

# Putting nutrition at the heart of patient care



## An update on Specialist Nutrition

### Call for greater focus on patients at risk of malnutrition as numbers admitted to hospital with malnutrition doubles in the last decade

Organisations such as the British Specialist Nutrition Association (BSNA), BAPEN, Age UK and Independent Age have called for more action from Government to ensure malnutrition is better identified and treated across health and social care.

The number of adults being admitted to hospital with malnutrition has more than doubled in the last decade, with admissions related to a primary diagnosis of malnutrition increasing to 735 in 2017-18 from 348 in 2008-09, according to new figures released by NHS Digital.

There was also a dramatic increase in the number of admissions with a secondary diagnosis of malnutrition, with the figure more than trebling over the last ten years from 2,545 to 7,803.

This means that the total number of admissions with a diagnosis of malnutrition has risen from 2,893 to 8,537.

The data was released in response to a parliamentary question about malnutrition-related admissions put forward by Eleanor Smith, Labour MP for Wolverhampton South West.

In research published by BSNA in last year, through its *Forgotten not Fixed: A Blueprint to Tackle the Increasing Burden of Malnutrition*

*in England* report, it was also found that more than half the hospital Trusts in England are significantly under-reporting malnutrition rates compared to accepted national estimates.

Over three million people in the UK are estimated to be either malnourished or at risk of malnutrition. Among its recommendations, BSNA's report calls for the full implementation and uptake of NICE Clinical Guideline 32 on Nutrition and Support in Adults (CG32) and the NICE Quality Standard. It also calls for the introduction of incentives, such as a Quality and Outcomes Framework indicator, to transform how malnutrition is identified, recorded and managed.

BSNA has also raised its concerns with NHS England and Ministers, that malnutrition was not specifically identified as a priority in the NHS Long Term Plan.

In response to the figures, A Department of Health and Social Care spokesman told the newspaper: "We must do all we can to avoid people becoming malnourished and better diagnosis and detection is key."

We are committed to training all health and care staff to spot the early warning signs so effective treatment can be put in place."

#### Optimal Nutritional Care for All

Disease-related malnutrition presents a significant public health problem not only in the UK, but across the whole of Europe. Unlike obesity, it is often ignored despite having significant economic cost to healthcare systems and reduction in quality of life for those suffering.

The Optimal Nutritional Care for All (ONCA) Campaign began in 2014 with the aim to facilitate greater screening for risk of disease-related malnutrition and better nutritional care implementation across Europe. It is a multi-stakeholder initiative spanning 18 countries.

The Annual ONCA Conference 2019 is being held this year in the UK. The Conference, taking place on 19 & 20 November in Cambridge, is being hosted by BAPEN, BDA, PINNT, ENHA and BSNA. This Conference aims brings together clinicians, dietitians, policy makers, politicians and most importantly patients to share knowledge and coordinate efforts to ensure optimal nutritional care for all.

If you are interested in attending the ONCA Conference, you can register at: [onca.typeform.com/to/nGwra5](https://onca.typeform.com/to/nGwra5)

More information about ONCA and the campaign can be found at: [www.european-nutrition.org](http://www.european-nutrition.org)

#### 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 diagnosed disorders and medical conditions, including parenteral nutrition, and gluten-free foods on prescription. [www.bsna.co.uk](http://www.bsna.co.uk)