

Food First - Prevention and management of malnutrition in Bedfordshire

Food First is a project led by a team of dietitians in Bedfordshire who train and provide resources to health and social care staff in the community and in local care homes.

The Project

The team screen people for malnutrition and identify those at risk of harm from dehydration and also provide a food-based approach to treating/preventing malnutrition. The team has trained more than 1000 staff and helped care homes achieve the Food First award. Care homes are audited every six months to ensure standards are maintained.

The Benefits

The results so far have been impressive. 90 per cent of patients reported they had moved closer to achieving their nutritional goal using the food based approach. Six months the initial Food First review, 82% of residents managed with real food only. Of these, 83% gained or maintained their weight.

70 per cent of care homes are meeting the 'Food First Expectations'. Audits demonstrate homes with the award have fewer errors in nutritional care plans (24%) compared to those without the award (64%). Risk of malnutrition is now reduced in local care homes due to increased awareness, screening, training and the award scheme.

For further information please contact foodfirst@sept.nhs.uk

or visit

<http://www.sept.nhs.uk/Community-Health/Bedfordshire-Community-Health-Services/Food-First.aspx>