

Giving Great Advice

Nutritional advice and treatment both face to face and through telephone clinics in the Cambridgeshire community

The Nutrition and Dietetic Service (Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust) provides a nutrition support service for people living in the community. The Service takes both a Food First and Homemade Supplements approach prior to prescribing and initiating oral nutritional supplements (ONS) (unless the patient's clinical risk warrants immediate supplementation).

The Project

The primary aim of the Service is to ensure people at risk of malnutrition receive appropriate nutrition advice and treatment, i.e. Food First solutions as first line treatment instead of liberally prescribing ONS. This helps to ensure that people are receiving the right nutritional support, treatment and are regularly monitored to determine if they are achieving the desired outcome or require further intervention (including ONS).

The Service provides telephone clinics which have been shown to significantly reduce waiting times for consultation with a specialist. The Service works closely with acute hospitals, care homes, general practices and medicines management teams to raise awareness of malnutrition and improve personalised care pathways.

The Benefits

Since being introduced, there has been a 45% increase in referrals. 83 care homes have increased awareness of malnutrition and are using Food First solutions and monitoring the impact of this before ONS. By doing this, the Service has found that patients are receiving the right treatment and those who have significant clinical need for ONS receive them. By preventing poor use of ONS, using individualised care plans and food solution options, we have been able to decrease inappropriate prescribing of ONS

and help providers meet the Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances (ACBS) criteria. This alone has resulted in an 11.6% decrease in the annual cost of prescribed ONS in the first year of the project whilst still meeting the nutritional needs of service users.

For further information please contact:

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