



## **A Beacon in the Dark**

### Meals on Wheels in the Community

As the evenings quickly begin to draw in the problem of social isolation becomes more apparent amongst our growing elderly population. It is possible in the warmer weather and light evenings to access outside space to have social contact with other people but as the winter approaches we all tend to see less of other people.

The Community Meals on Wheels service is a beacon not only providing a valuable nutritional service all year round but becoming a life saver during winter months. The service provides regular meals and social contact for older people with employed drivers who have been trained in identifying potential problems on their daily visits. These are then reported back through structured channels to be actioned by the appropriate professionals.

The vehicles used by contracted suppliers are specifically designed for the transportation of meals and are not used for any other purposes. The meals are required to meet the nutritional standards set by the NACC (National Association of Care Catering) [www.thenacc.co.uk](http://www.thenacc.co.uk) the meals are balanced and structured, not a speculative guess of the daily nutrients required by our elderly. There is a wide variety of menu choice available daily and the needs of special diets are fully met.

The maintenance of these social links has a positive influence on older peoples' mental and physical health. Community meals provide this vital social contact once a day. This helps people to feel a connection to their community and remain living independently at home for longer. Secure in the knowledge a fully trained and police checked delivery driver will be there with a hot, tasty and healthy meal 365 days of the year, providing at least one third of the daily nutritional requirements.

Ends

For more information , please contact: Karen Oliver, [Chair NACC](mailto:Chair NACC) on: 0870 7480 180  
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#### **Notes to editors:**

The National Association of Care Catering (NACC) is a progressive organisation representing professionals providing catering to the care industry. They are recognised by Local Authorities, independent providers, the charitable sector and Government departments as a prime source of information and opinion on all aspects of catering within the care sector and whose primary aim is to improve standards.

The NACC has a petition asking for support in raising awareness of this issue, and that of malnutrition to a wider audience. This will be presented to Downing Street on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011 at the start of National Community Meals Week. For more information log on to [www.thenacc.co.uk](http://www.thenacc.co.uk)

The NACC's No One Should Go Hungry campaign is an ongoing campaign to raise the profile of malnutrition in the care sector, and demonstrate the benefits to all of good nutrition. Improved quality of life for those at risk, less demands on their carers, health and social care services.

The NACC works with a number of partners to:

- To promote and enrich the standard of catering within the care sector, whether that catering be provided by Social Care Departments or other Caring Agencies
- To provide a forum for debate among individuals, companies and organisations of all kinds involved in catering for the care sector
- To facilitate the exchange of information, experience and expertise
- To promote the development of professional standards among those involved in catering for the care sector
- To commission research into matters relating to catering for the care sector
- To publish guidelines, policy papers and authoritative statements on all aspects of catering for the care sector