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Malnutrition must be addressed in the community as well as in hospital and care

BAPEN Report confirms up to 1 in 3 of all adults *of all ages* at risk of malnutrition *on admission* to hospital, care homes & mental health units

- **28% overall at risk of malnutrition (22% overall at high risk; 6% medium risk)**
- **Increased risk on transfer between care settings with
43% at risk on transfer from care home to hospital and
35% at risk on transfer from hospital to care home**
- **Data fed back to local reporting centres for benchmarking against national results to improve policy and practice**

BAPEN's Nutrition Screening Week Report 2007 (NSW07)¹ launched today (Tuesday 8th April 2008) provides detailed analysis on 11,000+ subjects in the largest prospective study on nutritional screening ever undertaken in the UK using consistent criteria across all settings based on BAPEN's Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool, the 'MUST'.²

370 reporting centres throughout the UK (172 hospitals, 173 care homes, 22 mental health units) throughout the UK screened 11,000+ individuals on admission (9,722 in hospital, 1,610 residents in care and 336 admitted to mental health units)

"28% of all subjects screened on admission to hospital and care during BAPEN's Nutrition Screening Survey were shown to be at risk – the vast majority (22%) at high risk," says BAPEN Chair and co-project lead of NSW07 Professor Marinos Elia. "BAPEN's NSW07 has clearly demonstrated that malnutrition is a significant public health issue which must be addressed in the community – where it starts.

¹ The Report on BAPEN's first Nutrition Screening Week - Nutrition Screening in the UK in 2007: A BAPEN Report, Nutrition Screening Survey and Audit of Adults on Admission to Hospitals, Care Homes and Mental Health Units, BAPEN 2008 – can be downloaded free of charge from www.bapen.org.uk

² BAPEN's 'MUST' Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool, validated for use across all settings, is available at www.bapen.org.uk

“Consistent and integrated strategies to detect, prevent and treat malnutrition must be developed to effectively address malnutrition in the community and within and between all care settings to ensure that the health outcomes for all being admitted to hospital, care and mental health units are not compromised.

Our data show that particular attention should be paid to those being transferred from one care setting to another.

It is essential that everyone admitted to hospital and care is screened for malnutrition, so that all at risk are identified and an appropriate nutritional care plan put in place. Those at risk must be monitored regularly.

The Report also demonstrates that currently nutritional screening policies and practice vary between and within health care settings, which means that malnutrition continues to be under-recognised and under-treated. ”

Data from BAPEN’s NSW07 demonstrate that malnutrition is common in all types of care homes, hospitals, all types of wards and diagnostic categories and in mental health units. It is also common across all age groups, although risk increases with age, and women are at greater risk than men.

Christine Russell, co-project lead for BAPEN’s NSW07 states:

“Health care professionals – doctors, nurses and dietitians – must work to implement consistent nutritional screening policies and practice across all settings in order to ensure that malnutrition is effectively addressed.”

Professor Elia concludes: “Participating hospitals, care homes and mental health units have now received their results so they can benchmark their own local prevalence figures and screening practice against the national picture.

Such comparison will support the drive for further implementation of universal nutritional screening and best practice in nutritional care and treatment spearheaded by BAPEN as part of the national Nutrition Action Plan.”³

BAPEN’s second Nutrition Screening Week takes place 1-3 July 2008 and further results will be presented at BAPEN’s 2008 Conference ‘Malnutrition Matters’ (4/5 Nov, Harrogate).

Further information at www.bapen.org.uk.

ENDS/ Notes follow

³ Improving Nutritional Care, a Joint Action Plan from the Department of Health and Nutrition Summit http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_079931

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- Co-project leads of BAPEN's NSW07, Professor Marinos Elia and Christine Russell are available for interview.
- BAPEN's NSW07 Report available at www.bapen.org.uk (from home page)

Notes to Editors:

1. The British Dietetic Association (BDA) and Royal College of Nursing (RCN) were key collaborators in BAPEN's Nutrition Screening Week in 2007 (NSW07). The Survey and Audit was also supported by the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA), the Department of Health in England, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Scottish Government and the Chief Nursing Officer in Northern Ireland.
2. BAPEN thanks the BDA and the RCN, its key collaborators, and in particular the 370 individual reporting centres across the UK that took part by completing a general questionnaire and providing 11,000+ anonymous patient and resident questionnaires.