

# Improving patient satisfaction and outcomes with a change in dietetic model of care

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## Background

With a malnutrition prevalence of more than 30%, and nutritional intakes falling short of targets, for patients of acute hospitals, there is a need to improve systems to enhance patient satisfaction, intake and nutritional status. Significant changes to the Nutrition and Dietetics model of care at the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital involving a shift of resources from an outpatient service delivery model to a focus on evidence based nutrition support, for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition, was evaluated through key performance measures.

## Methods

Resources were shifted from an historical individual weight management clinic to inpatient malnutrition identification, prevention and treatment in line with evidence. Due to resource constraints and limited Dietetic staff, multidisciplinary systems including the implementation of malnutrition screening and menu improvements were implemented to maximising benefits to at risk patients.

A strong university partnership and using Dietetic students to undertake intensive nutritional intake and foodservice satisfaction surveys was key to reporting improvements and determining areas for further development.

## Results

Change in the model of care to a nutrition support approach improves intake, foodservice satisfaction and outcomes for patients.

Key improvements include malnutrition screening compliance (0% in 2010, 40% in 2011 and 92% in 2015); significant changes in patient foodservice satisfaction using the ACHFPSQ (an overall satisfaction score of 3.7/5 in 2011 to 4.38/5 in 2014) and increases in nutritional intake. Partnerships with the University of Queensland Dietetics Program have been strengthened and student capacity and productivity have also improved.

## Discussion

In a fiscal and resource constrained healthcare environment, efficient systems based on evidence to improve outcomes are required. Malnutrition is associated with increased morbidity and mortality. QEII Jubilee Hospital has successfully implemented a change in the model of care to identify and treat malnutrition, resulting in improvements in malnutrition screening, patient foodservice satisfaction and nutritional intake. Improved nutritional intake is associated with improved quality of life and patient outcomes. Intensive intake and satisfaction studies are not common but necessary and university partnerships are beneficial in measuring and tracking improvements over time to inform continual improvements.