

# Sharing knowledge and taking responsibility

**A group of community and professional partners in Dorset developed a three year Nutritional Care Strategy for Adults and began implementing it in January 2013.**

Using the BAPEN toolkit<sup>1</sup>, they estimated that 32-42% of care home residents, 25% of those receiving care at home and 14% of the general population in Dorset were at risk of malnutrition.

They formed a partnership which brought together a wide range of professionals from health, care and the voluntary sector (see Appendix) to work together and deliver a proactive and preventive service which reduces levels of malnutrition.

## **The Project**

The project aimed to raise awareness about malnutrition and dehydration, to support residents in taking responsibility for their nutritional health and to provide assistance when needed.

The strategy was implemented via the action plan below. All partners were involved in developing the action plan and are essential to its continued implementation. The project aimed to keep actions as simple and as straightforward as possible and to be inclusive of all adults.

The action plan had four main aims:

- To define pathways of care, to raise awareness and to identify, prevent and treat malnutrition and dehydration in all settings

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<sup>1</sup> BAPEN toolkit for commissioners [www.bapen.org.uk/pdfs/toolkit-for-commissioners.pdf](http://www.bapen.org.uk/pdfs/toolkit-for-commissioners.pdf)

- To agree a training policy, consistent training materials and presentations to support implementing care pathways and to educate individuals and carers on recognising and reducing risk of malnutrition and dehydration
- To ensure the Nutritional Care Strategy for Adults is linked and incorporated into the Public Health, NHS, Dorset County Council, voluntary sector and local health and wellbeing board agendas
- To produce and implement a communications strategy to raise awareness about malnutrition and dehydration among adults. This will encourage people to take more responsibility for their own nutritional care by providing information, signposting and supporting as appropriate

Specific work streams have been set up for each aim and will report back to the strategy group. Each work stream will meet as required to implement relevant actions. The strategy stakeholders will meet every six months to review progress and monitor the work streams. The partnership will report annually to the health and wellbeing board.

### **The Benefits**

Early benefits already show that working together is critical and a silo approach to this wouldn't work. Whilst it is very early to demonstrate quantifiable benefits at this stage, the project anticipates that the joined up approach and strategy will help to make a real difference to people and the wider community.

**For further information**, please visit:

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/adult-nutrition>

### **Appendix: List of partner organisations**

Mental Health Forum  
Senior Forums  
Head of Adult Services, County Council  
Commissioning Manager, County Council  
Champion for Older People & Mental Health Service  
Cancer Network  
Dorset LiNK

Food & Safety Manager, District Council  
Consultant in Public Health  
Age UK  
Dietetic Manager, acute hospital  
Medicines Management Team  
Trading Standards  
Care Catering Services, County Council  
Director of Communities, District Council  
Age Partnership  
St John Ambulance  
Director of Operations, NHS  
POPP  
Sight & Hearing Team, County Council  
Service Improvement Manager, NHS  
Community Services Manager, NHS  
Deputy Director of Joint Commissioning & Partnerships  
Senior Nurse, acute hospital  
Carers' Association