

PRESS RELEASE - 6 March 2019

Good nutrition and hydration on the menu at South Tyneside and Sunderland hospitals



Highlighting the importance of food and drink to health and wellbeing will be on the menu in South Tyneside and Sunderland hospitals during Nutrition & Hydration Week 2019.

South Tyneside and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trusts are supporting the week from March 11th-17th with a programme of activities emphasising the positive and inspiring aspects of good practice already taking place and generally encouraging good nutrition and hydration for patients and staff.

The Trusts' Nutrition and Hydration Steering Group, working with staff from Speech and Language Therapy, Dietetics and Catering, has organised a number of events at South Tyneside District Hospital and Sunderland Royal Hospital. These include a Big Breakfast on Monday (11th) to promote the most important meal of the day, and Fruity Friday (15th) when patients and staff will be offered fruit. During the week,

hospital patients will also be offered sweet treats of cakes or scones. Staff working in the community will be given fruit and bottles of water.

Melanie Johnson, South Tyneside and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trusts' Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals, said: "Good nutrition and hydration have a positive impact on our physical and mental well-being and are especially important when people are ill and as they get older. We always do everything we can to ensure our patients' needs are met at drink and meal times. Sometimes, that may mean providing them with a high energy, high protein diet, additional snacks and nourishing drinks.

"There are a number of reasons why people can become malnourished, particularly as they get older, including difficulty in eating and swallowing, an inability to absorb nutrients, depression or isolation, and lessening of taste which can make eating less pleasurable. Dehydration can contribute to problems including confusion, falls and pressure ulcers and, if undetected, can even lead to kidney injury and cause a person's condition to deteriorate rapidly. Nutrition & Hydration Week is a great opportunity for us to raise awareness about malnutrition and dehydration and how to prevent and manage these conditions to enhance the recovery of patients."

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Photo caption: The photo caption is: Lucy Matheson, Lead Dietitian at South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust, giving a patient a nutrition assessment

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