

# standing up for dietetics

## The ELEVATOR PITCH

You bump into a commissioner in the car park, you are both returning to your cars ready to drive off in different directions. It's a rare opportunity and you know you should use it to promote your dietetic team. You open your mouth, then pause. Where on earth do you start? The minute ticks by and in the end you exchange pleasantries then get into your car and drive away. Opportunity sadly missed.

This is one situation where it would have helped to have an 'elevator pitch' planned, ready to go and well-practiced.

## What is an ELEVATOR PITCH?

This is a brief, persuasive speech that will promote the value of your service delivered in a short time frame of a minute or so.

It will help you be prepared for opportune encounters (such as in an elevator) with commissioners or other important and influential stakeholders.

You will need to put aside some time to prepare your pitch or pitches – it will pay off in the end!

## How do you write an ELEVATOR PITCH?

What can you say in just a minute or so? You will probably need more than one elevator pitch depending on who you are aiming it at and what their priorities are. It may take some time to get your pitch right, compelling and sounding natural. Your pitch can be divided into **three parts**. Each part should take no more than 30 seconds each.

**1. Introduce yourself and state who you are and what you do.** If they know you already then you have more time to spend on parts 2 and 3.



**2. Describe your service and what it delivers succinctly**  
Include a sentence on what that means to the NHS by mentioning the quality and cost saving outcomes that your service delivers. One way to do this is to include the phrase: 'which means that' *example overleaf*.

Remember to mention any audit, evaluation or research results that you have that demonstrate that you can make cost efficiencies and / or quality improvements. Include any patient quotes / statistics e.g. 90 % of our patients would recommend our service

**3. Take home message for the commissioner.** What do you want the commissioner to do after your pitch? This will vary depending on the stakeholder. This can be a question.

- *I am very happy to send you more details of our service and the role of the dietitian – would that be useful?*
- *We are trying to secure monies to expand our service so could provide you with our data which may be useful information for the next CCG Board meeting*
- *May I call you sometime to discuss this further?*
- *Would you like to visit our service so that you can see it in action and talk to our dietitians and patients?*

**Put it all together and PRACTICE!**

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## Example of an ELEVATOR PITCH

*Good afternoon Mr Holmes. We haven't met before but may I introduce myself? My name is Alice Threfall and I am the Nutrition and Dietetic service manager for the East County Community NHS Trust.*

*May I grab a minute of your time to let you know about the innovative telephone nutrition support service that we provide to patients in our community? We are very proud of it.*

*Our innovative telephone nutrition support service supports patients in their treatment at home. We can improve the nutritional status of patients through the effective and efficient use of food and prescribed nutritional supplements which means that our patients are more able to manage their own condition, they're less likely to develop complications such as pressure sores and they're more likely to stay at home for longer with fewer admissions to hospital and nursing homes.*

*We've been able to deliver proven and tangible cost savings. An evaluation of our service showed that we made savings of 20% on the local expenditure on ONS in the community and at the same time reduced incidence of pressure sores in nursing homes by 15%.*

*And 90% of our telephone service users say that the service means that they feel more confident to manage their condition at home.*

*Would you like to visit our service so that you can see it in action and talk to our dietitians and patients? You would be very welcome. In the meantime here is my business card.* ”

## Practice!

Practice makes perfect. The more you practice the more natural it will sound. Remember your body language – it conveys as much information as your words – it needs practicing too! Ask a colleague to watch and listen to you – their feedback will be useful.

## Some extras...

### Take away items:

It's a good idea to keep your business card or a brochure about your service with you for chance encounters with stakeholders. These can be given to the stakeholder so that they have something to remember you with.

### Follow up:

You may feel it's appropriate to follow up your elevator pitch with a brief email reminding them of your pitch and providing further information.