

Development of a patient outcome measure to evaluate the impact of dietary and nutritional care

THE CHALLENGE

We were approached by a leading London university hospital to take on the role of project leader and mentor of a project to develop a patient reported outcome (PRO) measure to evaluate the impact of dietary and nutritional care and support on patient outcomes.

THE SOLUTION

We initially undertook discussions with the research team to clearly identify the purpose of the measure and establish how information from its use was to be used.

This was followed by conducting a carousel group with all staff members to be involved in administering the questionnaire to patients as the first stage in identifying key themes to be covered by the scale. Focus groups were also held with a range of patients and carers to identify areas of

importance to them. Correspondence between staff themes and patients' and carers' areas of importance was assessed and was found to be very high.

Draft patient and carer questionnaires underwent evaluation through a series of cognitive interviews until final versions of the scales were produced. Questionnaires were fielded in samples of nearly 200 patients and carers to evaluate their psychometric properties. These were found to be satisfactory meeting all but one of the psychometric criteria set.

OUTCOME

A final patient and carer version of the scale each comprising 15-items were developed and are now part of the routine evaluation of patient and carer outcomes in diabetes and cancer outpatient services.