



OLDER PEOPLE SPECIALIST GROUP

Autumn 2024



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Hello and welcome to our Autumn Newsletter.

Lots has changed since the last newsletter including a change in Government. Pay increases for health workers have been offered and difficult decisions that could potentially affect the older adults we care for have been made. We will continue to advocate for our specialism and the people we care for. As always we have a jam packed newsletter. We have a new social media officer and events officer join our committee, welcome Lexi and Joanna. Have a read of what else we have been getting up to.

Your OPSG team!

Care Home Digest Launch

On Wednesday 26th June in Birmingham, we held a joint study day with the Food Services Specialist Group and the National Association of Care Catering to launch the Care Home Digest. The Care Home Digest is the first menu planning and food service guidelines for care homes for older adults.

The Care Home Digest provides information and tools that catering teams, care home managers, carers and nursing staff can use to help them provide high quality food and drink services for residents in their care.



The study day brought together 138 Dietitians, Chefs and care home staff for a great day of learning. In the morning session we heard from the chapter leads who talked us through the content of the Care Home Digest and provided insight into the context of the resource. The session ended with a great discussion about the content of the Care Home Digest between the chapter leads and event delegates.

The afternoon session began with a session led by Sam Heal, Executive Chef with Porthaven Care Homes Group and Alison Smith, OPSG committee member and Prescribing Support Consultant Dietitian at NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board provided real world examples of how care homes can implement a successful nutrient dense approach for their residents.

National IDDSI Craft Trainer Andy Cullum then provided a practical session demonstrating better ways to provide IDDSI compliant meals to care home residents. For our final session we welcomed Charlotte Rudge, a registered Dietitian working with the Care Quality Commission. Charlotte along with Vittoria Romano, OPSG committee Chair and Specialist Dietitian and Prescribing Lead in Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust discussed the role of the Care Quality Commission in ensuring high quality care and food service is provided to care home residents and how the Care Home Digest will be a key resource for care homes and those working with care homes.



Overall, we had a great day of learning and delegates largely rated the day highly and valued the variety of speakers and the opportunity to discuss the contents of the Care Home Digest and food provision in care homes with colleagues working in the same area. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors (Apetito, Bidfood, BonCulina, Brakes, NHCare and White Oaks) and the BDA Specialist Groups Events Team for their support with this event.

“An exciting day and really grateful to have been a part of it!”

Delegate Feedback





Research Focus: 2023 BDA Research Symposium Presenter

Jen

At the BDA Research Symposium in December 2023 I presented the finding of a “Mixed-methods evaluation of the Scottish Borders/Eat Well Age Well Implementation of the Patients Association Nutrition Checklist”

Eat Well Age Well is a project by the Scottish charity Food Train that aims to work with a variety of organisations to implement projects to improve the identification and treatment of older people at risk of malnutrition in Scotland.

This project was carried out in partnership with the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership and aimed to assess the benefit of implementing the Patients Association Nutrition Checklist in areas that were not currently screening for malnutrition risk or providing support to those at risk of malnutrition.

We worked with 12 organisations across the Scottish Borders from a variety of areas including housing, care at home voluntary sector organisations to implement the checklist into existing pathways. Bespoke training was provided to the organisations to ensure staff felt confident using the checklist and providing first line advice to those found to be at risk of malnutrition.

We received support to evaluate this project and the study was funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) as part of the Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team (PHIRST) initiative. A mixed method design, incorporating observational and process evaluation of checklist implementation was used.

Over the course of the project 461 older adults were screened for malnutrition risk using the checklist, 7.4% of whom were found to be at risk of malnutrition. From the surveys conducted staff perceived the checklist to be easy to use and found it to be a useful tool to facilitate difficult conversations around nutrition with older adults. Results highlighted the time available at appointments and resource issues such as staffing and caseload volumes as barrier to using the checklist.

Overall, we found that using the checklist could help to increase awareness of and early identification of older people at risk of malnutrition and improve difficult conversations around nutrition with older people. However more support is needed to ensure staff have the time to implement new tools and further work is needed to identify to long term benefits of projects like this.

Presenting this work at BDA Symposium was a great experience and is an opportunity for dietitians to present work that they may not have the opportunity to present at other conferences.

Jen Grant, Dietitian, Food Train.

REPORT

The evaluation of the Scottish Borders/Food Train Eat Well Age Well implementation of the Patients Association Nutrition Checklist



2024 Nutrition Interventions in Sarcopenia and Frailty: From Research to Practice.

Wednesday 9th October

Encourage folk to engage share with non dietitian peers



New Report: **BGS** **roundtable: Transforming** **care for older people**

This report summarises a roundtable event hosted by the British Geriatrics Society (BGS) on 20 June 2024 to discuss the themes raised in the 2023 report Health in an Ageing Society from the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), and the BGS's blueprint document, Joining the dots: Preventing and managing frailty in older people, also published in 2023.



If you have resources to share or suggestions for future events, please get in touch.
Contact us via our email address or by following us on social media

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