

nutritionDay – the worldwide initiative to tackle malnourishment in hospital patients and nursing home residents

Research has shown that 20-60% of all hospitalized patients can be considered malnourished or at nutritional risk [1]. It is estimated that disease related malnutrition is responsible for prolonged length of hospital stay, morbidity and premature mortality in hospitalized patients [2].

Cancer patients in particular are frequently affected by loss of appetite, unintended weight loss and treatment related adverse reactions. In studies it has been shown that weight stable cancer patients have a better prognosis than cancer patients with weight loss: in concrete a lower number of treatment related adverse reactions in weight stable patients is reported, the response to cancer treatment is increased, the patient reports a higher activity level and a better subjective quality of life [3]. Moreover, the actual survival rate of weight stable patients is higher compared to patients with weight loss [4].

nutritionDay is an annual benchmarking opportunity for all types of hospital wards and nursing homes aiming to improve malnutrition in health care facilities. Due to the particular importance of adequate nutritional treatment of cancer patients nutritionDay defined the oncology focus for 2012 and 2013.

On nutritionDay data on nutritional standards and information on patient nutrition is collected on one day each year in participating units worldwide providing each ward with a report of their unit results in comparison to the worldwide average. On basis of the results actions to combat malnutrition can be defined individually by each unit.

On the 8th of November 2012 the 6th nutritionDay was performed in hospital wards, intensive care units and nursing homes. In addition the “oncology nutritionDay” was conducted simultaneously in 31 countries with more than 2410 patients being the first disease related nutritionDay performed.

What has been done?

In 2012 three additional questionnaires for cancer patients in hospital wards were designed to collect specific information on nutritional care and structures: one unit questionnaire collects information on organizational aspects and standards to ensure optimal nutritional care, the second questionnaire provides a patient's profile on demographic data, severity of illness, therapy situation and nutritional treatment. The third questionnaire is designed as an individual patient questionnaire which asks for general health information of the cancer patient.

To ensure worldwide participation and inclusion of minority groups also in oncology nutritionDay all questionnaires were translated in 24 global languages.

The overall participation in nutritionDay 2012 climbed to more than 23 936 patient data entries from 36 countries. Concrete, in the nutritionDay online database 15 560 datasets were entered for nutritionDay in hospitals, 4 242 for nutritionDay in nursing homes and about 1 724 datasets of patients admitted to intensive care units. In addition 2 410 datasets were collected for nutritionDay oncology. In your country (Poland) participation rates were nD in hospitals: 139 and nD oncology: 18. Altogether, over 138.000 datasets could be collected since 2006.

Where we are now:

nutritionDay data entry is well underway and almost completed. All hospital unit reports are immediately available after data entry and also a specific oncology unit report will be provided by end of April 2013 for all participants of oncology nutritionDay. Participants of nutritionDay in nursing homes will receive their final reports by mid of August 2013 and the final reports for ICU units are provided approximately in March 2013. All reports can be downloaded from the nutritionDay website: www.nutritionday.org.

What next?

Apart from creating the nutritionDay oncology report emphasis lies on the development and redesign of the **nutritionDay report for nursing homes** in beginning of 2013. Participants of nD in NH will receive a brand-new report with improved usability and readability. Results are presented in figures, graphics as well as in textual mode and compare unit results to a national and international reference. Further, reports for nutritionDay in hospitals will be translated in Norwegian, Japanese, Portuguese and Turkish.

Certificate: a major novelty affects nutritionDay in hospitals and nursing homes whose participants can apply for nutritionDay certification. Further information will be provided on the nD website, facebook and the nD newsletter!

Save the date for this year's nutritionDay in hospitals, nursing homes and intensive care units and for oncology nutritionDay on 7th November 2013. Again, we would very much appreciate your participation.

The accomplishment of nutritionDay was made possible by various supporters. The nutritionDay team thanks all who helped in the preparation and conduction of nutritionDay very much!

References:

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