

NSW Nutrition Screening Week

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Nutrition Screening Week: 25-27 September 2007

Department of Health backs BAPEN's Nutrition Screening Week to establish extent of malnutrition on admission to hospital and care homes

“The findings will enhance our evidence base and generate important information for hospital, clinical and support staff as well as for public health in general,” says Ivan Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Care Services, as he endorses the BAPEN initiative.

BAPEN is undertaking the first prospective national nutrition screening survey in the UK across both hospital and community care settings 25 – 27th September 2007, in collaboration with the British Dietetic Association (BDA) and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN). The initiative is also supported by the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) and now also by the Department of Health.

Christine Russell, the BAPEN Lead for Nutrition Screening Week (NSW) says:

“At the moment, we do not know the percentage of people being admitted to hospital or care homes who are at risk of malnutrition. Most of the data we currently have is over 10 years old and the studies used different criteria to define malnutrition. Screening for malnutrition risk on these three days in September during NSW and collecting data based on ‘MUST’¹ will provide us with a very clear set of data and reflect what is happening in the community.

Additionally, it will provide evidence for hospitals and care homes on the scale of the problem they have to tackle in their care settings – the numbers of patients and residents for whom a nutritional care plan should be provided.”

“Nutritional screening is an important part of improving nutritional care within all settings,” adds Ivan Lewis, “and complements the Department of Health’s aim of placing dignity and respect at the heart of services.”

Professor Marinos Elia, Chair of BAPEN, concludes: “Malnutrition is preventable and if treated early can improve outcomes for patients and residents. In the long run, treatment saves the NHS and social

¹ ‘MUST’ Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool developed and produced by the Malnutrition Advisory Group of BAPEN

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care system money as the cost of treatment is small compared with the potential benefits to be gained.”

For information on how hospitals and care homes can participate in the Nutrition Screening Week and contribute to the urgently needed national data bank on malnutrition that will be generated, log on to www.bapen.org.uk. Find here background information, the forms to be used by Hospitals and Care Homes during the 3 days of the Survey, Guidance Notes and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.

Once you have decided that you wish to participate, secure approval from your Management or Line Manager and then register. To register, please email your contact details to the BAPEN Office Bapen@sovereignconference.co.uk Tel: 01527-457850. A Registration Form will be sent to you for completion, followed by the issue of a Registration Number and further details.

“Hospitals and care homes involved in piloting the forms recently, using the Guidance Notes and sample screening during July and August have reported that they had no trouble in getting approval to participate and it was easy or very easy to take part,” adds Christine Russell, “but any further queries can be raised by emailing the BAPEN Office.”

Please register to take part as soon as possible; closing date for registrations is Friday 21st September 2007.

The results of the Nutrition Screening Week are expected to be announced on the first day of the BAPEN Conference – Malnutrition Matters – Tuesday 27th November 2007 in Harrogate. Log onto www.bapen.org.uk for further information on the Conference and the Nutrition Screening Week.

Ends

Further media information: 01264-710428 / 07887-714957 info@minervaprc.com

Notes for Editors:

Why is such a survey needed?

- The prevalence of malnutrition in UK is based on data collected in studies undertaken over 10 years ago involving a limited number of institutions. It may not reflect the magnitude of the problem today.
- Different criteria were used to define malnutrition in these studies.
- The BAPEN Nutrition Screening Week will be the first prospective national survey of the prevalence of malnutrition on admission to hospital and care in the UK.

What is the purpose of the survey?

- It will complement the data collected during the European Nutrition Day audits. The amount of paperwork required for the UK survey is considerably less.
- It will be used to inform the Department of Health and other government departments, other organisations and the media of the current magnitude of the problem of malnutrition on admission to hospital and care homes.

What will be the outcomes of the survey?

- Data from participating centres will be analysed and returned to reporters to enable local data to be compared with national figures.
- The results of the survey will be presented at BAPEN 2007 (Harrogate 27/28 Nov.)
- The results of the survey will also form the basis of launching or promoting other initiatives such as education and training of health professionals, including nurses, who usually undertake nutritional screening.

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