

Hospice Hearty Meals

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Hospice Hearty Meals was inspired by our patients in response to COVID-19. Due to reduced activity, patients' function decreased thus affecting their ability to cook nutritious meals. Carers expressed that due to the additional catering burden on them during the pandemic and lack of respite they were struggling with additional responsibilities and pressures. In order to address these issues SAH began preparing home cooked meals for patients & carers who were struggling to access nutritional meals

Access to Food Policy Circle, Scottish Government (2020)



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This poster is part of
the SPPC Poster
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The logo for the Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care is a blue circular icon with a white 'C' shape inside, positioned to the left of the text.

Previous work, challenge, and approach

Due to the COVID -19 pandemic, SAH has had to suspend Outpatient and Community Services.

The hospice staff maintained contact with patients and their carers during the pandemic by keeping in touch and providing support via telephone. During these calls, issues in relation to accessing nutritious home cooked meals highlighted. Patients identified that due to no longer participating in regular exercise/ activities, they were losing functional ability which impacted on their capability to prepare home cooked meals. Due to this patients were becoming increasingly reliant on quick snacks or ready meals which did not meet their nutritional needs. Carers also expressed that due to the additional catering burden on them during COVID-19 and lack of respite they were struggling with all the increased responsibilities.



Techniques and Methods

The Hospice Catering Team prepares home cooked meals daily for inpatients and staff and with a small amount of additional resources are able to provide home cooked meals 3 times per week for patients and their carers in the community. These are prepared onsite, blast chilled and packed based on household requirements (for oven reheating or microwave). They are delivered to patients/carers 3 x per week by our dedicated staff and volunteers.



Anne is retired and lives alone. She has Parkinson's disease which has led to reduced mobility and ataxia (disjointed involuntary movements). Since lockdown, Anne has received less support and was struggling to make herself fresh, nutritious meals. Since the launch of Hearty Hospice Meals, Anne's sense of wellbeing has improved. She told us:

"The meals are absolutely lovely! The menu choice is good, with large portions. I feel this service has improved my health greatly by relieving some of the stresses of lockdown."

Results and Conclusions

Following evaluation patients/ carers found this service to be invaluable. Patients reported that by relieving the worry or burden of ensuring they ate well, they were less anxious and felt more able to cope.

In total, 2047 meals were delivered in the first year of Hospice Hearty Meals. Following the success of the initial project we were able to gain additional funding to secure the service until at least 2022.

- 100% rated the overall service as excellent
- Over 94% of respondents rated the quality and choice of meals good or excellent



“Excellent service which saved “valuable time” to spend together before death.”- Carer