

EAT WELL AGE WELL – PREVENTING MALNUTRITION IN OLDER PEOPLE LIVING AT HOME

PROJECT BRIEF

Overview

Eat Well Age Well (EWA) is a national project funded by the Scottish Government and part of the award-winning Scottish Charity, [Food Train](#)¹ with the overall aim of contributing to the prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition amongst older adults living at home in Scotland. Eat Well Age Well works in collaboration across all sectors to develop initiatives that support older people to eat well, live well and age well. This brief aims to raise awareness of the project and support the engagement process with key partners.

Key Points: Older People and Malnutrition

- Malnutrition is one of the key issues affecting the health of older people in Scotland.²
- The UK Malnutrition Task Force estimates that 1 in 10 people older people over the age of 65 are malnourished or at risk of being malnourished in the UK³.
- This figure was pre-covid and from Eat Well Age Well's own prevalence data, we think this may be an underestimate, with between 20-30% of older people living in the community at risk of malnourishment.
- Malnutrition regularly goes undetected, untreated and unrecorded.
- Tackling malnutrition will support **better outcomes for older people** and achieve very significant **cost savings**⁴.
- There is clear evidence that we can prevent malnutrition through early intervention and screening⁵.

What we do

As most malnutrition occurs in the community (93% in the community, 5% in care homes and 2% hospital) our focus is on prevention in the community (ref 5). To do this, we collect data on the prevalence of malnutrition in the community, we raise awareness and educate about the interaction between risk factors for malnutrition which may span across physical, psychological and social risks. Our work is focused and spread across three work strands: , policy and communications, capacity building and screening and early identification:

¹ The Food Train (Available from <http://www.thefoodtrain.co.uk/>)

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-older-people-framework-action/>

³ Malnutrition Task Force (2013) [A review and summary of the impact of malnutrition in older people and the reported costs and benefits of interventions](#)

⁴ Elia, M. & Russell, C.A. (Eds) (2009) 'Combating Malnutrition: recommendations for action: Report from the advisory group on malnutrition, led by BAPEN cited in Malnutrition Task Force (2013) [A review and summary of the impact of malnutrition in older people and the reported costs and benefits of interventions](#)

⁵ NICE (2012) Quality Standard for Nutrition Support in Adults, NICE Quality Standard 24, (Available online at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs24>)

Our strands of work

Policy and communications – using our research, evidence and best practice gathered from phase 1 of the project as levers for influencing policy and changes in practice, sharing learning with wide stakeholders

Capacity building – we build the capacity in individuals and organisations, groups, carers, staff and volunteers on how to identify malnutrition and take early action. We will continue to offer our Raising the Issue of Malnutrition Training and REHIS Eating Well for Older People course in the community.

Screening and Early Intervention – collaborative working with Health & Social Care Partnership areas providing specific support to embed and implement community screening across partnership areas and across community and voluntary, social care and housing services to tackle malnutrition.

Links to useful reports/work

Research: our 1 year [research](#) project with 169 older people led by Glasgow University and Food Train exploring malnutrition risk and food insecurity.

Policy recommendations: our [4 calls to action](#) on practical actions to tackle malnutrition

Project impact: Eat Well Age Well (2018-2020) impact and progress [report](#)

Capacity building: our training [REHIS Eating Well for Older People](#) and [Raising the Issue of Malnutrition Training in the community](#), our [toolkit](#) with practical tools to support conversations about nutrition

Small Ideas Big Impact Grants: see our [video and image gallery](#) to learn more about community projects we have funded, including Covid-19 grants.

Podcasts – sharing and [discussing](#) how we can support older people to eat well and age well

Further information

hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk, visit our [website](#) and follow us on Twitter @EatWellScot and @FoodTrainScot