



16/12/11

Inquiry into Residential Care for Older People

The British Dietetic Association would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Assembly for Wales, Inquiry into Residential Care for Older People.

Food and fluid are a significant part of service provided to older people in residential care and key to satisfaction with services. Adequate nutrition and hydration are essential and risks of malnutrition increase with age and institutional care.^{1,2}

The Welsh Assembly Government has published "Nutrition in Community Settings" an All-Wales pathway for the management of malnutrition in the community, March 2011. In the introduction this document outlines the importance of nutrition in care homes. The All Wales Dietetic Managers Committee assisted with the development of this document and are co-ordinating the dissemination of the pathway across Wales including to residential settings. There followed the development of "All Wales food and fluid chart for community settings" along with "Fluid volume guide" and "Food record chart guide" to support care homes in monitoring food and fluid intake and implementing the pathway.

Care staff and caterers in care home settings need training about food and nutrition care in order to provide appropriate levels of care. The Welsh Assembly Government dietetic capacity grant scheme have funded the development and delivery by registered dietitians of Agored Cymru, accredited training courses designed to raise awareness of nutrition issues and increase knowledge and skills for Improving Food and Nutrition Care. Catering and care staff attend the courses, piloted in Cardiff and Vale which are now being offered as part of the dietetic capacity grant scheme across Wales. Evaluation 6 months post course shows that participants are making appropriate changes to everyday practice and over 95% would recommend the course to others. There is a gap in relation to nutrition education associated with menu planning and analysis to ensure they meet nutrient and food based requirements as there is no capacity to include this within existing resources.

There is a similar unmet need for training for those providing care in peoples' own homes. The British Dietetic Association has recently launched a new UK campaign 'Mind the Hunger Gap' which highlights malnutrition levels in older people living in their own homes. More information for which can be found at www.mindthehungergap.com

There is not capacity within existing dietetic services to meet the training requirements of this large cohort of carers in both residential and community settings.

Following a positively evaluated regional nutrition training session for CSSIW inspectors in October 2011 more are planned for early 2012. This has been delivered through a post funded by The Welsh Assembly Government until March 2012. The opportunity should be taken to look at whether some aspects of training can be delivered at a regional or national level to broaden reach.

¹ BAPEN (2008) Nutrition Screening Survey in the UK in 2007: a report by BAPEN
www.bapen.org.uk

² BAPEN (2009) Nutrition Screening Survey in the UK in 2008: a report by BAPEN
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Work has been undertaken to support the delivery of Healthcare standard 14. Nutritional standards for hospitals have been developed and published. This supports previous work on the production of the hospital food and fluid charts. Nutritional standards for care homes now need to be considered, including dietetic support with planning and provision of nutritionally complete menus that meet nutritional, therapeutic and texture requirements of this client group.

We would be grateful for feedback to this and an opportunity for further involvement.

Yours sincerely,



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On behalf of Bwrdd Cymru BDA and The All Wales Dietetic Managers Committee

The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for registered dietitians in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is the nation's largest organisation of food and nutrition professionals with over 6,000 members.

Registered dietitians are the only qualified health professionals that assess, diagnose and treat diet and nutrition problems at an individual and wider public health level. Uniquely, dietitians use the most up to date public health and scientific research on food, health and disease, which they translate into practical guidance to enable people to make appropriate lifestyle and food choices.

Dietitians are the only nutrition professionals to be statutorily regulated, and governed by an ethical code, to ensure that they always work to the highest standard. Dietitians work in the NHS, private practice, industry, education, research, sport, media, public relations, publishing, Non Government Organisations and government. Their advice influences food and health policy across the spectrum from government, local communities and individuals.

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