

Malnutrition Advice Line Update Report

Introduction

Eat Well Age Well launched the Malnutrition Advice Line (MAL) nationally across Scotland on March 1st, 2021, following a successful pilot in Lothian (December 2020 – Jan 2021). MAL aims to provide an additional resource for older adults and those who work with or care for them to access support around malnutrition. MAL aims to provide first line advice to those at risk of malnutrition as well as signposting those who require further support and intervention to appropriate service.

MAL is a freephone line that operates Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays each week and is open from 9am to 4pm. This report details the progress of this project from 1st December 2021 to 31st July 2021.

Calls Received

Seventeen calls have been received by the MAL since its inception. Key information from these calls has been summarised below.

- 65% of calls were made by the older person themselves. The remaining 35% were relative of the older person
- 12 callers were women or were regarding a woman. 5 were men or were regarding men
- 65% of calls were regarding someone over the age of 80. 35% were regarding someone under 80.
- 88% of those who called were at risk of malnutrition. Callers were screened using the Patients Association Nutrition Checklist.
- 88% of callers lived alone.
- All callers were given relevant advice and signposted to relevant services as necessary. Case studies can be found at the end of this document
- 30% of callers were sign posted to meal/shopping provision services such as Meal Makers
- 47% of callers were given signposting information regarding social activities/befriending such as Age Scotland and local services
- 47% of callers were signposted to other organisations for support such as Citizens Advice, Social Work and their GP
- 2 callers were signposted to their local dietetic service for further support.
- 6 callers required and agreed to a follow up call 4 weeks after their first call with 1 caller requiring further monthly follow up calls at 8 and 12 weeks
- All those followed up had been able to implement the advice given to them with mostly positive results. Due to ongoing health needs 2 callers had made minimal progress but were happy with the advice given

Eat Well Age Well

Tel: 0131 447 8151 Email: hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk

URL: www.eatwellagewell.org.uk

Eat Well Age Well is brought to Scotland by Food Train and funded by the Scottish Government.
Food Train Ltd Company No.158165 is a Company Registered in Scotland. Scottish Charity No. 024843

Case Studies

Case Study 1

Mrs A is a 92-year-old woman who was referred to the Malnutrition Advice Line by her link worker due to concerns around weight loss and poor appetite.

During the initial call Mrs A and her daughter reported a history of steady weight loss due to recurrent illness over the past few years and that the issue had worsened during Covid-19 and associated lockdown due to limited ability to access usual activities. Mrs A was screened using the Patient's Association Nutrition Checklist and was found to be at risk of malnutrition. She reported a variable appetite and difficulties finishing meals as well as issues knowing what was best to eat. Mrs A has a very supportive family who helped with meal preparation, shopping, and other necessary support.

Mrs A and her family were provided with first line advice to help prevent further weight loss and improve her appetite and intake. Mrs A was followed up with a monthly call for three months. With support from her family and the advice provided by MAL she was able to begin eating little and often, choosing higher calorie and protein foods, and choosing more nourishing snacks and drinks.

Over the three months Mrs A was supported by MAL her appetite and intake gradually improved. Her weight began to increase, and her family noticed improvements in her energy levels. By her final call Mrs A felt she was eating better than she had been in a long time and felt her appetite and dietary intake were back to normal. Mrs A was very grateful for the advice she received and stated she found it very helpful.

Case Study 2

Referred By: Scottish Older People's Assembly Newsletter

Background: Mary called the Malnutrition Advice Line as she had concerns that she was losing weight quite rapidly. Mary is 72 years old and receives support from her daughter, who helps her with shopping once a week and will also cook meals for her. Mary has arthritis which means she finds it difficult to stand and cook for a long time.

Mary also mentioned that she was receiving meals throughout the height of the pandemic, however, this has stopped. This, she feels the loss of these meals has had a massive impact on her appetite and she struggles with motivation to eat.

Additionally, Mary told us that due to the recent weight loss she has struggled with her dentures becoming loose. This has made chewing, and therefore eating more difficult.

Advice: Through using the Patients Association Nutrition Checklist, it was clear that Mary was at risk of malnutrition.

Eat Well Age Well

Tel: 0131 447 8151 Email: hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk

URL: www.eatwellagewell.org.uk

Eat Well Age Well is brought to Scotland by Food Train and funded by the Scottish Government. Food Train Ltd Company No.158165 is a Company Registered in Scotland. Scottish Charity No. 024843

EWAW discussed what she would normally eat as part of her daily diet and offered advice on how to fortify foods. For example, Mary mentioned she would generally have a bowl of cereal and a jam toastie throughout the day but would rarely finish either. EWAW suggested switching to full fat milk instead of semi-skimmed and adding extra calories to her cereal by through nuts, honey etc. Advice such as adding cheese and cold meat to a toastie would add much needed calories and protein to a meal.

We also discussed increasing small nutritious snacks throughout the day such as milky puddings and/or drinks or crackers and cheese due to rarely being able to finish a meal.

EWAW also advised that Mary should see a dentist due to her dentures no longer fitting as well.

As Mary was previously receiving 3 meals a day which she was eating, EWAW suggested she may benefit from signing up to Meal Makers whereby a volunteer could share a meal with her. This would offer more variety in her diet, as well as much needed company.

EWAW resources were sent to reinforce the key messages covered throughout the call.

Outcome:

EWAW followed up with Mary 4 weeks after the initial consultation. Since then, Mary has been able to implement some of the advice discussed previously such as switching to full fat milk and snacking more regularly.



Malnutrition Advice Line

0800 13 88 220

For those aged 65+ in Scotland



**Difficulties
eating and
drinking?**

**Unplanned
weight loss?**

**Lost
motivation
to cook?**

**Poor
appetite?**

Our free advice line provides practical tips and information about how to stay well-nourished



Opening Hours:

Mondays 09:00 – 16:00

Wednesdays 09:00 – 16:00

Thursdays 09:00 – 16:00



Eat Well Age Well

Tel: 0131 447 8151 Email: hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk

URL: www.eatwellagewell.org.uk

Eat Well Age Well is brought to Scotland by Food Train and funded by the Scottish Government.
Food Train Ltd Company No.158165 is a Company Registered in Scotland. Scottish Charity No. 024843