

MALNUTRITION IN THE COMMUNITY

10 years of identifying and treating adult malnutrition in East Sussex



Gail Bright
Community
Nutrition Support
Dietitian

Within our Nutrition and Dietetic department we have a dedicated Community Nutrition Support Dietetic team, which provides nutrition support services to people living in East Sussex. Over the last 10 years, this team has grown and evolved as more patients are being identified as either being malnourished or at risk of malnutrition.

An exciting development this year has been funding for a new one-year post, working jointly with our Medicines Management team, to look specifically at nutritional screening, management plans for treating malnutrition and the appropriate use of oral nutritional supplements (ONS) in identified care homes.

secure funding for an additional dietetic post to work within the field of community nutrition support to develop this service further.

In 2007, the nutrition support guidelines were reviewed and updated in line with best practice and evidence from NICE Guideline 32 (2). The updated guidelines were consolidated into a practical resource pack, 'Treating Adult Malnutrition in the Community'. The update was relaunched to GPs, nurses, healthcare assistants, other healthcare professionals, including care homes in Eastbourne, Uckfield and the surrounding areas. The pack contains background information on malnutrition, the Trust-adopted nutrition screening tool The Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST), standard treatment protocols (according to MUST score), supporting first line diet sheets and suggested monitoring tools.



Jennifer Marsh
Community
Nutrition Support
Dietitian

HOW DID WE GET TO WHERE WE ARE TODAY?
In 2002, an 'Audit of the Prescribing Practice for Nutritional Supplements in Primary Care' was conducted in Eastbourne and the surrounding area to evaluate ONS prescribing and nutritional training needs of healthcare professionals in the community (1). This audit found that following a review by a dietitian, 34 percent of ONS supplements could be stopped and 28 percent of prescriptions could be reduced or changed to a more cost effective product.

Since 2007 we have faced many challenging and exciting developments, during a time of significant organisational change and changing staffing levels. The community nutrition support team has now expanded to provide a service across the whole of East Sussex. Referral criteria have been developed and reviewed; consequently we now have packages of care for both oral and enteral nutritional support patients. These packages of care are supported by standard assessment sheets, outcome measures and our evidence based nutrition support diet sheets. This work helps to ensure that we provide standardised nutrition support care across East Sussex.

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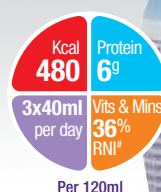
Following this audit, standard nutrition support guidelines with supporting training that promotes a food-first approach as first line treatment for those requiring nutrition support were developed. The audit highlighted the need for standard supporting literature, a standard nutritional screening tool, guidance on the use of ONS as well as access to a dietitian when required. The results of this audit enabled us to

To help maintain competencies in screening, we have developed a rolling training programme of interactive workshops on 'Treating Malnutrition using MUST and Food First'. Over the past year we have delivered this county-wide training programme ▶

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to healthcare staff, including the NHS and external organisations. Each workshop is evaluated and the feedback is very positive; all of our 2011 workshops were fully booked with a long waiting lists. It is rewarding to see evidence of our guidelines being implemented, for example, Community Matrons and Macmillan Nurses making use of our first line diet sheets and our community hospital's and local care homes implementing first line dietary advice before requesting a dietetic referral.

Gail Bright is a Community Nutrition Support Dietitian based in East Sussex. She has worked in nutrition support since starting work in 2006, firstly in the acute setting and more recently in the community. Her areas of interest are gastroenterology and oncology.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

The work we have done to promote the identification and treatment of malnutrition has led to an increase in referrals into the team. As with all areas within the NHS, we have had to look at the way we work and how we can be more efficient. Working more efficiently has enabled us to meet the demands of our growing referral numbers across East Sussex. However, this needs to be balanced with the need for continued service development, as well as ensuring that guidelines are consistently implemented throughout the county, in all care settings.

Jennifer Marsh is a Community Nutrition Support Dietitian based in East Sussex. In addition to her clinical work, Jennifer is involved in teaching, guideline development and student training. Her specialist areas include home enteral tube feeding, nutrition support in care homes as well as nutrition and wound healing.

In East Sussex we have a large number of care homes, including both residential and nursing homes. Current evidence has highlighted that there are more than three million people in the UK who are either malnourished or at risk of malnutrition, with five percent of this population living in care homes (BAPEN 2008). The evidence also suggests that these figures are likely to increase with the ageing population and with more care being provided in the community (3).

To help combat this trend, our newly funded

community nutrition support post has been established to provide an enhanced nutrition support service to a cohort of identified care homes. This one-year project aims to evaluate nutritional care, determine whether residents receiving ONS have been screened for malnutrition, have an appropriate care plan in place and assess whether ONS have been prescribed appropriately. This service is using our existing resource pack and training programme to provide intensive comprehensive training tailored to the care home staff, enabling them to identify and treat malnutrition appropriately.

Initial findings have identified varying practices around nutritional care, including several different nutritional screening tools being used within a care home, a lack of standard treatment protocols (care plans), as well as appropriate snacks and fortified diets not being available. The initial preparation for this project has also highlighted that there is often little ongoing monitoring or review of the effectiveness of prescribed ONS at general practice level. Systems and processes are therefore being reviewed and developed to ensure that any recommendations from the project can be put in to practice and that improvements in nutritional care continue in the long term.

We will be evaluating the outcomes of this exciting project at the end of the year with our colleagues from Medicines Management. The final project report for commissioners will help our community nutrition support team develop future priorities and plan how we will contribute to treating adult malnutrition in East Sussex over the next 10 years.

If you would like to know more about the work we are doing on treating adult malnutrition in the East Sussex community, please do not hesitate to contact us either by telephone, 01323 444167, or email, gail.bright@nhs.net and Jennifer.marsh1@nhs.net

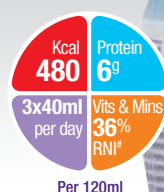
References

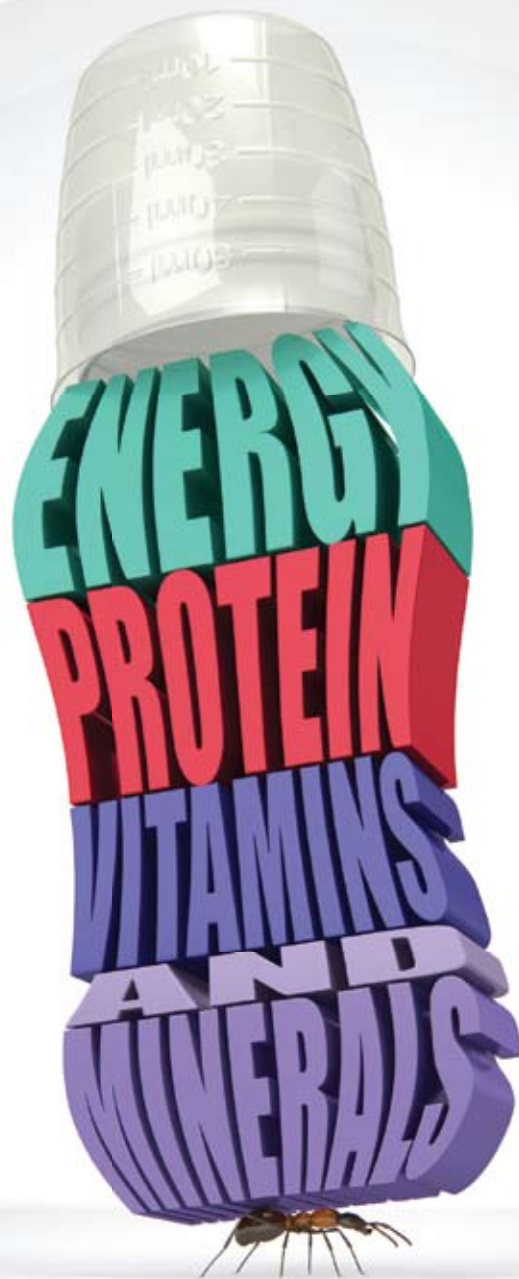
- 1 Audit of the Prescribing Practice for Nutritional Supplements in Primary Care, N Panico (Eastbourne and County Healthcare NHS Trust 2002)
- 2 Nutrition Support in Adults: Oral Supplements, Enteral and Parenteral Feeding, NICE Guideline 32 (NICE 2006)
- 3 Combating Malnutrition: Recommendations for Action, Output of a meeting of the Advisory Group on Malnutrition, M Elia and C A Russell (BAPEN 2008)

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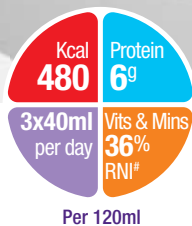
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Questions relating to: *Malnutrition in the community*

Type your answers below and then **print for your records**. Alternatively print and complete answers by hand.

Q.1	With more patients in the community suffering from malnutrition, an audit was carried out in Eastbourne in 2002. Summarise the main findings.
A	
Q.2	What did the 2002 audit highlight the need for?
A	
Q.3	What did the audit secure for the team?
A	
Q.4	Describe the content of the practical resource pack – 'Treating adult malnutrition in the Community'.
A	
Q.5	How does the Community Nutrition Support Team (CNST) ensure that there is standardised nutrition support care across East Sussex.
A	
Q.6	Describe how the CNST maintain competencies in nutritional screening.
A	
Q.7	What are the aims of the one-year community nutrition support project?
A	
Q.8	Describe the initial findings of the project.
A	

Please type extra notes here . . .