



### ***The NACC Care Cook of the Year 2015 competition grows ever more challenging***

The search for the next talented care cook to be crowned the 'best in the UK' has begun. The ***National Association of Care Catering's Care Cook of the Year 2015*** competition is officially open for entries with a deadline of 6 February 2015.

Building on the huge success of the 2014 competition that attracted record numbers of entries and saw the grand final double in size, the NACC is expecting the numbers to rise to even greater proportions for 2015. Care cooks working across the sector – from residential homes to community services such as meals on wheels, day centres and luncheon clubs – are invited to enter and showcase their specific skills and knowledge.

Catering for the care sector has never been so challenging or rewarding. With one million people over the age of 65 malnourished<sup>1</sup> and the number of elderly at risk of malnutrition even greater, cooks catering for older people in care homes and in the community have a duty of care to ensure the meals they produce are nutritionally beneficial and meet specific dietary requirements, as well as being appetising, appealing and delicious.

Now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year, the NACC's Care Cook of the Year competition challenges all care cooks to do just that. Entrants must create and substantiate a delicious and nutritionally-balanced two-course menu, main and dessert, suitable for service users in a care setting. The combined food cost for both courses is also to be no more than £1.50 per head based on four portions, reflecting the restricted budgets care cooks often have to maximise.

The competition raises the profile of the care catering sector and champions the dedication, flair and skill-set required of those working within it to continually raise standards.

All entries will be judged by a central judging panel for consistency and those shortlisted will have the opportunity to show off their culinary skills and knowledge at one of the six regional cook-offs. Here they will have just 90 minutes to produce their dishes with the judges looking for innovation, costing, suitability for the environment, adherence to nutrition guidelines, taste and overall menu balance.

The two highest-scoring competitors from each regional heat go on to the Grand Final on Wednesday 10 June 2015 at Barking & Dagenham Technical Skills Academy to vie for the coveted title *Care Cook of the Year 2015*.

Neel Radia, National Chair, NACC, comments: "Catering within the care sector is a highly skilled vocation and responsibility. It is also a growing sector as the population continues to age apace.

"As well as the culinary ability and flair to create great-tasting and well-presented food, very specific knowledge and understanding is required by cooks and chefs when planning menus for the elderly and vulnerable entrusted to their care. Important factors such as nutrition, budget restrictions, specific dietary needs and individual demands, for example for those with dementia or dysphagia, must be understood and considered at all times. Care cooks must also keep abreast of developments in regulations and legislation, such as the new allergen regulations introduced this month.

"The NACC Care Cook of the Year competition is vital to the sector. It gives care cooks the opportunity to shine and showcase to stakeholders and the wider industry the dedication and excellence they deliver every day. Our sector is privileged to be represented by talented and selfless cooks that continually demonstrate best practice and push themselves and their abilities ever further to do the very best they can for the elderly they serve. I urge everyone, whether working in care homes or in community settings such as meals on wheels and luncheon clubs, to enter this prestigious competition and show the wider industry exactly what we're made of!"

For more information on the NACC Care Cook of the Year 2015 competition and to download an entry form visit [www.thenacc.co.uk](http://www.thenacc.co.uk).

## Ends

### Notes to editors:

#### 1. BAPEN 2009

- The competition is supported by the Worshipful Company of Cooks

#### • 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:

- Promote and enrich the standard of catering within the care sector, whether that catering be provided by Social Care Departments or other Caring Agencies
- Provide a forum for debate among individuals, companies and organisations of all kinds involved in catering for the care sector
- Facilitate the exchange of information, experience and expertise
- Promote the development of professional standards among those involved in catering for the care sector
- Commission research into matters relating to catering for the care sector
- 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)

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