



Dr Trevor Smith
BAPEN President

An Update from BAPEN

Spring has sprung, and I think I can safely say that 2019 has got off to a flying start at BAPEN. We have been busily planning and laying the foundations for some exciting projects and I am delighted to have the opportunity to bring you up to speed.

Malnutrition Awareness Week 2019

It was very exciting to announce the dates for the second Malnutrition Awareness Week which will take place from 14th-20th October this year.

Last year's first ever UK Malnutrition Awareness Week (MAW) was a great success and we were absolutely delighted that so many of you decided to get involved and run your own local events. In 2019, we are looking to build on last year's success and go even bigger and better! We are very happy to announce that we will be teaming up with the Malnutrition Task Force once again this year, and we are looking forward to warm support from many health and care organisations around the country.

Our focus for #MAW2019 will be on communicating about the need for effective malnutrition screening in all settings. We will be particularly focused on driving use of the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (otherwise known as 'MUST') and our online self-screening tool. We will also be running our Nutritional Care Tool Data Collection Week during MAW, which we hope you will be keen to get involved with. We will be providing a resource pack that will give you everything you need to stage your own MAW event, whether you want to talk directly about signs and symptoms to people who may be at risk or raise awareness of the importance of malnutrition screening with your colleagues. Keep an eye out on our social media channels and the BAPEN website for more announcements and information about how you can get involved.

BAPEN responses

In February, we issued a statement in response to the Helpforce report: 'Developing Innovative volunteer services in the NHS'. This report found that volunteers were lessening patients' feelings of anxiety and social isolation and were successful in preventing malnutrition by coaxing patients to eat their meals. We acknowledge that the support of volunteers in the hospital setting can be invaluable, and our statement echoed

that but did caution that an effective volunteer system is no substitute for the systemic change that is required in our healthcare system if we are to tackle malnutrition. Identifying individuals at risk as soon as possible will go a long way towards improving clinical and economic outcomes and so the importance of nutritional screening must not be overlooked.

We also issued our response to the new GP contract and expressed our disappointment that nutrition and hydration seem to have been neglected in the new contract and updated Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) indicators. We do however welcome the declared shift in focus to improving care in primary medical and community settings. We hope that this will ensure that more patients at risk of malnutrition are recognised and supported earlier. We are at risk of banging on the same drum, but currently there are far too many people who are only identified in hospital, and if 'MUST' was routinely and universally used in primary care settings and care homes there is no doubt that many cases of malnutrition risk would be picked up earlier and an intervention made.

We will continue to raise our points and make our calls for action, and post about our statements on social media. If you agree with what we say, do think about sharing our posts, as I do believe there is power in a united voice and repetition of common sense messages.

Core group news

Our Core Groups continue to do great work. PENG have nearly completed the new edition of the Pocket Guide to Clinical Nutrition. We know they have worked tirelessly on this project and we look forward to its publication date.

We were delighted to see PINNT shortlisted for a Patient Experience Network (PEN) award in the Partnership Working to Improve the Experience category. Sadly, the judging panel got it wrong and they didn't win (always our winners for the absolutely fabulous Medical Tag). If you haven't read about PINNT's innovation,

then please do look it up at <https://pinnt.com/Support/Medical-Tag.aspx>. The PINNT team worked incredibly hard to bring this to fruition and it is of huge value to patients.

5,000 and counting...

In my last column, I mentioned how the BAPEN social media community has grown significantly over the past few months. I am delighted that we recently hit a big milestone on our Twitter account – we reached 5,000 followers! (No doubt by the time you are reading this we will have collected a few more!) If you're not yet following us, please do consider it, as every new follower helps tell the BAPEN story to more people. Can you help us reach 6,000? You will find us on Twitter @BAPENUK and don't forget Facebook @UKBAPEN.

BAPEN Annual Conference 2019

Hopefully you have November 26th and 27th marked in your diary, as our Annual Conference will be taking place in Belfast this year and should not be missed! Registration is open and all the details are available on the BAPEN website. Topics to be covered in symposia this year include:

- Sports Nutrition in Clinical Settings
- Neonatal Nutrition Support
- COPD
- Nutrition in Pancreatic Disease
- Gastroparesis
- Early Assessment of Intestinal Failure
- Upper GI Cancer
- Blood Glucose Control in PN
- Frailty (a patient centred symposium)
- Home Parenteral Nutrition.

The BAPEN Medical Teaching Day will take place on the 25th November. The Teaching Day provides a unique opportunity to develop your expertise in advanced clinical nutrition. Early booking is advised!

While I look forward to seeing many of you in Belfast, November is still some time away and so I will bring you up-to-date with all things BAPEN in my next column. Wishing you all a happy and productive spring.

For further information visit: www.bapen.org.uk

Twitter: @BAPENUK Facebook: @UKBAPEN (British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition)