

EMBARGOED UNTIL: 00.01am Weds 1st November 2006 Issue date: Fri 27 Oct 06
2 pages

MALNUTRITION & MORTALITY: THE GREAT DIVIDE

The latest health inequality unveiled between North and South and Rich and Poor

“You are at greatest risk of malnutrition and its consequences if you live in the North and are poor,” says Dr Rebecca Stratton in The Pennington Lecture to be delivered today (Wednesday 1st November 2006) at the BAPEN Conference (Brighton, 1 / 2 November 2006)

“Older people living in the North of England are at 73% greater risk of malnutrition than those living in the South,”¹ continues Stratton, “but in the South those living in more deprived areas are at significantly greater risk of malnutrition and of dying when admitted to hospital than those from more affluent areas.”

Stratton’s research on the North/South divide, on which her lecture at the BAPEN Conference is partly based, was carried out with Professor Marinos Elia and involved a secondary analysis of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey of people in the UK aged 65 years and older.² Those living in the North were also shown in this analysis to have significantly poorer nutrient status and lower intakes of fresh fruit and vegetables and fibre, deficiencies linked to the development of heart disease and cancer.

The second study,³ referenced by Stratton in the BAPEN lecture, involved one thousand patients admitted to a university teaching hospital being screened for malnutrition risk using the ‘MUST’⁴, deprivation status assessed using the Index of Multiple Deprivation and their final outcomes recorded. This study demonstrated that malnutrition risk using ‘MUST’ and its individual components, such as low body mass index and unintentional weight loss, are linked to deprivation, as is mortality in hospital.

“Malnutrition must now be added to the list of significant health inequalities in the UK, and should be considered alongside other markers of deprivation such as disability, low income and lack of employment. Evidence suggests that all these factors contributing to inequality should be addressed together - not in isolation – in order to deliver benefit,” concludes Stratton.

Bapen06 -3HealthInequality

Ends/

For further information please contact: see over

¹ M. Elia and R.J.Stratton, Nutrition 21 (2005) 1100-1106

² National Diet and Nutrition Survey: people aged 65 years and over: London: Stationery Office: 1998

³ R.J.Stratton and M.Elia, Deprivation and Nutrition, British Journal of Nutrition (2006) 96 870-876

⁴ ‘MUST’ Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool, Malnutrition Advisory Group, BAPEN, 2003.

Rhonda Smith +44 (0) 1264 710428
rhonda@minervaprc.com +44 (0) 7887 714957

Lizzie Smith +44 (0) 1264 710428
lizzie@minervaprc.com +44 (0) 7766 467535

Interviews available – contact as above:

- **Dr Rebecca Stratton**

Copies of referenced articles available on request

Notes to Editors

What is BAPEN?

The British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition is a multi-professional association and registered charity. Established in 1992, BAPEN is committed to improving nutritional care and treatment in hospital, care and the community.

What are BAPEN's objectives?

- Increase awareness of and enhance understanding and management of malnutrition
- Establish a clinical governance framework to underpin the nutritional management of all patients, residents and individuals
- Enhance knowledge and skills in clinical nutrition and nutritional care and treatment for doctors, nurses, dietitians, pharmacists and patients through education & training
- Communicate the benefits of clinical and cost-effective optimal nutritional care to all healthcare professionals, policy makers, patients and the public

Who are Members?

BAPEN meets the needs and interests of doctors, specialist clinicians, pharmacists, dietitians, nurses, care managers and professionals, academics, patients, researchers, public health & policy advisers, service and support providers and commercial organisations with an interest in nutrition and nutritional support.

What activities & projects are run by BAPEN?

- Annual Conference & Regional meetings
- BANS - British Artificial Nutrition Survey
- 'MUST' Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool & its implementation
- MAG – Malnutrition Advisory Group
- NICE and intercollegiate liaison
- Training courses & materials
- Newsletter, Reports, Website

BAPEN Conference

The BAPEN conference is being held at the Brighton Hilton Metropole Hotel on the 1st & 2nd November 2006 attended by 500 doctors, nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, policy makers, community and care professionals and representatives from industry.

www.bapen.org.uk