



The State Registered Dietitian's Role in Oncology Working with Patients with Cancer

Produced by: The Oncology Group of The British Dietetic Association

Registered Dietitians play an important part in multi professional team working, caring for people with cancer.

They aim to optimise the nutritional status and quality of life of those patients who are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition as a result of their illness or the treatment they are receiving.

They do this in the following ways:

- By **assessing** the patient's nutritional requirements. This assessment includes medical history, measurement of height and weight, reviewing relevant blood tests, dietary review and calculating the deficit between nutrient intake and requirements. All this is done whilst taking into consideration the patient's social circumstances, prognosis and treatment.
- By **advising** on appropriate nutritional support, which may be oral, enteral or parenteral. Appropriate feeding regimes are calculated for those fed enterally and parenterally.
- By **liaising** with doctors, nurses, dietitians and other health care professionals who are involved in the patient's care in the hospital or in the community. This can be done effectively as part of a multi-professional team
- By **monitoring** the patient's progress and changing needs by assessing weight changes, reviewing dietary intake and liaising with the multi professional team

- By **arranging** nutrition support in the community by working with GPs to prescribe ongoing nutritional support
- By **organising** information and support for the patient, family, friends and carers about appropriate nutrition in hospital and at home
- By **educating** families and carers about managing enteral feeding at home
- By **participating** in the training of students from all professions and health care professionals. To increase awareness about the importance of nutrition in cancer.
- By **promoting** awareness about the role of dietitians in cancer care
- By **utilising** and being involved in research and audit to increase the body of knowledge about cancer and nutrition.

The Oncology Group of The British Dietetic Association

This group comprises Registered Dietitians working in the specialist area of nutrition and cancer and those who are interested in this area.

The group produces and develops resources, produces a bi-annual newsletter, organises two meetings each year and provides expert advice to other bodies.

It also provides a forum for all Registered Dietitians working in oncology to exchange information, provide support for each other and promote the importance of nutrition in cancer.

Members work in a variety of locations:

- Cancer Centres
- Cancer Units
- Hospitals
- Hospices/ Palliative Care Units
- Community
- GP Practices

For further information contact:

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To contact a Registered Dietitian ask your General Practitioner or local hospital.