

REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT OF MALNUTRITION AND DEHYDRATION IN HOSPITALS

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide evidence from City Hospitals Sunderland for the policy review of malnutrition and dehydration in hospitals.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 9th June 2010 the Scrutiny Committee agreed to pursue a review of the management of malnutrition and dehydration in hospitals.
- 2.2 The review was selected following a number of national research studies highlighting the risks. At its meeting on 7th July 2010 the Committee agreed the scope of the review.

3. Aim of the Review

- 3.1 The aim of the review was agreed as:

To review strategies to support the decision-making of health professionals involved in the provision of food and fluids, nutritional support and public health advice/interventions for Sunderland hospital inpatients in order to manage avoidable malnutrition and dehydration.

4. Terms of Reference

- 4.1 The following terms of reference were agreed:

- To consider the whole process for providing hospital meals: menu/nutritional planning; preparation; meal time; monitoring [who is eating their meal]; and clear-up;
- To explore issues around the identification of patients who are admitted to hospital malnourished and whether that status has changed on discharge;
- To explore reasons why patients are not eating their meals;
- To establish how patients who find it difficult to feed themselves are supported to do so;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of management, treatment and education/training programmes relevant to malnutrition and dehydration;
- To explore what happens to monitoring information and how it is used to ensure all people receive the nutrition they require.

5. Methods of Enquiry

- 5.1 The Committee agreed to take detailed evidence from City Hospitals Sunderland to review policies and guidance in relation to the management of avoidable malnutrition and dehydration in hospitals including how decisions are taken around the provision and allocation of resources in the management of patients at risk of or with pre-existing malnutrition or dehydration.
- 5.2 This will include reviewing the way in which healthcare professionals use their clinical judgement and consult with patients which aims to reduce the negative personal, physical, emotional, social and financial impact of malnutrition and dehydration.
- 5.3 The next stage following this evidence gathering meeting will involve a visit to the hospital, a tour of the kitchens and some of the wards, and observing meal times.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to receive the evidence gathering for the policy review.

7. Background Papers

Health & Well Being Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme and Policy Review Report 9th June 2010 and Scope of Review 7th July 2010

8. Key Terms

Nutrition - the supplying or receiving of nourishment

Malnutrition – a condition resulting from not getting enough nutritious food (with vitamins and minerals).

Dehydration – an inadequate amount of fluid in the body

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