



PRESS INFORMATION

HCA & NACC ANNOUNCE EXPANSION OF JOINT INITIATIVE TO CHAMPION GOOD NUTRITION AND HYDRATION IN SOCIAL & HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

NUTRITION & HYDRATION WEEK 2014 #NHW2014

Following the tremendous success of the inaugural Nutrition Day (20 March 2013) organised by the **Hospital Caterers Association (HCA)** and the **National Association of Care Catering (NACC)**, the two Associations have announced today (*Wednesday 10 April*) that the joint activity will become an annual event but on a much larger scale over a longer time period. **Nutrition & Hydration Week 2014** will run from 17 – 24 March 2014.

Linking with the Patient Safety First campaign, the associations have expanded their crucial work to raise awareness of the importance of good nutritional care, which includes hydration, in all social and healthcare settings throughout the UK.

Nutrition & Hydration Week will focus on positive action. It will provide vital advice and guidance to health and social professionals on the action that can be taken to help prevent under-nutrition and dehydration. Research¹ shows that the raising of awareness of preventing malnutrition and dehydration to professionals is only a small part of addressing the nutrition time bomb facing the UK. There are issues with both under- and over-nutrition. Ignoring both is placing stress on health and social care services, and positive action is clearly needed.

The aim of the week is to illustrate how, by making changes to eating and drinking habits, people can improve their quality of life. The campaign will benefit professionals and staff within social and healthcare settings by showing them the preventative role they can play in catalysing a reduction in malnutrition-related illnesses that often require complex treatments, prolong recovery periods, delayed hospital discharges all increasing NHS costs and in a community setting can lead to expensive social care packages.

Karen Oliver, NACC Chairman, explains: “It was a logical move to combine our work with Patient Safety First and HCA. Many people receiving care come into contact with healthcare, so having simple unambiguous messages on key issues like nutrition and

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hydration is both obvious and vital. It's important to understand how much fluid is required on a daily basis, how this can be increased and what good practices to follow are. People in the community are in a great position to help monitor the health of older people. It is essential that we ensure they have the awareness, tools and information to provide the best care. It could be as simple as ensuring the person they care for is eating enough calories each day, or recognising that an elderly relative or neighbour is dehydrated or under nourished."

Andy Jones, HCA Chair, commented: "Good nutrition and hydration are fundamental basic needs to recovery, without these we can become malnourished and dehydrated. With evidence suggesting that under-nutrition and dehydration can lead to increased hospital stay and increased readmission rates, we need to continue our focus on this aspect of good care. By announcing the 2014 Week now, it will provide focus not only in twelve months' time, but also in the ensuing twelve months. By undertaking this aim for 2014, the HCA and the NACC are moving beyond their respective comfort zones, but in the absence of Government policy, central direction and funding, we believe the onus now falls to us to take appropriate action. However, we all have a part to play in the nutritional good health of the nation and the sooner everyone realizes that the better – even if it is just their own health!"

Caroline Lecko, Patient Safety Lead, Patient Safety Nursing Directorate added: "Combining our campaigning not only links our work with the campaigning the HCA and NACC are delivering in this vital aspect of care, but targets the key message at clinical staff, caterers and care staff at the same time and in the same way. The nutritional health of the nation is a challenge and it is time for action. There are a myriad of reports into the long term effects obesity will cause; how poor diet will lead to other health problems including under nutrition; but what are we doing? Talking... something needs to be done and with the announcement of Nutrition & Hydration Week 2014 we are delivering the first major step along this pathway."

The Nutrition & Hydration Week will keenly promote the following:

- The 10 Key Characteristics for Good Nutritional Care
- Protected mealtimes
- Further embedding of 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
- Continued education of professionals on good nutrition and hydration.

Ends

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. PS 100 Health & Nutrition in the Public Sector Report –

http://costsectorcatering.co.uk/sites/default/files/attachment/ps100_health_and_nutrition_in_the_public_sector_0.pdf

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

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.