

20 August 2012



### **NACC highlights the loneliness of older people in the community**

The National Association of Care Catering (NACC) has commended ITV's Tonight programme for bringing into the public eye the issue of loneliness of older people in the community.

The programme, which was seen on Thursday 16 August, aired in the same week that the NACC launched further vital activity to help combat loneliness amongst the elderly – the new guide ***How To Set Up A Luncheon Club*** and **National Community Meals Week 2012**.

Karen Oliver, National Chair, NACC, explains: “With two million older people having reported recently that they do not see anyone for a week or more and have no one to talk to on a daily basis, loneliness amongst the elderly is a real and growing issue within our society. Sadly, the effects of loneliness can be much greater than first thought, with physical as well as emotional implications. It is therefore crucial that organisations, like the NACC, continue to bring such issues to public attention and provide ways to encourage social activity of the elderly within the community, through Luncheon Clubs and Community Meals, for example. We applaud ITV for producing the Tonight programme and bringing the sensitive yet real issue of loneliness to the mass audience.”

Professor Ian Philp, an advisor to the World Health Organisation and an expert on healthy ageing and the care of older people, said during the Tonight programme *“Loneliness leads to illness in older people and they are likely to suffer from many illnesses including depression.”* A consequence of this can be malnutrition where people with illness and depression have no interest in food and cooking for themselves. As a result, the spiral of illness goes rapidly downward compounding the conditions with added complications such as falls.

Karen Oliver continues: “According to Professor Philp half of the NHS budget is taken up by treating older people. That equates to over £50 million a year and if just a portion of that is due to malnutrition then surely in a first world country that is nothing short of

scandalous? Recently Mr. Cameron announced a Hunger Summit to combat malnutrition across the world. Sadly, there was no evidence in the statements that malnutrition in the elderly in this country would be addressed.”

### **How to set up a Luncheon Club**

The new NACC guidance “**How to set up a Luncheon Club**” launched this week. The guide has been written by experts within the membership of the NACC who are concerned about the growing number of older people that no longer have access to social contact and good nutritious meals.

The aim of the guidance is to make it easy for communities to run a local community group with a luncheon club. It gives anyone who wants to start up a luncheon club everything they need to launch and run the group, including what it entails, how to source funding and volunteers, and of course of the legal side of the operation.

Karen Oliver comments: “Professor Philp also praised the importance of access to luncheon clubs during the Tonight programme. Understanding the vital role luncheon clubs can play in bringing a social element to the lives of the elderly, we have launched the ‘How to set up a luncheon club’ guide that will help establish important life lines for older people in communities across the country.”

The guide will be available at the end of the month from [www.thenacc.co.uk](http://www.thenacc.co.uk) or by telephoning 0870 748 0180.

### **National Community Meals Week 2012 – 1-7 October**

NACC members are also helping to address malnutrition and loneliness through Community Meals provision. Community Meals are provided across the country to vulnerable older people living in their own homes. As well as delivering hearty and nutritional meals to the doors of service users, the drivers also provide a crucial social visit and a ‘safe and well’ check, ensuring that those who use the service are safe and in good health.

Every year the NACC National Community Meals Week promotes the value of this indispensable service. This year the NACC has been given permission to undertake a Guinness Book of World Records attempt for the total number of the same Community

Meal served on the same day. The monumental event takes place on the 1 October 2012, which is the World Health Organisation's Older Persons Day.

The record attempt will be essential for alerting people across the UK to the sheer number of vulnerable older people relying on the Community Meals service every day to maintain their independence and health, whilst also giving them human contact at least once a day.

For further information and to request a National Community Meals Week pack please email [info@thenacc.co.uk](mailto:info@thenacc.co.uk) or call 0870 748 0180.

ENDS

Notes:

#### The NACC

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 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

[www.thenacc.co.uk](http://www.thenacc.co.uk)

**For further information contact: [info@thenacc.co.uk](mailto:info@thenacc.co.uk) / 0870 748 0180 or [berenice.pretlove@gmail.com](mailto:berenice.pretlove@gmail.com) / 07508 146 118.**