

Nutrition Support

What was the issue?

- A high proportion of care home residents were receiving Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) on prescription
- A lack of systematic processes to assess and monitor individuals at nutritional risk.

Case study

The nutrition champion at a Welwyn care home created fortified smoothies to replace costly nutritional supplements for some residents.

The manager explained:

“Previously if a resident wasn't eating we would ask the GP for nutritional supplements. Now we make our own shakes and give them to residents between meals. Some even make their own as part of activity sessions. This is showing really good results in terms of their health and wellbeing. Our nutrition champion has helped us make worthwhile changes for residents.”



Find out more: www.enhertsvanguard.uk

How did we tackle the problem?

The Enhanced Nutrition Support team contacted care homes within east and north Hertfordshire. The purpose was to help staff and residents understand the risks of malnutrition and dehydration and how to substitute ONS products with real food.

The team specifically focused on homes with poor CQC ratings, or homes inappropriately using ONS. They reviewed patients on ONS and advised ways in which residents can benefit best from the product. Resources were developed by HCT Nutrition and Dietetics Service and made available to homes to help them provide alternatives to ONS products.

Benefits

- The project provides training for care home staff to complement and support that already received by nutrition champions, ensuring homes regularly screen residents at risk of malnutrition
- Improved clinical and cost effective use of oral nutritional supplements
- Support for primary care professionals to implement local guidelines on oral nutrition
- Care homes are supported and trained towards achieving the Food First Care Home accreditation
- Integration with all dietitians across the acute and community sectors, and nurses to determine ways of assessing the scope of malnutrition

Key facts

- Over 150 people seen by nutrition champions, leading to 100 prescribed ONS items being discontinued in four months
- Support from the dietetic team means care staff can offer residents tasty home-made shakes

How it works

