



Media Release

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For Immediate Release

Dietitians welcome 'Better Hospital Food - The NHS Menu'

The British Dietetic Association welcomes the NHS initiative to improve hospital food for patients, and the participation of Loyd Grosman and the celebrity chefs in helping to achieve it's goals. The working group devising the new NHS menu includes 8 dietitians as well as nurses and catering officers. Dietitians are actively involved in giving dietary advice to hospital inpatients who are malnourished as well as to those with eating difficulties related to their illness or treatment. The availability of acceptable and appetising food when patients want it is a major challenge.

Rick Wilson, Director of Nutrition and Dietetics at Kings College Hospital, London, says "If you do not eat in hospital you will not get better! This initiative is an important, quality development recognising the value of food as part of care and treatment." Dietitians have a crucial role to play in ensuring the nutritional quality of hospital food and this will be monitored as part of a Performance Assessment Framework described in the NHS Plan.

The minimum food service is outlined in the NHS Plan as consisting of "*continental breakfast, cold drinks and snacks at mid-morning and in the afternoon, light lunchtime meals and an improved two course evening dinner*". The NHS Menu and recommendations for the 24 hour catering service will be ready in the first quarter of 2001. The standards described in the NHS Menu will be mandatory for all NHS Trust catering for patients. This is quite different to the many documents we have seen over the last ten years which have all been guidelines.

This is a major boost for hospital food services. There has never been such a golden opportunity to move hospital food services forward and State Registered Dietitians wish the initiative every success and look forward to its implementation.

For more information contact:

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The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for State Registered Dietitians (SRDs) in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Members of the Association hold a degree or recognised post-graduate diploma in nutrition and/or dietetics.

The British Dietetic Association is the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. It has approximately 4,000 members of which around half are employed in the National Health Service. The remaining dietitians work in education, industry and research settings, or as freelance consultants.

State Registered Dietitians interpret and translate the science of nutrition into a practical way of promoting nutritional well-being, disease treatment and the prevention of nutrition-related problems.

Note:

State Registration is awarded by the Dietitians Board of the Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine (CPSM), under the Professions Supplementary to Medicine Act 1960, and is an indication that a Dietitian is competent to practise, and must work within the Statement of Conduct issued by the Dietitians Board.

The general terms 'nutritional therapist', 'dietary therapist', 'nutritionist' or 'nutrition consultant' do not indicate eligibility for State Registration.