



BAPEN Wins a Health Foundation Grant for Spreading Improvements in Nutritional Care



Dr Ailsa Brotherton, Chair of the BAPEN Quality & Safety Committee, and **Kate Cheema**, Head of Service, Quality Observatory

BAPEN has been awarded £28,000 from the Health Foundation, which is really exciting news. The award will further enable us to spread improvement and disseminate best practice in nutritional care. The project will be led by Ailsa Brotherton (a Health Foundation Generation Q Fellow) and Kate Cheema, and will aim to spread system wide improvements in the delivery of nutritional care.

Why is this project important?

Every provider organisation is required by the Health and Social Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 (Regulation 14) to make sure the individuals in care have enough to eat and drink to meet their nutrition and hydration needs and receive the support they need to do so. Individuals *“must have their nutritional needs assessed and food must be provided to meet those needs. This includes where people are prescribed nutritional supplements and/or parenteral nutrition.”* (Source: CQC website).

Despite the best efforts of many organisations and individuals, the costs associated with malnutrition, within the UK have continued to rise. The new health economic analysis report identified more than £200 million of annual savings for health and social care services through simple steps to tackle the nation’s multi-billion pound malnutrition burden. The report, published by the National Institute for Health Research Southampton Biomedical Research Centre (NIHR Southampton BRC) and BAPEN, states that the estimated cost of malnutrition in both

adults and children in England in 2011-12 was £19.6 billion, and is only set to increase with an ageing population and the rising cost of health and social care. However, it also estimates savings to health and social care of between £172 and £229 million per annum through full implementation of appropriate, high quality pathways of nutritional care, as recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), for various groups of malnourished adults. Given the scale of the current economic challenges to the NHS, we cannot afford to ignore the findings of this report.

The personal cost to individuals and their families is also significant, with an increased mortality rate, increased admissions to hospital, increased pressure ulcers, falls and infections and an overall decrease in quality of life. Combating malnutrition in the UK remains a significant challenge, requiring a mindset shift in how we work together to find innovative solutions.

We know from the national Nutrition Screening Week data undertaken by BAPEN that the prevalence of malnutrition remains high (with 24-30% of patients admitted to a UK hospital malnourished or at risk of malnutrition). Whilst numerous nutrition initiatives (many of them national) – such as ‘protected mealtimes’ and ‘Nutrition Now’ (Royal College of Nursing), and the publication of numerous standards, including the NICE guidance – have helped to raise the profile of nutrition, these figures show more has

to be done, not just in hospitals but across a range of care settings.

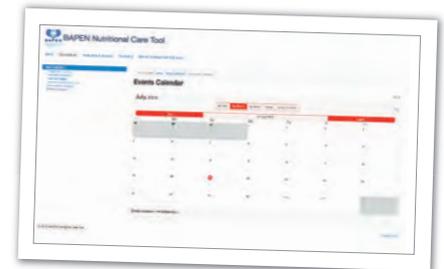
Aims of the project

The overall aim of this initiative is to raise awareness of the importance of nutrition and to spread best practice. In addition to describing the case for change, there will be a focus on disseminating best practice in relation to both the NHS Guidance on Commissioning Excellent Nutrition and Hydration, published by NHS England and BAPEN's new Nutritional Care Tool across the NHS. We will also use the opportunity to promote other innovative solutions for improving nutritional care, such as the Malnutrition Self-Screening Tool.

We are now finalising our plans with key partners and aim to organise four regional events that will bring together key decision makers and influencers across the system at regional level. We want to ensure a whole health economy focus, raising awareness to commissioners as well as providers.

Why is this project important?

Look out for the dates of the regional events throughout 2016. The meetings will provide an overview of the latest BAPEN reports as well as the new commissioning guidance and the early data analysis from the Nutritional Care Tool. The outcomes expected from these events are for organisations across a health economy to work together to improve the nutritional care delivered to local populations and patients.



*‘Excellent nutrition and hydration care for all; achieving system wide improvement’ is part of the Health Foundation’s **Spreading Improvement** programme. The Health Foundation is an independent charity working to improve the quality of healthcare in the UK.*