



# THE NEED FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION/INNOVATION PROGRAMME

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## Nursing Essay Competition 2016

We would all agree that hospital malnutrition has been a challenge for decades in the UK, with considerable impact on patient outcomes. The prevalence of hospital malnutrition in the UK is estimated to be as high as 40%, warranting targeted, effective strategies to support enhanced nutrition care. The NNEdPro Group has previously identified that nutrition is under-recognised within medical and healthcare specialties. NNEdPro's first nutrition education intervention to medical students was shown to be successful in increasing the knowledge, attitudes and practices among fourth year medical students. With the aim to raise awareness that nutrition forms an important part of everyone's responsibilities, this year we set forth to focus on nurses, another healthcare profession crucial to nutrition care. Nurses are an integral part of our healthcare system and, with the most frequent and direct patient contact, are key to providing, effective patient-care.

The NNEdPro Group has recently launched the **Nutrition in Nursing** theme for 2016, with the aim to emphasise the need and importance of nutrition in nursing education and nursing practice. To start off the year, at the NNEdPro Annual Meeting on 1st February 2016, we held our **Second Annual Essay Competition**, this time open for nurses to submit an essay. Our Honorary Patron, Lord Richard Balfe of Dulwich, opened the symposium with opening remarks on the Royal College of Nursing nutrition report.

*"Nurses see themselves as providing nutrition care while GPs can facilitate lifestyle changes, however, both often refer to themselves as not being dietitians, which is clearly a challenge. The government is concerned about the standard of nutrition in hospitals: concerned about the way inappropriate diets are offered to patients. We have to be much more sophisticated in nutrition healthcare delivery."*

Nursing students and practicing nurses from across the UK submitted personal essays on their perception on the importance of nutrition in nursing. We received an overwhelming number of submissions, from which 15 were shortlisted. Our top three candidates were invited to Cambridge on February 1st to present their essays during our symposium. Our judging panel consisted of Prof Christi Deaton (Florence Nightingale Foundation Professor of Clinical Nursing Research, The University of Cambridge), Joan Gandy, RD (Nutrition and Dietetic consultant), Emma Amez (NNEdPro

Nursing, Patient and Public Health Representative) and Pauline Douglas, RD (Clinician and Academic in Dietetics, University of Ulster).

The essays and presentations of the finalists were judged on critical thinking, discussion of current practices, effective communication, use of innovation and initiative and overall presentation. After intense discussions and rigorous thought, NNEdPro is pleased to announce its winners:

- **Emma Little** (BSc Adult Nursing Student, Keele University): Winner of the 2016 Essay Competition
- **Matthew Weir** (BSc Adult Nursing Student, University of Dundee) & **Kim Delaney** (BSc Nursing student, University of Birmingham): Joint Second Place of the 2016 Essay Competition.

These individuals brought the importance of nutrition in nursing to light by educating us about the need to introduce and implement methods that ensure our patients are given the best care possible through quality and competent nutrition care.



From Left to Right: Emma Amez, Christie Deaton, Kim Delaney, Emma Little, Matthew Weir, Joan Gandy, and Pauline Douglas

We would like to extend a Special Acknowledgement to **Sarah Gibbings** and **Marietta Sayegh** for organising the logistics of the event.

We would like to extend Special Thanks to our Annual Meeting Presenters: Lauren Ball, Christie Deaton, Daniele Del Rio, Pauline Douglas, Celia Laur, Mike Newell, Toni Vidal-Puig, Shumone Ray, Minha Rajput-Ray.

**Events**

- **International Summit in Medical Nutrition Education and Research:** 17th - 19th June 2016
- **Cambridge Summer School:** 20th - 24th June 2016

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