



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians

5th Floor, Charles House, 148/9 Great Charles Street Queensway, Birmingham B3 3HT

Tel: 0121 200 8080 Fax: 0121 200 8081



Media Release

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For immediate release

British Dietetic Association supports Hospital Nutritional Guidelines

The British Dietetic Association has been instrumental in creating the 10 Key characteristics for good nutritional care and supports the launch of the *10 Key Characteristics* by the Council of Europe Alliance (UK).

The *10 Key Characteristics* aim to communicate what good care looks like to all professions at the bedside and in the boardroom. The *10 Key Characteristics* stress the importance of nutritional screening on admission to hospital. Other recommendations include the implementation of Protected Mealtimes, to ensure patients get the assistance they need to eat and enjoy their food, nutritional care plans which identify patients' individual needs and the inclusion of specific guidance on food services in hospitals' Clinical Governance arrangements.

Speaking at the 10 Key characteristics stakeholder event on 4 October 2007, Pauline Douglas, honorary chairman of British Dietetic Association, said: "Good nutritional care is important because patients expect that their basic need for food and water will be met. All hospital treatments are less effective in patients who are malnourished or dehydrated; furthermore, such patients will have a reduced immunity to hospital acquired infection."

Data from 2006 in patients older people survey by Healthcare Commission showed that while care has improved when compared to the survey in 2005, there is still a long way to go. As many as one in eight elderly patients still say that hospital food is poor and more than one in five 75-84 year olds said that they did not get sufficient help and assistance with eating and drinking.

She added: "Dietitians are the experts in applying nutritional science to the care situation and all hospital Dietetic Departments have a key role to play in ensuring that food and beverage services are 'fit for purpose' and are capable of delivering adequate nutrition and hydration.

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“Nutritional care requires the commitment and resource of a strong multi-disciplinary team and dietitians look forward to working with all staff patients and carers to give nutritional care the status and priority our patients demand and deserve.”

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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.