



Care at Home:

Malnutrition Screening Pack

Guidance Booklet



Hello!

Thank you for ordering a **'Care at Home: Malnutrition Screening Pack'**.

Eat Well Age Well is a national project from award winning Scottish Charity Food Train and our focus is on tackling malnutrition and dehydration in older people aged 65+.



Malnutrition (as undernutrition) is a significant public health issue. 1 in 10 older people in Scotland today are at risk of, or living with malnutrition, however from our own prevalence data, we think this may be an underestimate, with as many 30% of older people living in the community at risk.

Malnutrition is largely preventable and treatable through early intervention and screening, and we recognise that carers and care organisations can play a vital role in identifying and supporting older people at risk.

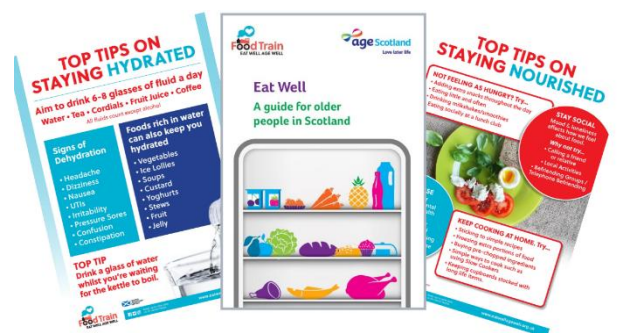
Our packs are designed to help you and/or your organisation to feel confident in addressing malnutrition with the older people you care for and equip you with easy-to-use screening tools.

We hope that by working together we can measure the true extent of the problem of malnutrition in Scotland and make a real difference for older people living at home.

“The Care Inspectorate is delighted to support the use of this malnutrition screening toolkit. The role of the Care Inspectorate is not simply to regulate and inspect care services across Scotland, but to support improvement and spread good practice. The majority of services perform well, but the Care Inspectorate’s vision is that every person in every community experiences high-quality care and support, tailored to their rights, needs and wishes.”

What’s in your screening pack?

- Guidance Booklet
- ‘Staying Well & Nourished in Later Life’ booklet
- ‘Staying Nourished’ poster
- ‘Staying Hydrated’ poster
- ‘How to Spot’ poster
- A supply of Paperweight Armbands
- 2 x Raising the Issue of Malnutrition Key Question cards
- 1 x Patients Association Nutrition Checklist.
- 1 x Age Scotland booklet: **‘Eat Well, A Guide for Older People in Scotland’**
- 1 x Contact Sheet for National Services Supporting Older People.



ABOUT MALNUTRITION

Malnutrition occurs when a person's diet does not meet their nutritional needs.

At Eat Well Age Well, we are concerned with older adults who are undernourished and not eating enough. Malnutrition is a key public health problem that has a significant impact on individuals' health and wellbeing, costing the NHS billions per year. It is often a silent and hidden issue, with low awareness amongst the public and health professionals.

DID YOU KNOW...?




◀ It's estimated 1 in 10 older people in the UK are either at risk or suffering from malnutrition.




◀ That equates to **103,000** older people in Scotland.



Those who are malnourished are:

twice as likely to visit their GP. 

more likely to require hospital admissions. 

have a greater number of health issues. 

Older people are at higher risk of malnutrition than younger people. Older people living at home are at risk of becoming malnourished due to a variety of reasons such as:

RESTRICTED MOBILITY

- Arthritic hands
- Unable to stand for long periods.



LONELINESS

- Low mood affecting appetite
- Reduced interest in cooking



DEMENTIA

- Forgetting to eat
- Safety issues in the kitchen



ISOLATION

- Poor transport links
- Unable to access local shops



DIFFICULTIES WITH

- Eating
- Chewing
- Swallowing



Why care at home?

Did you know that there is currently **no** routine screening for malnutrition in community settings?

Current data on rates of malnutrition comes from hospital contexts, yet **93% of malnutrition occurs in older people living at home and in the community.**



We recognise that it is the people and organisations working directly with older people in their homes that understand the issues that affect them the most and can identify change. The regular contact and trusting relationships carers and care organisations have with their older clients also make them best placed to have conversations and address concerns about eating and drinking well.

Identifying Malnutrition Risk

How many times have you heard that it's normal to lose weight as you get older? Would it surprise you to know that this is a **myth!** Malnutrition can often be missed and go undetected with the belief that getting thinner is an inevitable part of ageing, however visual and verbal cues are often our first steps to recognising that an older person is not eating and drinking enough.

Visual cues:

- Does the person look like they have lost weight?
- Are clothes or jewellery looser?
- Has there been any change in mood?
- Is there uneaten food in the fridge?
- Is food being thrown away?



Verbal Cues:

I don't
feel
hungry

It's too difficult
to stand in the
kitchen for a
long time

I've lost
my
appetite

I can't get
out to the
shops

I can't be
bothered
cooking

Start the Conversation

Asking if someone is eating & drinking enough can be a tricky and sensitive subject but starting a conversation with an older person is often the first step to discovering what issues they may be facing and their barriers to eating well.

Building trust is key and chatting about food, cooking and memories can help create a friendly and safe environment.

FOOD

- What's your all-time favourite meal?
- What's your ideal restaurant to visit e.g. Italian, Indian, Chinese?
- What's your food hell?
- Are there any foods you've never tried before?

COOKING

- What's your favourite thing to cook?
- What did you enjoy cooking?
- Do you find it difficult to cook?
- Do you have a favourite recipe or signature dish?

Conversation Starters

SHOPPING

- Do you enjoy food shopping?
- Does anything prevent you from doing your own shopping?
- What's some of the biggest changes you've noticed in supermarkets & shops?
- Are there any products you liked but can't get anymore?

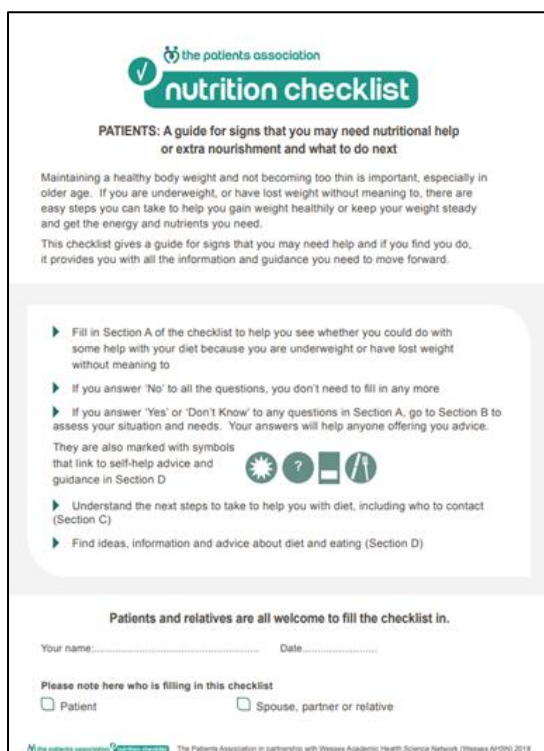
APPETITE

- Do feel your appetite has changed over time?
- Does anything prevent you from eating the foods you enjoy?
- How many meals do you have a day?
- What are some of your favourite snacks?

Malnutrition Screening Tools

Screening older people for malnutrition may sound like a daunting task but it can be quite a simple process and there are several easy-to-use tools to choose from that can help detect if someone is at risk. The following tools can be used as 'signposting' conversation starters and help with general awareness raising for those who have routine contact with older people. These tools are included in your screening pack and can also be ordered from Eat Well Age Well.

The Patients Association Nutrition Checklist



The screenshot shows the top portion of the 'Patients Association Nutrition Checklist'. It features the logo for 'the patients association' and the title 'nutrition checklist'. Below the title, it states: 'PATIENTS: A guide for signs that you may need nutritional help or extra nourishment and what to do next'. The text explains that maintaining a healthy body weight is important, especially in older age, and that the checklist provides a guide for signs that you may need help and if you find you do, it provides you with all the information and guidance you need to move forward. There are four numbered steps: 1. Fill in Section A to see if you need help. 2. If you answer 'No', you don't need to fill in any more. 3. If you answer 'Yes' or 'Don't Know', go to Section B to assess your situation. 4. Understand the next steps to take to help you with diet. There are also icons for a sun, a question mark, a person, and a fork and knife. At the bottom, it says 'Patients and relatives are all welcome to fill the checklist in.' and provides fields for 'Your name' and 'Date'. There are checkboxes for 'Patient' and 'Spouse, partner or relative'. At the very bottom, it says 'The Patients Association in partnership with Wessex Academic Health Science Network (Wessex AHSN) 2018'.

The Patients Association Nutrition Checklist was first published in December 2018. It aims to address the rising problems of undernutrition in older people by helping those working in health and social care identify the potential risk of undernutrition in adults.

The checklist has been tested and refined over a period of two years receiving positive feedback from older people and staff working in the health and social care sector.

It is easy to use:

- Fill in Section A. If the answer to all 4 questions was no, then you don't need to continue.
- If the answer was YES or DON'T KNOW to any questions, go to Section B to assess the situation and needs.
- Sections C and D give guidance on what to do next along with further information, tips and ideas about eating.

The Paperweight Armband

The Paperweight Armband is a non-medical, non-intrusive tool that is helping health and social care professionals identify older people at risk of malnutrition and signpost them to immediately accessible information and advice. This approach helps people and carers self-manage and address the risk of malnutrition before consulting with their GP or healthcare professionals.

The Paperweight Armband is intended to be used in a wide range of settings and raise awareness of the risks of malnutrition and direct people to practical nutrition advice quickly and safely.

Since the introduction of the paperweight armband Age UK Salford has reported a reduction in hospital admissions, a 50% increase in reporting of underweight BMI in primary care after 1 year and a more appropriate prescribing of oral nutritional supplements (Age UK, Salford).



How to use the PAPERWEIGHT ARMBAND TOOL

Overview

1. Start a conversation around eating, drinking, appetite & weight loss (see prompt card)
2. With verbal consent, use the Paperweight Armband to assess risk
3. Ask the red flag questions if someone is at risk
4. Give appropriate advice and signposting to local community groups/clubs
5. Complete data form and discuss follow up (if applicable)

Key Questions

1. Has the person lost weight without meaning to, had a poor appetite or low mood?
2. Do his/her clothes, shoes, jewellery or dentures look or feel loose?
3. Does the paperweight armband fit together and slide easily up and down?



If the answer is **YES** to any of the 3 key questions, then ask the following questions:



Red Flag Questions

- Have you noticed sudden weight loss (10% of body weight in 3 months)?
- Do you have difficulties swallowing food or drinks?
- Do you get pain in your tummy when you eat?
- Has there been a recent persistent change in moving to your bowels to looser stools and/or increased frequency?

If the answer is **YES** to any of the questions, then signpost to the GP and give the Understanding Malnutrition and What You Can do About It Leaflet

- Do you have a sore mouth?

If the answer is **YES**, then signpost to the dentist and give the Understanding Malnutrition Leaflet and What You Can do About It Leaflet

If there is an ongoing medical condition that requires a special diet direct to GP for more tailored advice.



If the answer to these questions are **NO** then we can take the following **ACTIONS**.

- Give the Understanding Malnutrition and What You Can do About It Leaflet
- Give Food First advice to try and increase food intake for 12 weeks.
- Signpost older person or family member to relevant services (e.g. cooking group, befriending service, lunch club) - see voluntary organisations handout



RECORD: Send your data back to Eat Well Age Well (see page 8)

Send us your Malnutrition Screening Data

Your screening data is incredibly important in helping to build a true picture of the problem of malnutrition in Scotland.




We are encouraging carers and care organisations to use either the armband or checklist to identify older people in the community who may be at risk of malnutrition. We are interested in **ALL** your screening data including individuals who **ARE** at risk and who **ARE NOT** at risk.

If in the position to do so, we would appreciate if you could gather and record the interactions you have with older people you are working with.

Please record information on:

- a) how many people you have **raised awareness of malnutrition** with?
- b) how many people you have **identified at risk**?
- c) how many people you have **identified not at risk**?
- d) What **action** did you take?

How to send Eat Well Age Well your screening data:

-  Use our online Google Form: <https://forms.gle/4RqNbe2wCkbGJmyd7>.
-  Email your data to us: hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk
-  Phone us on **0131 447 8151**

UK Malnutrition Awareness Week

UK Malnutrition Awareness Week © has been set up by [BAPEN](#) and the [Malnutrition Task Force](#) to help raise the profile of malnutrition in older people.



UK Malnutrition Awareness Week takes place between **11th – 17th October 2021** and is a key event in our calendar. This year we are focusing on how the care sector can play a vital role in addressing malnutrition by screening older people in Scotland.

We will be campaigning for carers and care organisations to screen and send their data back to us during UK Malnutrition Awareness Week and beyond so that we can build the true picture of the issue in Scotland. For more info on our **#Let'sBuildThePicture** campaign and how to get involved, please visit our website, or follow us on social media for regular updates.



Raising the Issue of Malnutrition Training

Eat Well Age Well's Raising the Issue of Malnutrition training aims to increase practitioners' knowledge and confidence around identifying and supporting older people at home in the community who are at risk or are suffering from malnutrition.

Training is **FREE** to attend and takes place **every month** on **Zoom**. This training incorporates information on:



- Common signs and symptoms of malnutrition.
- Guidance around supporting individuals using Food First advice.
- Utilising simple tools such as armbands and the Patients Association Nutrition Checklist to identify at risk individuals.
- Gaining awareness of promoting good nutrition and hydration in older people.

Visit www.eatwellagewell.org.uk/raising-the-issue to view all upcoming dates and to book a place.

Bespoke training is also available upon request for carers and care organisations. Contact hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk for more details.

National Services for Older People

General Enquiries

NHS Inform
Telephone 0800 22 44 88

Age Scotland
Telephone: 0800 12 44 222
www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland

Money Worries

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
Telephone: 0345 404 0506
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland>

Food & Nutrition

Meal Makers
Telephone 0141 551 8118
www.mealmakers.org.uk

Eat Well Age Well
Telephone 0131 447 8151.
www.eatwellagewell.org.uk

Food Train
Telephone 01387 270 800
www.thefoodtrain.co.uk

Specific Enquiries

Action on Hearing Loss
Telephone 0808 808 0123
www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

National Osteoporosis Society
Telephone 0808 800 0035
<https://nos.org.uk>

RNIB Scotland
Telephone 0303 123 9999
www.rnib.org.uk/scotland

Alzheimer Scotland
Telephone 0808 808 3000
www.alzscot.org

Carers Trust
Telephone 0300 772 7701
www.carers.org/country/carers-trust-scotland

Falls Prevention

Age Scotland
Telephone: 0800 12 44 222
www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland

NHS Health Scotland
Up and About Booklet
Telephone: 0845 125 9732

Loneliness & Social Isolation

Befriending Networks
Telephone 0131 261 8799
www.befriending.co.uk

The Silver Line
Telephone 0800 4 70 80 90
www.thesilverline.org.uk

Reengage
Telephone 0800 716543
www.reengage.org.uk

Royal Voluntary Service
Telephone 0845 608 0122
www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

Keeping Active

Paths for All (walking groups)
Telephone: 01259 218 888
www.pathsforall.org.uk

Age Scotland
Telephone: 0800 12 44 222
www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland

Oral Health

Emergency Dental Services

In case of emergency contact your usual dental practice. A list of helpline numbers for every Health Board in Scotland can be found below:

<https://www.scottishdental.org/public/emergency-dental-services/>

Registering with a dentist

Find your local NHS dental practice

Telephone: 0800 22 44 88
<https://www.nhsinform.scot/scotlands-service-directory/dental-services>

Resources are available on our website or can be ordered from Eat Well Age Well

www.eatwellagewell.org.uk / hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk

Contact us



Email:

hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk



Website:

www.eatwellagewell.org.uk



Twitter:

[@EatWellScot](https://twitter.com/EatWellScot)



Facebook:

[@EatWellScot](https://www.facebook.com/EatWellScot)



Instagram:

[eat_well_scot](https://www.instagram.com/eat_well_scot)



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

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care inspectorate

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