

Putting Nutrition at the Heart of Patient Care

Updates from the BSNA

As the summer is finally here, June is a busy month for nutrition with plenty of opportunities to share insights and knowledge about clinical practice and the importance of good nutritional care for patients. We also reflect on the value of foods for special medical purposes (FSMPs) in providing safe and nutritious foods for people who are temporarily or permanently unable to achieve an adequate nutritional intake from normal foods alone.

Dietitians Week

June starts with Dietitians Week (3-7 June) and BSNA joins with BDA and others to celebrate the impact and value of dietitians in the UK. Here at BSNA, we collaborate and work with a range of dietitians across many specialities and we take this week as an opportunity to recognise the value of this highly skilled profession. We welcomed the launch of the BDA Industry Specialist Group in 2023, bringing together and supporting dietitians working in non-clinical roles in all areas of industry and we were delighted to be a sponsor at the Group's first study day in March.

The Optimal Nutritional Care for All (ONCA) Conference

The ONCA campaign is holding its annual Conference in June (6-7 June), hosted in the Italian city of Turin. Disease-related malnutrition (DRM) presents a significant public health problem, not only in the UK, but across the whole of Europe, affecting more than 30 million European citizens. The ONCA campaign was launched in 2014 as a multi-stakeholder initiative to facilitate screening for risk of disease-related malnutrition and implementation of appropriate nutritional care for all across Europe. ONCA is supported by the European Nutrition for Health Alliance (ENHA) and representatives from the European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN), the European Federation of the Association of Dietitians (EFAD), the Patients Network for Medical Research and Health (EGAN) and the European Geriatric Medicine Society (EuGMS) comprise its steering committee.

The Conference will be hosted by the Italian Society for Artificial Nutrition and Metabolism (SINPE), alongside national patient organisations, the active scientific societies that collaborate with SINPE in combating malnutrition, as well as representatives of the Italian Ministry of Health.

This year's Conference marks a significant step forward for the ONCA campaign, as it aspires to further transform the event Conference into an even more interactive 'European nutritional care policy summit'.

From the UK, Professor Simon Lal, Professor of Gastroenterology at the University of Manchester, will present a session on 'Navigating Nutritional Policies in the UK: Valuable Lessons from Intestinal Failure Strategies' and there will also be a presentation on 'Celebrating Triumphs:

Acknowledging the Impact of Community Dietitians in Italy' by the Italian National Dietitians Association.

Renowned experts in nutritional care, patient organisations and policymakers will attend the Conference to discuss how the European Union, and individual countries, can better address inequalities in nutritional care, identify and tackle barriers, and share achievements on the implementation of optimal nutritional care in policy and practice. The Conference is therefore a valuable opportunity to learn from and exchange insights with colleagues across Europe to secure improvements in nutritional care for all patients.

World Food Safety Day

At the end of the Dietitians Week (7 June), the World Health Organization (WHO) along with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) promote World Food Safety Day (WFSB) to draw attention to food standards around the world. This year is the sixth WFSB and the WHO hopes to draw attention to food safety incidents, with the theme underlining the importance of being prepared for such incidents, no matter how mild or severe. BSNA are promoting the importance of food safety both within industry and by supporting the ongoing partnership with healthcare professionals working to ensure food safety for all patients.

BSNA members work together with national authorities, for example the Food Standards Agency, to ensure safe and nutritious foods are available, providing support in regulating food safety along the entire food chain and ensuring international standards are met or even surpassed.

The most specialised nutrition produced is parenteral nutrition. The process of producing this nutrition is a complex one involving multiple, carefully controlled and regulated steps in an aseptic environment. These steps are essential to ensure the quality of products is maintained during production, processing, delivery and administration of the product. You can learn more about PN through our video on the BSNA website – <https://bsna.co.uk/pages/about-specialist-nutrition/parenteral-nutrition> – along with similar explainer videos for our other sectors too!

About the British Specialist Nutrition Association

BSNA is the trade association representing the manufacturers of products designed to meet the particular nutritional needs of individuals; these include specialist products for infants and young children (including infant formula, follow-on formula, young child formula and complementary weaning foods), medical nutrition products for diseases, disorders and medical conditions, including oral nutritional supplements, enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition, as well as companies who aseptically compound chemotherapy, parenteral nutrition and CIVAS.