

EATING WELL IN LATER LIFE

LOSING WEIGHT IS NOT A NORMAL PART OF AGEING

SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Feeling tired all the time
- Out of date food in the fridge
- Loss of appetite
- I find it hard to keep warm
- Weight loss
- Loose fitting clothes and jewellery
- Loose dentures

HOW TO HELP

- Have snacks in between meals
- Choose full fat foods and drinks
- Have little and often
- Make quick and easy meals
- Have meals delivered to you
- Tinned and frozen foods are just as good
- Have milky drinks
- Have a pudding after your meal
- Get a check up from your GP if still concerned



OCTOBER 2014 – SEPTEMBER 2015

Introduction

The National Malnutrition Task Force was set up in 2012 to help prevent older people being caught in a spiral of decline as medical professionals often fail to spot the warning signs of malnutrition. <http://www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk/>

The Prevention Programme was set up by the Malnutrition Task Force in order to raise awareness of malnutrition amongst older people, carers and professionals, help ensure the right services and support are in place locally to prevent malnutrition wherever possible and provide the right care and support whenever needed. The Programme has been funded by the Department of Health as part of their response to the Francis Inquiry and aims to help the one million older people in England who are suffering from or are at risk of malnutrition and dehydration.

The Programme has seen whole communities – including local NHS trusts, hospitals, GP Practices, care homes and community groups – come together to tackle malnutrition in local areas across the country and try out innovative new approaches to working across organisations to tackle malnutrition. The Malnutrition Prevention Pilot is led by Age UK Salford as the local co-ordinating agency for one of the five national pilot areas. <http://www.nhselect2.org.uk/malnutrition/salford.php>

Along-side this pilot work on malnutrition Salford is working on an integrated care approach to supporting older people to live health, active lives. <http://www.salfordtogether.com/>

Salford Integrated Care for Older People

To work towards achieving the aims of the ICfOP (delivering better care outcomes, improving the experience of service users and carers and reduce care costs). There are three component parts of the programme to deliver:

- Promotion and increased use of **Local Community Assets** to support increased independence and resilience for older people
- Establishment of an integrated **Centre of Contact** to support navigation, monitoring and support
- Establishment of **Multi-Disciplinary Groups** supporting older people who are most at risk, as well as a providing a broader focus on prevention and signposting to community support

Community asset model:

- A Sally Friendly City – ***the commitment of the city to support older people to stay healthy and well.***
- Sally Standards and Sally well-being plans- ***the commitment by older people to support their own health and well-being.***
- A set of tools developed by and for older people based in local neighbourhoods – ***the commitment of community and deliverers to support older people to stay healthy and well***

Community asset role



The starting point for Salford prevention programme was a launch event where partners were able to pledge their support to the model being developed. The Community asset work taking place across Salford had already brought together a number of partners from across a range of organisations as well as older people to develop a coproduction model of developing positive solutions to support older people.

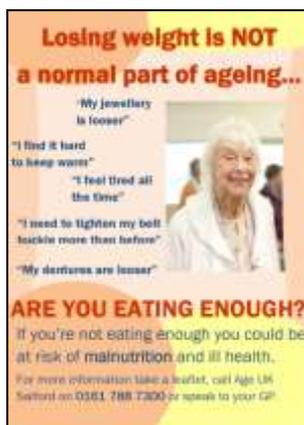
Community asset work stream project group membership

The work stream includes a wide range of partners including older people, Salford City Council, Salford University, Housing providers, Local Businesses, Charities, Social Enterprises, and Third Sector organisations, all working across a number of areas including housing, volunteering, befriending and Leisure and Health Improvement connections.

Whilst work had taken place through the malnutrition pilot to develop tools to support older people it was agreed that these tools could be improved by working with older people.

Developing the approach

The first stage of the coproduction approach was to facilitate a focus group between older people and the dietician service as it was clear there were opportunities to build on the work being carried out by both the community asset work stream of the Integrated Care programme and the malnutrition pilot.



The dietician team had produced a leaflet they wish to place in doctor surgeries to make people aware of the signs of malnutrition and the steps people can take to help reduce the impact. Along side this mature people had been working on developing a set of older person standards which had already identified that they wish to be able to access information which helped them to stay health and well but this information needed to be in plain English.

The malnutrition focus group session was an opportunity for nine mature people along with three service providers to come together and:

- Provide feed back on leaflets which will be used within doctor surgeries to raise awareness of malnutrition and how to prevent people becoming malnourished.

- Offer alternative ways of promoting the malnutrition messages
- Gain an understanding of what malnutrition is and the role every one can play in helping to reduce the numbers of people affected.

The focus group

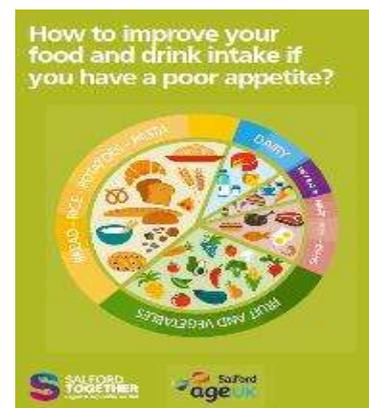
The Community Nutrition Support Dietician had brought the supplements which mature people suffering from malnutrition would be given by the doctor. The group were asked to sample the drinks.

The group were surprised at how bad the drinks tasted and felt that they would not be keen to take them – one service provided said **that they had seen large amounts of these drinks in other resident homes so people were not taking them even when issued.** The group were told that most people could by improving their own diet see the same results as drinking these supplements and this was the approach the project was trying to promote – **food first.** Group members were also surprised at the cost of these supplements and could not understand why the doctor did not try to encourage people to change their diet first or even let them try the supplement in the surgery before issuing as they were sure people would not want them.



During the session the group designed postcards and fridge magnets to complement the design of the posters created for use in the GP practices in Salford (which were themselves designed by the Student Dieticians) The postcards will have some simple messages on one side and on the reverse will be an invitation and voucher for people to come to Age UK Salford's Critchley House & Cafe where they can have a free drink and cake and collect their free fridge magnet.

The group also did some work on creating a booklet which would contain simple messages and top tips of simple recipes



The aim was to

- keep count of the number of postcards taken for the GP practices
- keep count of people presenting a voucher at Critchley House and taking a Fridge Magnet (in return for a very simple question about their understanding of the issues around malnutrition)

Delivering the approach

To enable the project to take place funding needed to be secured to cover the cost of design and printing the fridge magnets and postcards and provide refreshments at Critchley House as an incentive. A bid was successfully submitted to the Salford Little Pot of Health Innovation fund by Inspiring Communities Together <http://inspiringcommunitiestogether.co.uk/> – a local Charity who also leads on the Community Asset work stream of the Integrated Care Programme to secure £3,000 to test the approach developed.

The original idea was to work just across GP surgeries and link with AGE UK café and this work did take place however we were also able to widen the project by going out to sheltered housing schemes, older people groups, presenting at events, worked with housing providers and Care on Call to ensure the messages were distributed to a larger number of older people and raise awareness amongst staff members to understand signs to look out for and build knowledge of how to support those who may be at risk of malnutrition.

Case Study

Irene was doing a tech and tea course at a local community centre. During the break I spoke to her about eating well in later life, I showed her the malnutrition quiz which she filled out and then we discussed the answers together she was surprised that people can suffer malnutrition without realising even if you are overweight, I noticed that Irene was crying, I asked her what was the matter she was just so upset that malnutrition was still rife and that more and more older people were still being referred to hospital suffering from malnutrition. Irene felt that the information I gave her would make her think more about the type of foods she bought and try to make better choices when doing the weekly shopping for a neighbour she looks after. Irene was able to take home the tools to help her remember what we had talked about and the tips she can now put into practise Irene said "I will make sure that I help my friend stay fit and healthy by making better healthy food choices for her".

The tools because they are easy to read and simple to understand have been used in a variety of different ways including welcome packs for those moving into sheltered housing, at events (the quiz is a good starting point for discussion) and 1-1 conversations. Once older people group leaders understand the messages and tools they are happy to use the tools themselves to raise awareness with others.

What have we learnt?

The project aimed to raise awareness and provide older people with tools so they can help each other. The quiz enabled us to measure the knowledge older people had about eating well in later life. From the results it was clear that not every-one was aware of this as an issue in the UK.



- 43% of older people asked though it was natural for older people to lose their appetite
- 41% of older people asked though malnutrition is all about the starving children in Africa
- 68% of older people asked though it does not matter whether a mature person eats alone or with others – food is just fuel for the body
- 22% of older people asked knew that the 93% of older people in the UK who suffer from malnutrition live in the community either in their own home or with family
- 40% of older people asked knew that 1-10 older people over 65 years of age in the UK suffer from malnutrition

The quiz has raised awareness but by also providing tools for people to take home they feel more able to put small measures into practise both for themselves and others they may look after of be aware of.

What difference has this project made?

The following outputs were achieved through this project:

- 1000 post cards and fridge magnets produced
- 500 postcards distributed across 10 GP surgeries in Salford
- 500 postcards distributed across older people groups and events
- 1000 fridge magnets distributed to older people across neighbourhoods of Salford
- 200 malnutrition quiz were completed with older people groups
- 2 Awareness events held at Critchley House and fridge magnets distributed

The following outcomes have been achieved:

- The % of older people aware of the signs of malnutrition has been increased
- More older people have the tools to help them eat well in later life
- More service providers are able to access tools to support older people they have contact with to eat well in later life

The social value achieved

- More older people have the knowledge and skills to share messages around eating well in later life and have been able to use those skills to help others
- Using the quiz in group settings along-side having a cup of tea and slice of cake has supported older people to create new friendships and social networks
- Housing providers have used the tools to support their new and existing residents along-side building knowledge and skills of their own staff to identify the signs of malnutrition and share messages of eat well in later life.

For further information about the work of the Community Asset Working Group or type of work ICT do please check out our website www.inspiringcommunitiestogether.co.uk or contact:

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