

JOINT MISSION STATEMENT

UK MALNUTRITION AWARENESS WEEK

14 – 20 OCTOBER 2019

The Journey to Malnutrition Awareness: Strength in Numbers

UK Malnutrition Awareness Week was founded by BAPEN and the Malnutrition Task Force in 2018 to raise awareness of undernutrition and dehydration in the UK. The campaign seeks to increase understanding of this important issue amongst health and social care workers, community groups and the public, and mobilise people to take action to identify and prevent malnutrition.

The Challenge

More than three million people across the UK are either malnourished or at risk of becoming malnourished, with an estimated one million of these people over the age of 65.¹ Although malnutrition (undernutrition) is a condition that is often associated with extreme poverty, it is actually widespread in the UK, with the cost to the health service of disease-related malnutrition being as high as £23.5 billion at the last estimate, which is approximately 15% of the total expenditure on health and social care.²

Malnutrition is both a cause and a consequence of ill health and is often a hidden problem that goes unnoticed. Malnutrition can have a devastating effect on physical health and emotional wellbeing and can often lead to or exacerbate long-term health problems. Yet sadly many of us are not familiar with the signs, symptoms and risk factors that would help us recognise that a loved one or somebody in our community is at risk of suffering from the condition.

The Vision

We envision a future for the UK where preventing and managing malnutrition is everybody's business, including:

- Health and social care professionals who are able to spot the signs and symptoms and routinely screen for malnutrition.
- Policy makers who are engaged in helping to raise the profile of malnutrition (and dehydration) as a healthcare and public health issue.
- Members of the public who understand the risks and causes of malnutrition and are able to recognise them in both themselves and others, and use the necessary resources and self-screening tools to do so.

The Mission

Through the UK Malnutrition Awareness Week campaign, we aim to:

- Raise awareness of malnutrition (and dehydration) amongst the general public, and encourage the use of self-screening tools.
- Ensure that all health and social care professionals understand their role in preventing and treating malnutrition and routinely screen for malnutrition risk.
- Demonstrate what good nutritional care looks like and help organisations and individuals achieve it.
- Increase investment in treatment and the prevention of malnutrition and engage key stakeholders and policy makers.
- Make sure the wider public sector, local and national government, commercial organisations, third sector and voluntary sector organisations understand what they can do to tackle malnutrition.



Malnutrition Task Force
Eating and drinking well in later life



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About us

British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN)

BAPEN is a charity that works tirelessly to raise awareness of malnutrition in the UK. The organisation was founded in 1992 to bring together dietitians, doctors, nurses, patients and pharmacists into an integrated and effective organisation dedicated to improving nutritional care. Our aim is to advance the nutritional care of patients in health and care settings and those at risk of malnutrition within the wider community.

For more information visit: www.bapen.org.uk/malnutrition-undernutrition/combating-malnutrition/malnutrition-awareness-week

Malnutrition Task Force

The Malnutrition Task Force is united to combat preventable and avoidable malnutrition and dehydration among older people in the UK. Established in 2012, we believe that good nutrition and hydration is vital to enabling older people to live fulfilling and independent lives. We seek to raise awareness of undernutrition in later life and its causes, provide information and guidance, and work with partners across sectors and settings to improve the lives of older people in the UK.

For more information visit: www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk



For me, UK Malnutrition Awareness Week is about encouraging earlier identification of disease-related malnutrition in health and social care settings and raising awareness of the 'Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool' ('MUST') in clinical settings. We are also keen to increase use of our Malnutrition Self-Screening Tool within the community and amongst the general public. It is important that people have access to the tools available to self-screen and know what they can do if concerned.

Dr Trevor Smith, BAPEN President



Many of us wrongly assume that malnutrition belongs to the past – but the reality is that poor nutrition and hydration often go unnoticed by older people, their families and healthcare professionals. The Malnutrition Task Force is delighted to be working with BAPEN for the second year on UK Malnutrition Awareness Week to continue to raise awareness of the importance of eating well in later life.

Dianne Jeffrey CBE DL, Chair, Malnutrition Task Force

1. BAPEN. Introduction to malnutrition. Available at: www.bapen.org.uk/malnutrition-undernutrition/introduction-to-malnutrition?.pdf.

2. BAPEN. Managing malnutrition to improve lives and save money. Available at: www.bapen.org.uk/pdfs/reports/mag/managing-malnutrition.pdf.



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