INTRODUCTION

There is substantial global evidence indicating that interpretive front-of-pack (FOP) labels (using graphics, symbols or colours) are better understood than traditional quantitative nutrition labels. However, research on the impact of front-of-pack labels on real-world food purchases and consumption is greatly needed.

The aim of the Starlight trial is to assess the effect of interpretive FOP nutrition labels on food choices at supermarkets and other retail outlets selling packaged foods in New Zealand.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Media; Social media; Investigator networks; Presentation at New Zealand conferences; Recruitment in communities

PROGRESS

Opened for screening: July 2014
Anticipated recruitment start date: 20th Oct 2014
Results expected late 2015

DISCUSSION

The Starlight randomised, controlled trial will determine the effects of interpretive front-of-pack nutrition labels on the healthiness of consumer food purchases in the real world.

PRINCIPAL OUTCOME

Healthiness of food purchases (assessed using Food Standards Australia New Zealand nutrient profiling scoring calculator)

INTERVENTION

Duration: 4 weeks
App functions
Label viewing: active
Purchase lists: active
Till receipt photos: active
Automatic reminder messages: active

Requirements for participants:
• Use app to:
  1) View nutrition labels when shopping
  2) Record all food & beverage purchases
  3) Photograph till receipts
• Collect hard copies of till receipts

RANDOMISATION

To one of three trial arms (1:1:1)
Stratification: ethnicity; self-reported interest in healthy eating

RUN-IN AND BASELINE

Duration: 1 week
App functions:
Label viewing: inactive
Record purchases: active
Till receipt photos: active
Automatic reminder messages: active

Requirements for participants:
• Record at least 15 barcoded food & beverage items
• Photograph and keep till receipts

SCREENING

via www.diet.auckland.ac.nz/content/starlight

Inclusion criteria
• ≥ 18 years of age, currently living in NZ
• Smartphone owners
• Shop at a supermarket ≥ once a week
• Regular main shoppers for the household
• Ability to read and understand English

Exclusion criteria
• Previously used the “FoodSwitch” application and/or have it downloaded on their phone
• Failure to successfully complete the run-in phase

APP FUNCTIONALITY

Participants will use the app to:
View nutrition labels
Record purchases
Photograph till receipts

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