouth). Information about the program including its content, the location, times and explanation of cost should be provided to interested people when they contact you. Interested individuals can then be booked into the program.

### 5. Book participants into the program and create a waiting list

If you receive a phone call or have face-to-face contact with a potential participant the following steps should be taken.

* Provide an overview of the course to the prospective participant:
	+ Five sessions of approximately three hours duration
	+ Relay the dates and times of the sessions and where the program will be run
	+ Explain that each session will involve the group actively involved in cooking a meal together, discussion of a nutrition/health topic, then sharing the cooked meal together for their lunch.
	+ The cost of each session is estimated when the number of participants is known. All sessions need to be paid for in full and in cash two to three weeks before the commencement of the program, to ensure the cost of the food is met. If the prospective participant is interested, ask for some personal details and confirm their tentative enrolment into the program:
	+ Name, address and phone number (record this on the participant enrolment sheet; Appendix C).
* A waiting list may need to be generated if more than 8 people would like to enroll in the program
	+ If more than eight people are interested, generate a waiting list by recording their name, address and phone number to be contacted should a participant withdraw from the program. Closer to the program date the extra participants should be informed that they have been placed on a waiting list and that when additional programs become available, those on the waiting list will be contacted (Appendix D).
* Tell the participant if they are enrolled an information package (Appendix E) about the program will be sent out, which includes:
	+ The dates and content of each session.
	+ Details of payment.
	+ A consent form to be returned at the first session.
* Ask the participant if they have any food allergies.
	+ If yes, write what type of food allergy the person has on the enrolment form.
	+ Please inform the participants with food allergies that the program does not cater for specific dietary requirements and it is up to the participant as to whether they take part in the meal consumption.

### 6. Collect money from participants

The cost of the program will vary depending on the number of participants, seasonal produce and changes in cost price of ingredients. The facilitator will need to calculate how much the ingredients will cost and the final amount will be divided between the number of participants participating in the program. All participants should pay in full prior to commencement of the program. The cost is estimated at $7.50 - $10 per person per session. Facilitators are strongly encouraged to calculate their own costs prior to commencing the program to ensure there are no out of pocket expenses.

### 7. Purchase food for each session

As the facilitator, it is your responsibility to do the grocery shopping. A shopping list for each session has been supplied for your convenience. The assistant may be able to assist with the shopping.

### 8. Cleaning

The setting up, cleaning and packing away duties can be split between the facilitator and assistant. At the end of each session ask the group if two participants would kindly stay behind and assist with the cleaning up.

### 9. Washing of linen

After each session all linen, including tea towels and tablecloths should be washed and returned for the next session. This can be the responsibility of the facilitator or assistant.

### 10. Keep a copy of the participant attendance sheet at end of program

If you intend on evaluating the program keep a copy of the attendance sheet for the follow up at the end of the program and the follow up two months post-program.

### 11. Organise follow up sessions

If evaluating the program, organise a follow up session to discuss progress and complete evaluation questionnaires.

### 12. Maintain safety checks

It will be the facilitator’s responsibility to check that all electrical equipment undergoes a safety check once per year.

## Safety and training

It is important that both the facilitator and assistant familiarise themselves with the food safety information on the Food Safety Information Council website www.foodsafety.asn.au. Familiarising yourself with the food safety tips and taking a few simple actions (clean, chill, cook, separate) can reduce the risk of food poisoning drastically.

### Shopping and transporting food

To ensure the groceries brought for the sessions are safe follow these guidelines:

* Buy groceries for each session on the same day the session is run.
* When shopping, leave the fridge and freezer items to last, and shop for the non-perishable items first.
* Check the use-by-dates of all products; ensure they are all within the timeframe of the program.
* Do not buy foods if the package is damaged.
* If you need to purchase eggs, check to see that they aren’t cracked or dirty.
* At the checkout, ask for raw meats and poultry to be packed in separate bags.
* Transport cold foods from the shopping centre to the venue in an insulated box or bag with ice bricks. Cold foods should be stored below 5 degrees Celsius.
* Place food in the coolest part of your car, and ensure your car is clean before transporting the food
* When you arrive at the venue, unpack the cold items first. Temperature-test these items to make sure they are below 5 degrees Celsius.
* Place raw food items at the bottom of the fridge.

### Temperature control

Some foods are potentially hazardous to bacterial growth. In particular, meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, milk, soy, cooked rice, pasta and vegetables. These potentially hazardous foods must be stored, transported and prepared within safe temperatures. Safe food temperatures are less than 5degrees or above 60 degrees Celsius. To minimise bacterial growth the potential hazardous foods must be kept outside the temperature danger zone of 5 to 60 degrees Celsius.

### Preventing food from becoming contaminated during the program session

It is of critical importance that hands be washed and dried thoroughly before preparing any food. You may wear gloves, but remember gloves need to be disposed of before commencing the next task.

Never allow participants, facilitators or assistants to use the same utensils between uncooked and cooked food products. Utensils must be thoroughly cleaned, sanitized and dried between uses. Food that has either been cooked or is ready to eat, such as salads, must be placed on clean and dry serving dishes.

### Cooking For One or Two cleaning and sanitizing equipment

The three steps involved in cleaning and sanitizing equipment are:

* Washing.
* Sanitising.
* Drying.

Equipment such as chopping boards, bowls, knives, and other utensils must be thoroughly washed in warm soapy water. After the equipment has been washed, it should appear clean and clear from any visible foods. Thorough cleaning will remove the majority of the harmful bacteria. Sanitising with washing up detergent will also remove the bacteria. All equipment must be completely dried before re-use. Tea towels that are clean can be used to dry the equipment but air-drying is preferred. Washing up water must remain hot and the water clear throughout the washing up period.

### Health and hygiene

When you are ill or have an infection you may accidentally contaminate the food by transferring your bacteria or virus onto the food. Ask participants to let you know if they become ill. Do not handle food if you are suffering from diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, have a sore throat, or your doctor has diagnosed or suspects a food-borne illness.

In general, everyone involved in the food handling needs to take precautions not to compromise the safety of the food. It is important to make sure that equipment or surfaces that come into contact with food are free from contamination. This includes hair, nails, jewellery, bandages, Band-Aids, blood, sweat, saliva or mucous. If you need to cough, sneeze, blow your nose or smoke, please do it away from the food, equipment and utensils. If you are wearing a bandage or Band-Aid please ensure to cover the wound with a waterproof covering. Wash your hands before and between handling food(s), after using the toilet, sneezing, coughing, blowing your nose, smoking, handling rubbish or other waste.

### Risk management

The intention of risk management is to minimise the risk for all parties involved in the program while in the venue and environment. Examples of hazards are unsafe food transportation or contamination, uneven flooring, slippery flooring, faulty, and unsafely placed electrical equipment.

Risk assessments identify risks and prioritise actions. It is important for the facilitator to liaise with the venue to identify potential risks, determine the appropriate action should an accident occur and prevent additional incidents. Facilitators should also check with the venue to ensure an up to date safety check has taken place on all electrical equipment.

## Additional information

### Clothing

Facilitators, assistants and participants should wear comfortable clothing and enclosed shoes.

# Evaluation

## Pre and post evaluation

If you as the facilitator would like to evaluate your program please feel free to do so. Evaluation questionnaires have been provided in Appendix F. Please see below for when each evaluation should be conducted.

* The baseline survey will need to be conducted at Session One
* Follow-up 1 will need to be conducted at Session Five
* Follow-up 2 will need to be conducted eight weeks post-program

Make sure each participant reads the instructions before completing the evaluation. You can collate the results and compare the answers from Session One to the follow-ups at Session Five and at eight weeks post-program.

# Program preparation checklist

The following checklists will help the facilitator to prepare for the program.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4 to 6 weeks before program | 🗸 |
| Advertise the program in your local community and area, start recruitment of participants |  |
| Start enrolling participants in the program |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2 to 3 weeks before program | 🗸 |
| Send out information packs to enrolled participants |  |
| Collect money from participants  |  |
| Read Food Safety Information Council website (www.foodsafety.asn.au) |  |
| Familiarise yourself with the program by reading through the sessions, references and food safety tips (www.foodsafety.asn.au) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 week before program | 🗸 |
| Contact enrolled participants who have not paid for sessions to ensure they are still attending the program (if not offer their spot to someone on the waiting list)  |  |