



**The NACC launches social media campaign to spotlight the life-enhancing value of Meals on Wheels - #morethanjustameal**

For Meals on Wheels Week 2019 (4-8 November), the National Association of Care Catering (NACC) will be using social media to spotlight the many essential, life-enhancing roles the Meals on Wheels service plays in communities across the UK.

Through customer testimonies and eye-opening facts and statistics, the **#morethanjustameal** campaign will clearly demonstrate the positive impact the Meals on Wheels service has on the elderly and vulnerable living independently in the community – from helping prevent malnutrition and malnutrition-related illnesses to providing a crucial lifeline against isolation and loneliness. It will also give effective pointers on spotting the warning signs of malnutrition.

***Join the #morethanjustameal conversation on Twitter @NACCCaterCare, Facebook @TheNACCCaterCare and LinkedIn - National Association of Care Catering (NACC).***

The NACC remains steadfast in its important message that the Meals on Wheels service offers so much **more than just a meal** and should be properly funded to make it accessible to everyone.

The service has been the victim of ongoing budget cuts. Last year, the NACC's biennial research confirmed that 24 per cent of the UK's local authorities have stopped offering a service since 2014 and just 42 per cent of local authorities now offer any kind of service.

Meals on Wheels enables the elderly and vulnerable to live independently in their homes for longer. It keeps them nourished and hydrated with a nutritious daily meal (in many cases the only one they will have each day) and provides an essential preventative service that reduces costly malnutrition-related admissions to hospital.

For many customers, Meals on Wheels is a social lifeline that eases the devastating effects of isolation and loneliness. The delivery of a meal brings regular human contact, which for many may be the only interaction they enjoy. It also provides much-needed wellbeing and safety checks, again, crucial for those that may not see anyone else during the day.

**#morethanjustameal facts:**

- The cost of malnutrition to the health and social care systems in the UK is £20billion<sup>1</sup>
- 1 in 10 people over 65 are suffering from, or are at risk of undernourishment<sup>2</sup>
- A person who is not eating enough can become undernourished in as little as 2-3 days<sup>3</sup>
- 49% of people aged 65 and above (equivalent to over 5 million individuals) say the television or pets are their main form of company<sup>4</sup>. Meals on Wheels drivers are sometimes the only person many see in the course of the day
- Older people who are underweight are twice as likely to be admitted to hospital and will take longer to recover from illness and surgery<sup>1</sup>
- 12% of those aged over 65 find it difficult to get to their local supermarket<sup>2</sup>. Meals delivered safely to the home meeting nutritional needs helps old people

Sue Cawthray, National Chair of the NACC, said: "Meals on Wheels is a fantastic service and it's really important that we continue to talk about the enormous social contribution it makes. That's exactly what we're doing with our #morethanjustameal campaign. We want to make sure people understand the prevalence and impact of malnutrition and social isolation amongst the elderly and vulnerable in our communities and the many benefits the service offers to combat both. By sharing facts and humanising the issue by hearing directly from Meals on Wheels customers like Mrs Finney and Mr Shambrook, we will achieve this and be in a stronger position to increase the pressure on government to protect the service through greater social care funding.

"We've seen a steady decline in Meals on Wheels provision and if this continues, as the older population continues to grow, we'll only see a rise in malnutrition, social isolation and loneliness. Winter is fast approaching and the colder weather and darker nights make older people more vulnerable. The UK's Meals on Wheels network provides nutritious meals, wellbeing and safety checks and much needed human contact. The NACC is committed to protecting this vital lifeline and we urge all our members, partners and industry colleagues to get online and engage with us for Meals on Wheels Week and help share this very important message."

Across the country, NACC members will also be putting on special events and activities to raise awareness of the Meals on Wheels service and its fantastic contribution to the community. These include inviting local VIPs to join a delivery, Meals on Wheels Week menus and blogs, as well as the social media engagement.

*For more information about the NACC and Meals on Wheels Week 2019 visit*

*[www.thenacc.co.uk](http://www.thenacc.co.uk) or contact 08707 480 180 / [info@thenacc.co.uk](mailto:info@thenacc.co.uk)*

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**Notes to editors:**

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1. <https://www.bapen.org.uk/malnutrition-undernutrition/introduction-to-malnutrition>
2. <https://www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-09/State%20of%20the%20Nation.pdf>
3. <https://www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk/small-appetite/what-are-barriers-keeping-well-nourished>
4. [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/health--wellbeing/rb\\_june15\\_lonelines\\_in\\_later\\_life\\_evidence\\_review.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/health--wellbeing/rb_june15_lonelines_in_later_life_evidence_review.pdf)

### **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)