

## **AN EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDE FOR IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING MALNUTRITION AND FRAILTY IN THE COMMUNITY SETTING**

**Rationale:** Malnutrition and frailty are under-recognised and under-treated in community settings and have devastating impacts on patients and their families. With ageing populations, the burden of these conditions is expected to increase globally. Our team has developed guidance for the identification and nutritional management of malnutrition and frailty in the community setting.

**Methods:** The guide's development was underpinned by: a) a comprehensive literature review on malnutrition and frailty; b) a survey of Australian and New Zealand dietitians' current practices for identifying/managing these conditions; and c) interviews with dietitians and other stakeholders. Over a year, guide content was developed and revised by two authors and a multidisciplinary expert panel that included dietitians, geriatricians, exercise scientist, nurse, pharmacist and consumer representatives.

**Results:** The guide was recently launched (March 2022) and includes guidance on: 1) identifying malnutrition and frailty in the community (steps include: screening, referral, and assessment/diagnosis); and 2) the nutritional management of these conditions (steps include: setting goals/selecting outcome measures, selecting/implementing nutrition interventions, and evaluating/monitoring outcomes). Detailed guidance on each step and practical examples of how to enact these will be presented at the conference. The guide also includes general information on malnutrition and frailty, provides an overview of screening tools validated in the community, and highlights the roles various members of the multidisciplinary team can play in identifying and supporting the nutritional management of these conditions. Emphasis is also placed on patient- and family-centred care approaches. Finally, the guide contains pathways to guide practice and resources to support patient care. While the guide was tailored to the Australian and New Zealand community setting, it could easily be adapted to other countries.

**Conclusion:** This guide provides community-based health professionals with recommendations for identifying and managing malnutrition and frailty in their settings. Wide dissemination and facilitated implementation projects will assist with its uptake.