

## Dietitians Help to Combat Malnutrition in Local Care Homes

Bedford Hospital dietitians have launched a new Spot and Stop malnutrition pack to help stop elderly care home residents becoming malnourished.

The pack was devised by dietitians in consultation with GPs, care home managers, social services and pharmaceutical advisors after national data revealed that up to 42% of elderly care home residents are at risk of malnutrition<sup>1</sup>. Among other tools, the Spot and Stop pack contains nutritional care plans which can be personalised for residents who screen as being at risk of malnutrition.

The pack includes the nationally validated Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST)<sup>2</sup> plus standard nutritional care plans which can be personalised for individual residents who screen as being at risk of malnutrition. The aim is to equip homes to prevent, identify and manage malnutrition more effectively.

The nutrition pathway includes advice for care homes to purchase Complan, Build-up or similar over the counter products and /or to make nourishing milk shakes for residents who refuse the occasional meal.

Food fortification information is included, to be implemented for any resident at medium or high risk of malnutrition. **In addition, it is recommended that care homes ask GPs to prescribe Complan Shake or Food Link Complete for residents who screen as being at high risk of malnutrition.** One serving a day of Foodlink Complete made with full cream milk provides 420kcal and 12.5g protein at a cost of just £3.29 for a week's supply.

Where these nutrition care plans cannot be implemented effectively due to the patient's medical condition or their taste preferences, or if the need for prescribed supplements exceeds six months a dietetic referral is recommended.

Training on malnutrition screening and implementing of the pack is being offered to care home staff. In Horizon PCT this will be in conjunction with Social Services.

The Spot and Stop Malnutrition pack can be accessed on [www.bedfordhospital.nhs.uk](http://www.bedfordhospital.nhs.uk)

For further information please contact Bernice Chiswell, Community Dietitian Tel 01234 792171 or email

[Bernice.chiswell@bedfordhospital.nhs.uk](mailto:Bernice.chiswell@bedfordhospital.nhs.uk)

<sup>1</sup> British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN) Malnutrition Matters: Meeting Quality Standards in Nutritional Care 2010

<sup>2</sup> Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool produced by British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN) [www.bapen.org.uk/must\\_tool.html](http://www.bapen.org.uk/must_tool.html)