

JOINT MISSION STATEMENT

UK MALNUTRITION AWARENESS WEEK 5TH – 12TH OCTOBER 2020

Awareness matters. Now, more than ever.

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, the public, parliamentarians and policy makers, and mobilise people to take action to identify, prevent and better manage malnutrition. This year, it is more important than ever.

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 The cost to the health service of disease-related malnutrition is as high as £23.5 billion at the last estimate, which is approximately 15% of the total expenditure on health and social care.²

Following the coronavirus outbreak in the UK we believe more people will be at risk of malnutrition. It 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.

Our ten year vision

We envisage a future for the UK where preventing and managing malnutrition is everybody's business. This means that we want:

- Health and social care professionals to be able to spot the signs and symptoms of malnutrition and routinely screen for malnutrition
- Policy makers to be engaged in helping to raise the profile of malnutrition (and dehydration) as a public health issue
- Members of the public to understand the risks, causes, and signs of malnutrition, and know where to access resources and self-screening tools

Awareness in 2020

We believe many more people will be at risk of malnutrition as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. Therefore, our campaign this year matters more than ever. Through the 2020 UK Malnutrition Awareness Week campaign, we aim to:

- Raise awareness of malnutrition (and dehydration) among the public and encourage the use of self-screening tools
- Help health and social care professionals understand their role in preventing and treating malnutrition and routinely screening for malnutrition
- Demonstrate what good nutritional care looks like and help organisations and individuals achieve it
- Engage policy makers, public sector representatives, local and national government, third sector and voluntary sector organisations and help them recognise the need to tackle malnutrition now



Malnutrition Task Force
Eating and drinking well in later life



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The ageing population - ten years to act

While malnutrition can strike anybody at any age, there is a particularly pressing need to address malnutrition in the over 65 population.

The population aged over 65 is growing at a much faster rate than the population aged under 65.³

By 2030, one in five people in the UK (21.8%) will be aged 65 or over, 6.8% will be aged 75+ and 3.2% will be aged 85+.⁴

In order to protect our ageing population we have two goals:

1. To increase public awareness of malnutrition so that people can spot the signs, self-screen and seek help
2. To raise the prioritisation of malnutrition screening and management in the health and social care system and improve pathways of care

Our public awareness goals for 2030 are that:

- Everyone in the UK should have an understanding of the causes and signs of malnutrition
- Everyone in the UK should have access to the tools to self-screen for malnutrition risk if they are concerned about themselves or a loved one, and know what to do next

Our health and social care system goals for 2030 are that:

- All at-risk individuals should be routinely screened using the 'Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool'
- All at-risk individuals should have a nutrition care plan
- Integrated care pathways should be in place to ensure continuity of nutrition care between settings

In order to deliver real change in the health and social care system by 2030, these changes need to be seen across acute, community and domiciliary settings, supporting people wherever they receive care.

References

1. BAPEN, Introduction to Malnutrition. Available at: <https://www.bapen.org.uk/malnutrition-undernutrition/introduction-to-malnutrition?start=4>
2. BAPEN, Managing malnutrition to save lives and money. Available at: <https://www.bapen.org.uk/pdfs/reports/mag/managing-malnutrition.pdf>
3. Office for National Statistics, National population projections: 2016-based - Office for National Statistics. Retrieved January 31, 2019, from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/nationalpopulationprojections2016basedstatisticalbulletin>
4. Later Life in the United Kingdom 2019. Available at: https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/older_life_uk_factsheet.pdf



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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



For us, 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. More people than ever may be vulnerable this year - this week matters.

Dr Trevor Smith, BAPEN President



Malnutrition Task Force

Eating and drinking well in later life

The Malnutrition Task Force are 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



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 again for the third year on UK Malnutrition Awareness Week to continue to raise awareness of the importance of eating well in later life. This year our efforts are needed more than ever.

Dianne Jeffrey CBE DL, Chair, Malnutrition Task



The BDA are the professional body and trade union representing the UK dietetic workforce, who play a huge role in the prevention and treatment of malnutrition. Founded in 1936, we are one of the oldest and most experienced dietetic bodies in the world, dedicated to improving the health of the UK public by influencing national policy and promoting the highest standards of dietetic practice.

For more information visit:
<https://www.bda.uk.com/news-campaigns/campaigns/malnutrition.html>

The 2020 campaign is supported by the British Dietetic Association.



As long as malnutrition continues to impact on millions of people, it is vital that we do everything we can to highlight and demand action to tackle the problem. We are looking forward to working alongside our allies BAPEN and the Malnutrition Task Force to bring this pressing issue to the attention of policy makers, healthcare professionals and the wider public.

Caroline Bovey RD BEM, Chair, British Dietetic Association