



March 18th, 2015

Teatime is the right time for nutrition advice

The importance of food and drink in care was high on the menu when South Tyneside health workers joined care home residents for the Worldwide Afternoon Tea (Wednesday, March 18th), organised as part of Nutrition and Hydration Week.

Michelle Swinburne, Prescribing Support Dietitian, and Lauren McDowell, Community Nutrition Assistant, from South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust, took the opportunity to emphasise the need for good nutritional intake and hydration when they went to support events in several homes in the borough - Ashlea Mews, Harton Grange, Garden Hill and Chichester Court, in South Shields, and The Branches and The White House, in Jarrow. Roz Wright, manager of Ashlea Mews, said: "The Trust's nutrition and dietetics department have been a great support to us in helping to ensure we provide the best and most appropriate nutrition for our residents and we are looking forward to working with them in the future."

The nutrition and dietetics staff have given special training to more than 1,000 care home staff in the borough over the last two years to help prevent and treat malnutrition and, as a result, many of the homes have reported that their residents have put on weight. The 'Food First' programme, which is ongoing, focuses on screening for malnutrition and preventing and treating it by implementing a high energy/protein diet to boost weight. A new programme, Nutrition in Dementia Training, has also been developed, specifically in response to requests from the homes.

Denise Horsley, the Trust's Strategic Lead, Safer Care, said: "Food and drink are essential to physical and mental well-being and high standards of nutrition and hydration care are particularly important as people get older since they can lose their appetite, or they may not eat properly because they have dementia, depression or a long-term condition which affects their breathing or swallowing and makes eating difficult. If they are malnourished and underweight then they are at a higher risk of picking up infections, which can result in being admitted to hospital, where their stay can be prolonged due to their weakened state."
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Pictured above: Michelle Swinburne, left, and Lauren McDowell, of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's nutrition and dietetics team.

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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