
What the experts say about 'Managing adult malnutrition in the community':

Dr Rachel Pryke, RCGP Clinical Champion for Nutrition for Health and GP member of the consensus panel which developed the document, says: "I'm sure many people will be surprised to hear that in the 21st century a western nation like Britain could have so many people at risk of malnutrition. GPs are well-placed to make a huge difference to the lives of these people. With an ageing population many of the risks associated with malnutrition are also going to increase. We can help reduce these risks by ensuring that GPs and their teams are well-versed in spotting the signs of malnutrition and managing appropriately to improve clinical and health economic outcomes in what can be an avoidable issue."



"This guide aims to give professionals practical guidance on tackling the growing issue of malnutrition in the community to improve overall patient care" says **Anne Holdoway, Specialist Dietitian, Chair of the Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (PEN) Group of the BDA** and Chair of the Consensus Panel which developed the guide. "We know that many hospitals now screen routinely for malnutrition and quite rightly many patients will be commenced on ONS to support their nutritional intake during their hospital stay. Community Healthcare Professionals will often inherit these patients discharged from hospital on ONS with little information to assist decision making regarding on-going use. Equally in the community we know malnutrition is overlooked and if identified health professionals are unsure of optimal management. The pathway for the appropriate use of ONS, included in the new guide aims to assist decision-making and provides two routes; the first gives guidance on managing individuals who have recently been discharged from hospital with ONS, or who require short term ONS until oral intake is adequate, the second gives guidance on managing people with chronic conditions or those with longer term ONS requirements to enable appropriate monitoring, escalation or cessation of the intervention. Throughout the pathway, reference is made to concurrent dietary advice, the importance of monitoring and when to involve other members of the healthcare team including Dietitians."



"Malnutrition matters in primary care and evidence highlights the need for improved nutritional care" says **Ailsa Brotherton, Senior Research Fellow and Secretary of BAPEN**. "However to date it has been largely neglected in primary care for multiple reasons including a lack of nutrition steering committees in Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts and a lack of awareness amongst GPs. Research findings and recent articles have highlighted the dangers of malnutrition and the importance of shifting the focus to prevention, early detection, and early treatment; all of which can only be achieved in primary care. This pathway will help to remove fragmentation and support the development of integrated systems that are needed to ensure that vulnerable individuals who are at risk of malnutrition are screened early and receive appropriate nutritional care in the community."



"We are delighted to endorse this guidance" says **Catherine Duggan, Director of Professional Development and Support at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society**. "It is hugely important in disease management and will be an invaluable tool to pharmacists and other community health professionals."



"Malnutrition is often overlooked in the community," says **Jackie Eastwood, Chair of the British Pharmaceutical Nutrition Group** "pharmacists can play an important role in its identification and management and this document aims to assist all community healthcare professionals in its appropriate monitoring, diagnosis and treatment."



Iain McGregor, Former Chair of the RCN Older People's Forum and nurse member of the consensus panel which developed the document, says: "Malnutrition is often overlooked in the community and with an ageing population many of the risks associated with the disease are on the increase. Nurses will often see patients discharged from hospital on ONS with little information to assist decision making regarding on-going use. This guide aims to assist all community healthcare professionals on the appropriate use of ONS for individuals to enable appropriate monitoring, escalation or cessation of the intervention."



"This is a well thought out and informative piece of work; it is a timely and much needed document" says **Liz Evans, Nutrition Nurse Specialist and Chair of the NNNG** "I am sure it will prove invaluable to our colleagues in the community who play a key role in the identification and management of malnutrition. The NNNG are delighted to support it".



"Patients who are under-nourished use more NHS resources with more GP visits and hospital admissions as well as longer stays in hospital" says **Katherine Murphy, Chief Executive of the Patients Association**. "Malnutrition not only affects patients, their families and carers but can have a detrimental impact on other health conditions and costs the NHS millions of pounds a year to treat. With the NHS having to make £20 billion in efficiency savings, tackling malnutrition would not only benefit individual patients but would go a long way to helping the NHS achieve these financial savings and protect frontline hospital services.

Hopefully this guide will support healthcare professionals to ensure those people experiencing malnutrition get the best possible care in the community."