

# An Update from BAPEN



**Dr Nick Thompson**  
BAPEN President

**As we draw to the end of the year, I'm pleased to share an update on a very busy past few months that we've had at BAPEN.**

## **BAPEN Annual Conference**

What a Conference, with over 730 delegates! I'd like to start by saying a massive thank you to our Programmes Committee for pulling together a fantastic programme filled with expert speakers and insightful topics. Kevin Whelan's excellent Keynote Talk on ultra-processed food and gastrointestinal disease was particularly timely off the back of the House of Lords Food, Diet and Obesity Committee's report (<https://bit.ly/3CyXexP>) on our food system. Meanwhile, Dileep Lobo giving the Pennington Lecture delivered a masterclass on the safe use of intravenous fluids, especially in the surgical patient. Hugh Montgomery in the Opening Symposium gave us all a stark warning of the crisis of Climate Change and what we as individuals and as an organisation should consider, for details see: <https://realzero.earth/7-acts>.

The quality of the more than 100 posters was excellent and the poster rounds gave an opportunity for authors to present their work. It was great to be able to celebrate best practice in the presented abstracts across all specialties at our awards ceremony. Conference provides an important opportunity to celebrate what we are all doing to support nutritional care for patients, and what we can do to keep driving improvements in patient outcomes. A huge thank you to all delegates who contributed to the two days being such a success. Bring on Wales 2025 Conference! Save the dates: 11 – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

## **Malnutrition and Nutritional Care Screening Survey Report**

We recently published the 2023 national screening survey report on our website, detailing findings from the screening of 2,250 adults from across the UK in November 2023. The survey found the highest rate of adults at risk of malnutrition since the survey's commencement, at 48% of all those screened. 42% of those screened in care homes were at risk of malnutrition, increasing to 47% of those screened in hospital, and further still to 49% for patients at home. The highest prevalence of individuals at risk of malnutrition was in those with gastrointestinal conditions, cancer, cardiovascular conditions, COVID-19 and those with trauma and orthopaedic conditions. Not all those at risk of malnutrition had a nutrition care plan – only 75% of those at highest risk did – our patients need this to be higher and BAPEN will lobby for the resources to achieve this. I encourage you all to read the full report: <https://bit.ly/4fOdjhl>.

## **UK Malnutrition Awareness Week**

Last month, we marked UK Malnutrition Awareness Week – a campaign BAPEN runs in partnership with the Malnutrition Task Force. We all know

that it is easier to manage malnutrition or dehydration when it is spotted earlier, which is why we called on people to ask, look and listen for the signs of malnutrition in both patients and members of the community.

As multidisciplinary healthcare professionals, we can all play a critical role in identifying and managing malnutrition risk through screening, which enables us to implement timely and effective interventions where needed. With that in mind, many thanks to all those who contributed to the national screening survey throughout November. This data is critical to our ability to advocate for more resources dedicated to nutritional care, and it also provides us with an up-to-date analysis of the number of nutritional care plans being implemented across the country.

## **Political advocacy work: putting malnutrition on the political agenda**

We are continuing to work in the policy sphere to advocate for due recognition of malnutrition, particularly at a time of huge attention on the NHS. We have submitted a consultation response on behalf of BAPEN to the NHS 10-year plan engagement portal, where we outlined the health, societal and economic benefits of greater prioritisation of nutrition support and our recommended ideas for policy change. The expectation is for the 10-year plan to be published by the Government in March 2025, and we will continue to work alongside colleagues to have important conversations with policymakers and other stakeholders in the meantime. With PINNT – a support group for people receiving artificial nutrition – and the British Dietetic Association, we met with Mike Nesbitt, Minister of Health in Northern Ireland, to raise clinical nutrition issues.

## **Get your teams together for the BAPEN's Edgbaston Course**

Looking ahead to next year, I'd like to draw your attention to a course that BAPEN will be running in 2025 – the Edgbaston Course. This will be a three-day event focused on developing multi-disciplinary nutrition teams, including shared learning concerning screening, oral, enteral and parenteral nutrition, as well as interactive sessions on how successful teams develop. To get involved, teams of 4–6 members can apply via a one-page form that can be found on the BAPEN website. We expect the teams to include at least a dietitian, nutrition nurse specialist and physician, with additional members of the team including other professionals such as surgeons, pharmacists, biochemists, psychologists, etc. The deadline for applications is the end of January 2025.

In the meantime, I wish you all a restful end of the year and a very happy 2025; it will no doubt be busy!