



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians

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Media Release

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For immediate release

BDA Welcomes Nutrition Action Plan

The British Dietetic Association (BDA) is a key contributor to the 'Improving Nutrition' action plan and welcomes its launch today (Tuesday 30 October). The BDA believes that the Action Plan, which has identified five key priorities for action, will provide a common vision for all those involved in the delivery of nutritional care to the most vulnerable people in our society.

The Action Plan marks a step change in the approach towards ensuring good nutrition and Nutrition, adequate hydration and enjoyable mealtimes, which in turn can dramatically improve the health and well-being of people, particularly older or vulnerable people. For the first time, it unites the energies and expertise of a broad range of stakeholders in a common pursuit – to improve the standard of nutritional care throughout the NHS and social care.

The five key priorities for action are:

- To raise awareness of the link between nutrition and good health and that malnutrition can be treated.
- To ensure that accessible guidance is available across all sectors and that the most relevant guidance is appropriate and user-friendly.
- To encourage nutritional screening for all, with particular attention to those groups who are known to be vulnerable.
- To encourage provision and access to relevant training on the importance of nutrition for good health and nutritional care for frontline staff and managers
- To clarify standards and strengthen inspection and regulation.

Pauline Douglas, honorary chairman of British Dietetic Association, said: "Poor nutritional care is unacceptable in the 21st century yet it is widespread in hospitals, care homes and other settings where people are dependent on others for their care. This situation can only be overcome if all the caring professions and organisations work together with the public and Government to make sure that every vulnerable person is well nourished and hydrated.

“Under-nutrition is the result of poor nutritional care it; contributes to a lot of misery and ill-health. Poorly nourished individuals will not obtain maximum benefit from the treatments they receive and they are more likely to suffer complications such as hospital acquired infections. ‘Improving Nutritional Care’ provides a common vision and will enable professionals, regulators, Government bodies, patients and public representatives to all work together to ensure that through a strong, well resourced and well motivated team, patients’ nutritional needs are met.”

On the appointment of Gordon Lisham, Director General of Age Concern as chair the Nutrition Action Plan Delivery Board, Pauline Douglas added: “Gordon’s appointment to monitor and ensure delivery of the various commitments in the Action Plans is an important one, especially, as Age Concern has been campaigning for improvement in nutrition standards for vulnerable patients in NHS and social care.”

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Media enquiries to The British Dietetic Association should be directed to our media hotline on 0870 580 2517 or pr@bda.uk.com.

Notes to Editors

1. The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for registered dietitians in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is the nation's largest organisation of food and nutrition professionals with over 6,000 members. About two-thirds of members are employed in the National Health Service. The remaining members work in education, industry, research, sport settings or freelance.
2. Registered dietitians hold the only legally-recognised graduate qualifications in nutrition and dietetics. They are experts in interpreting and translating the science of nutrition into practical ways of promoting nutritional well-being, disease treatment and the prevention of nutrition-related problems. Their advice is sound and based on current scientific evidence.
3. Registration, awarded by the Health Professions Council, is an indication that a Dietitian is fit to practise and is working within an agreed statement of conduct. For further details about The British Dietetic Association, please visit our websites: www.bda.uk.com, www.bdaweightwise.com, www.teenweightwise.com.