

Putting Nutrition at the Heart of Patient Care

Promoting & Supporting Good Nutritional Care

As the start of summer, June sees a great many opportunities to promote and support good nutritional care in the UK and beyond.

Dietitians Week

From 5-9 June, Dietitians Week reflects on the importance of dietitians and why they are central to tackling malnutrition in the UK.

Although not all patients at risk of malnutrition will need to see a dietitian, it is recognised that dietitians play a crucial role in leading the implementation of appropriate evidence-based malnutrition management pathways, such as the *Managing Adult Malnutrition in the Community Pathway*,¹ supporting primary care professionals to effectively address malnutrition through early intervention.

As integrated care systems further develop their preventative care approaches, dietitians will play an even more vital role supporting colleagues and patients across the range of healthcare and community settings.

BSNA members collaborate and work with dietitians across a variety of specialities, with many dietitians working within industry themselves. The launch of the British Dietetic Associations's (BDA) Industry Specialist Group in March this year was very positive news to bring together and support all dietitians working in non-clinical roles in all areas of industry.

Through this year's Dietitians Week, BSNA takes the opportunity to recognise the value of this highly skilled profession.

World Food Safety Day

On 7 June it is also World Food Safety Day, run by the World Health Organization (WHO). BSNA are promoting the importance of food safety both within industry and by supporting the ongoing partnership with healthcare professionals working to ensure food safety for all patients.

Safe food is essential to human health and well-being. Only when food is safe can we fully benefit from its nutritional value and from the mental and social benefits of sharing a safe meal.

Foods for special dietary uses – from infant formula, complementary foods, foods for special medical purposes (FSMPs) and parenteral nutrition – are specifically developed to cater for the specific nutritional requirements of people with special dietary needs, supporting people throughout all stages of life.

References: 1. Holdoway A, et al. (2021) *Managing Adult Malnutrition in the Community*, 3rd Edition. Available online: www.malnutritionpathway.co.uk/library/managing_malnutrition.pdf (Apr 2023).
2. Optimal Nutritional Care for All Campaign. (2021). Nutritional Cancer care at EU Member state level, Digital Conference April 15, 2021. Accessed online: <https://european-nutrition.org/landing-page/eu4nutrition21/> (Apr 2023).

BSNA members work together with national authorities, for example the Food Standards Agency, to ensure safe and nutritious foods are available, providing support in regulating food safety along the entire food chain and ensuring international standards are met or even surpassed.

Optimal Nutritional Care for All (ONCA)

On 15 and 16 June 2023, the Netherlands will host the international Optimal Nutritional Care for All (ONCA) conference, with the theme of “Continuity of nutrition care: the power of concerted efforts against malnutrition”.

Launched in 2014, the ONCA campaign is a multi-stakeholder initiative to support and promote greater screening for risk of disease-related malnutrition and nutritional care implementation across Europe.

The campaign supports national professional societies, associations, and patient groups in public health and health care in 19 countries to implement nutritional risk screening and optimal nutritional care.

Through the EU4Nutrition programme,² the European Nutrition for Health Alliance (ENHA) and ONCA engage with the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union, to secure nutritional care in the EU's policies and programmes, and in the recommendations to its Member States.

Renowned experts in nutritional care, patient organisations, and policymakers will meet in Amsterdam to address inequalities in nutritional care, identify and tackle barriers, and share achievements and good practice on the implementation of optimal nutritional care in policy and practice.

Raising awareness of the challenges faced in tackling disease-related malnutrition and sharing best practice in providing high quality nutritional care - from proper screening for malnutrition risk, suitable assessment and care plan delivery and proper hospital discharge planning - are central to an effective preventative approach.

BSNA and our member companies are delighted to support this month of activities promoting the benefits of high quality, safe and effective nutritional care for patients across all settings, in the UK and globally.

About the British Specialist Nutrition Association

BSNA is the trade association representing the manufacturers of products designed to meet the particular nutritional needs of individuals; these include specialist products for infants and young children (including infant formula, follow-on formula, young child formula and complementary weaning foods), medical nutrition products for diseases, disorders and medical conditions, including oral nutritional supplements, enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition, as well as companies who aseptically compound chemotherapy, parenteral nutrition and CIVAS.