



20 March 2013

## PRIME MINISTER LENDS SUPPORT FOR HCA/NACC NUTRITION DAY INITIATIVE

*The Office of National Statistics has indicated that both malnutrition and dehydration are factors that are cited in the cause of death of over 420 people in social and health care settings every year. These incidences can be reduced and more importantly, eliminated by greater understanding and better application of nutritional care practices.*

The **Hospital Caterers Association (HCA)** and the **National Association of Care Catering (NACC)** have joined forces to stage **Nutrition Day** today, **Wednesday 20 March**. The aim is to raise awareness of the importance of good nutritional care, which includes hydration, in all social and health care settings throughout the UK.

In a letter to the Associations, **Prime Minister, David Cameron** has strongly acknowledged the HCA and NACC campaign. Mr Cameron wrote *“I am happy to lend my support to your campaign which complements the Government’s own efforts to ensure good nutritional care”*. He went on to say *“Individuals, carers and professionals all have roles to play in ensuring good nutrition and hydration. The changes to the health system, with a greater focus on healthcare outcomes, strategic oversight by Health and Wellbeing Boards at the local level and a leading role for local authorities in public health, present an opportunity to ensure that the causes and consequences of malnutrition are addressed by the whole system”*.

The Day will focus on providing vital advice and guidance to health and social professionals on the action that can be taken to help prevent under-nutrition and dehydration in the future. Malnutrition and dehydration are unacceptable in a 21<sup>st</sup> century health and social care service. As the leading representative bodies for both health and social care catering, the HCA and the NACC are well placed and determined to lead the way in eradicating these preventable conditions that are detrimental to patient health, wellbeing and recovery.

The overall aim of the **Nutrition Day** is to illustrate how, by making positive changes to eating and drinking habits, people can improve their quality of life. The benefit of the campaign to professionals

... more ...

and staff within social and healthcare settings will be the preventative role they can play in catalysing a reduction in malnutrition related illnesses that often require complex treatments, prolong recovery periods, delay hospital discharges and increase NHS costs. From feedback from their respective Memberships, the indications are that catering teams within a significant number of both NHS Trusts and care settings across the UK will be marking the Day with a special focus on adopting new measures to improve nutritional care. In doing so, they will also be making an ongoing commitment to ensuring good practices are maintained in the future. (*Visit the HCA and NACC websites for case study examples of the measures being undertaken*)

The HCA & NACC will provide information and supporting materials which can be used to promote good practice for all those working in these settings. These can also be used to highlight to patients and customers the dangers of becoming malnourished or dehydrated and how to avoid suffering from these conditions.

Karen Oliver, NACC Chairman said: “It’s important to understand how much food and fluid is required on a daily basis, how this can be increased and what good practices to follow are. I call upon all involved in social and health care to play their part in helping us to promote this vital element of good nutritional care up and down the country. Many social and health care staff are in a position to help monitor the health of older people and it is vital we ensure they have the awareness and tools to provide the care our vulnerable patients and service users deserve.”

Janice Gillan, HCA Chair commented “With more integrated partnership working between health and social care, it was a logical move to work with the NACC on promoting this vital core activity for health and social care. There is also a strong economic argument for supporting people with good nutrition and hydration. Evidence suggests that dehydration can lead to increased hospital stay, and increased readmission rates. It is also important to remember that food is the cheapest form of medicine and is as integral to patient care as their clinical treatment”.

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For more information and a copy of the 10 Key Characteristics for Good Nutritional Care please contact: Hazel Green, HCA Press Office on: 01932 253184/07950 007169 [HaGreen7@aol.com](mailto:HaGreen7@aol.com)  
Berenice Pretlove, NACC media liaison on: 0870 7480 180 [info@thenacc.co.uk](mailto:info@thenacc.co.uk)

### **Notes to Editors:**

- The British Association of Parenteral & Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN) and the British Dietetic Association (BDA) have endorsed the HCA & NACC Nutrition Day initiative and will be providing active support nationwide on the Day. ... more ...

- The HCA & NACC Nutrition Day will be promoting the following:
  - The 10 Key Characteristics for Good Nutritional Care
  - Utilising Nutrition Advocates for each health or social care setting
  - The minimum standards for good nutrition in the respective settings
  - Highlighting Good Nutrition Practices
  - Highlighting Good Hydration Practices

- **About the Hospital Caterers Association (HCA)**

Founded over 60 years ago, the **Hospital Caterers Association (HCA)** was one of the first professional associations to be formed within the National Health Service. It represents almost 400 senior health care catering managers and dietitians who provide a wide range of food services for patients, visitors and staff in NHS hospitals and health care facilities nationwide. With over 250 NHS hospitals represented in its membership and 17 HCA branches throughout the UK, the HCA network is the single largest group of health care catering providers within the NHS. With over 300 million meals served every year and around £500 million spent on food annually by around 300 NHS Trust across approximately 1200 hospitals, the NHS is the UK catering industry's largest provider of meals. The HCA's network of members is responsible for the jobs of 35,000 people, 80% of which are hospital chefs and kitchen based staff. Amongst its Associate membership are over 100 suppliers who are responsible for the provision of millions of pounds worth of food, beverages, services and equipment to the hospital catering sector.

- **About the National Association of Care Catering (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