



30th December 2011

**Another nail in the coffin for older people –
The NACC respond to The Daily Telegraph article 30th December 2011**

Figures released today show a 13% increase in the cost of Meals on Wheels across the country, with an average meal now costing £3.44. On top of this most people who need Meals on Wheels also need some form of home care - this currently stands at an average of £13.49 per hour. For many this equates to £30.42 per day for ONE meal and only two hours home care - working out at £212.94 per week.

Putting this into context - the basic state pension currently stands £102.15 per week (www.direct.gov.uk). If you receive no top up benefits, you cannot even afford this basic support package, let alone pay for your heating, lighting and other meals, other essentials like clothes and shoes cannot be afforded. Whilst 'little luxuries' such as outings are out of the question - leading to total social isolation, depression and other not insignificant illness.

Meals on Wheels is a vital service that is a critical lifeline for older, infirm and housebound people, it can be their only social contact in a day. Many people have been living in poverty for many years and this new announcement again identifies the difficult situation many of our most vulnerable find themselves in. We should be ashamed of ourselves and our government. We class ourselves as a civilised first world country, but we are knowingly putting our older generation at risk.

One meal a day does not meet the nutritional requirements of older people, but how do they make the choice. Is it your basic daily personal care, your warmth or your food you give up? Ask yourself how you would choose?

Good nutrition is a basic human right, malnutrition is estimated to cost this country over 9 billion pounds a year and rising. Malnourished older people are forced into hospital care, then care homes for respite care, then return to home all the time becoming more frail, socially isolated and dependant on care services they cannot afford.

The National Association of Care Catering (www.thenacc.co.uk) through their "No One Should Go Hungry Campaign" are calling for malnutrition to be incorporated into the public health agenda and a minister to be appointed to address the problems of malnutrition across Social Care, the juggernaut of malnutrition is not now approaching, it is on top of us!

Shadow health minister Liz Kendall said these services were a "lifeline" for many people and the increases in home care charges for older and disabled people were "a stealth tax on the most vulnerable in society".

Please sign our 'No One Should Go Hungry Campaign' petition on www.thenacc.co.uk to register your support

For more information , please contact: Karen Oliver, **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. For more information log on to www.thenacc.co.uk