

Public Health Dietitians Team Newsletter

Spring/Summer
2025



Welcome to our Spring/Summer Newsletter! A warm welcome to all the new Tutors who have completed training with us this year.

We remind Tutors that we are here to support you with nutrition programmes, health events and resources.

Please keep us informed about your activities and let us know how we can help!

REMEMBER

We offer tailored sessions for organisations, including health stands and wellness talks.

We are also now offering bespoke training. If you have a number of staff wishing to be trained in a particular programme, let us know!

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UPCOMING TRAINING

Food & Health Essentials
23 July 2025

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR MORE
INFO AND TO REGISTER

For information on all the
programmes we offer

[click here](#)



Collaborative working

We have collaborated with the Health Improvement Team to provide health and wellbeing information stands for staff throughout BHSCT. This involved working alongside colleagues from Human Resources, the Clinical Research Network, Laboratories, and Transport.

**Student Orla and Eithne with
Érin Collins, NICRN Stroke
Research Nurse, Antonia O'Kane,
Dietitian**

**Donna Rooney and Fiona McCabe
from Health Improvement Team,
at the Stroke Team at the stroke
awareness event**



**Martina and Eithne
with Michael McAlinden, Neurodegenerative Clinical
Research Nurse NICRN and Fiona McCabe, Stop
Smoking Specialist Health Improvement team**



**Clare and student Ami at the
HR health & wellbeing event**



**Student Ava with staff from
Lab Department**

The Health Improvement Team and Public Health Dietitians are providing health information stand visits to staff departments within Belfast Trust.

To learn more, please click [here](#)

(Note: This opportunity is available for BHSCT staff only.)*

Perinatal Mental Health Event

We were invited back to attend this fantastic event put on by the Perinatal Mental Health team for new parents. Many useful conversations were had with lots of signposting to our children's nutrition webinars and short videos on the PHDG YouTube channel. Plenty of leaflets and freebies given away too!



Falls Prevention @ IKEA

Our team were pleased to have a stand at an event organised by the community falls team. It was a busy morning spent talking to the public about how nutrition (namely a balanced diet with a focus on calcium, protein and hydration) can play a part in falls prevention. We had our brand new Food & Health Essentials resource out in action too!



Balmoral Show

This May marked the third year of a successful partnership between Public Health Dietitians and farm families health checks team at the Balmoral Show.

Together, they provided key nutrition messages to the general public, with a particular focus on rural and farming communities.

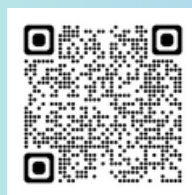
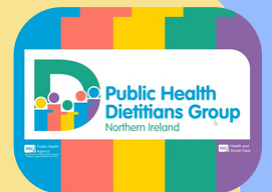


Antoinette at the Public Health Dietitians' health stand during a sunny day at the Balmoral Show.

A regional initiative was undertaken by the Public Health Dietitians Group in Northern Ireland to promote the PHDG YouTube channel among general practitioners and pharmacies. This effort aims to provide the public in Northern Ireland with accessible, evidence-based nutrition information and advice through engaging video content.

Also promoted was awareness of nutrition video series for before, during and after pregnancy to practice/pharmacy staff and service users.

The resources were circulated in the Belfast Trust area to 76 GP Surgeries and 128 Pharmacies to put on display.



Scan the QR code or click here to view and subscribe to the Public Health Dietitians Youtube channel with other helpful videos and webinars here

The channel hosts webinars and short videos on the following topics and much more:

- Weaning
- Fussy eating
- Weight management
- Eating well on a budget
- Diet and menopause
- Gut health
- Eating well as you age

Weaning Week

12th-16th May 2025

Weaning week took place in May. This is a regional Public Health Dietetics collaboration aiming to promote evidence based weaning information and support staff/parents to introduce solids.



Weaning video flyers, top tips flyers, business cards and pens were offered

How much did we do?



11 attended
lunch and
learn online
session



157 views
on YouTube channel
weaning videos
during the week



9 new subscribers to
the YouTube channel

How well did we do it?



100% would
recommend the
lunch and learn
session

New connections made with
key partners e.g. health
visitors and sure starts

Evidence of:

- Knowledge gained
- Increased confidence
- Awareness of evidence based resources

Feedback...

"I felt that the information I learnt
will help to support parents that I
work with"

"I really enjoyed this training
and it provided me with
information for parents"

"great presentation"

Twenty six Belfast City Council Community Centres have been supporting residents to get active thanks to support from Active Belfast Partnership Seed Development Funds.

Senior Ladies in Concorde Community Centre were supported by mixing moments of movement with mindfulness. The group learned simple relaxation techniques as well as learning about diabetes and high cholesterol.

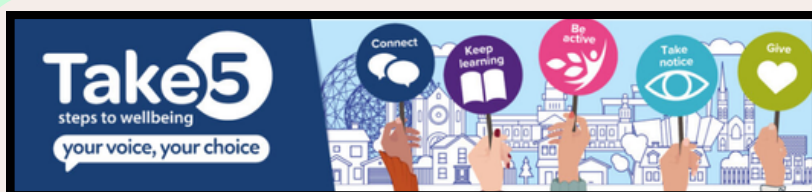
The Active Belfast Programme also supported the health and wellbeing of the Ligoniel Community Centre's Girls Group and Dance and Dine sessions were hosted in Divis Community Centre welcoming people into the centre to learn line dancing followed by a healthy lunch.

As part of the initiative Community Development Officers were upskilled in nutrition and physical activity provided by the Public Health Dietitians Team, Physical Activity Co-ordinator (Health Improvement Team, BHSCT) and Community Sports Network.



“I'm not an exercise person, but I found these simple, doable and achievable.”

“What an amazing thing I've done, great teacher, great music and dancing with lunch a welcome treat. It's been brilliant for addressing isolation and keeping fit.”



Take 5 steps to wellbeing

The “Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing” initiative, promotes five activities to enhance mental health. These steps encourage individuals to integrate these practices into their daily routines for improved health and wellbeing.

Connect Keep learning Be active Take notice Give

Participatory Budgeting in Belfast allows residents to influence funding decisions, fostering community spirit and generating ideas.

Applications opened 25 November 2024 and closed 10 January 2025. Groups across the city submitted project ideas that contribute to this theme, applying for up to £2,500. Local residents made the decision on which projects would get funded at four local Market Stall Decision Making Events in February 2025.

Click on the brochures below for details of the successful projects

[North Belfast successful projects](#)

[East Belfast successful projects](#)

[South Belfast successful projects](#)

[West Project successful projects](#)



Menopause, diet and lifestyle

Keep an eye out for information on how to request free copies of this amazing resource.

Menopause is a natural phase in every woman's life which brings challenges but also opportunities for growth.

A balanced diet and positive lifestyle changes can help reduce the severity of symptoms.

These changes can also lower the risk of long-term health issues, such as osteoporosis and heart disease, in postmenopausal women.

We have created a booklet that explores how lifestyle changes, eating a healthy diet and engaging in regular physical activity, can help with menopausal symptoms.

Menopause and Diet

What is Menopause?

Peri-menopause is a transitional stage, sometimes with irregular periods and early symptoms of menopause. Changes can often vary from month to month.

Menopause is when periods stop due to lower hormone levels, usually between the ages of 45 - 55 but it can happen earlier. Menopause can happen naturally or for reasons such as surgery, cancer treatments or a genetic reason. Sometimes the reason is unknown.

Post-menopause is when there has been no period for 12 months.

Menopause and perimenopause symptoms can have a big impact on your daily life, including relationships, social life, family life and work. It can feel different for everyone. You may have a number of symptoms or none.

Physical symptoms can be: Feeling tired, joint pain, sleep problems, weight gain, hot flushes, night sweats

Mental health symptoms can be: Mood changes, anxiety, brain fog, irritability

How does this impact health now and in the future?

Weight changes.

A decline in oestrogen can lead to weight gain due to changes in metabolism and a decrease in muscle mass. With less muscle, the body burns fewer calories at rest, causing excess calories to be more likely stored as fat.

Calcium.

From age 35 years, we slowly lose calcium from our bones. Losing oestrogen through the menopause raises the rate of loss, which can increase the risk of osteoporosis.

HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy*) helps to maintain oestrogen levels.

Blood pressure and changes in cholesterol.

The decline in oestrogen may have an effect on controlling cholesterol levels, and your heart health.

Blood pressure can be impacted, but this could also be as a result of other symptoms such as anxiety, weight gain or reduced activity.

*The decision on whether to take HRT, dietary supplements or complimentary therapies should be discussed with your doctor.

For all women, diet and lifestyle changes can help with managing some symptoms.

We also have a range of infographics and other printed resources available. Get in touch if you would like copies of these..

Infographics include:

- Healthier snack swaps
- Fibre
- Heart Health
- Top tips for weaning

Printed infographics

Healthier snack swaps

Healthier snack swaps for kids

Fibre

Heart health

Top tips for weaning

Contact us to order copies. More infographics are available.

CONTACT US

Tel: 028 9615 2450
Email: PHdietitians@belfasttrust.hscni.net

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New digital nutrition content

Short videos

Topics include...

- Childhood constipation
- Using an airfryer
- Caffeine
- Fibre
- Salt
- Healthier choices when eating out
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding

and many more...

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HSC Public Health Agency

Promoting healthier food and drink

A good practice guide for physical activity leaders and sports coaches

www.choosetolivebetter.com

A range of physical resources are available for borrowing. These can be used to add an interesting twist and a 'hands on' experience to your programmes or health events!



If you are hosting an event, we can also attend with information and resources!

What's next?

Your step by step guide to running a nutrition programme

What's next?

Your step by step guide to running a nutrition programme...

- 1 Book a follow up appointment / support visit with the Dietitian
- 2 Decide what programme you want to deliver and what date/time
- 3 Select group - you might choose to advertise your programme on social media, newsletters, flyers etc

Suggestion: group size should be no more than 6-8 people if you are delivering a cooking programme

HSC Health and Social Care

Public Health Dietitian's Group

HSC Public Health Agency

Survey on Resources Topics/themes

We would appreciate your help by completing a short survey on resources to let us know what topics or themes you would like to be made available. Click [here](#) !



International foods new foods Food allergies children recipes for adults
food banks nutrition foods budget cook family nutrition
types of food use diet recipes Healthy eating budget / snacks
convenience food best nutrition

Small Grants of up to £200 per programme, health stand or event are available for tutors to help buy food and equipment

***Slow cooker *Cooking equipment *Cooking ingredients *Food storage**
Click [here](#) for guidance on claiming small grants

Monitoring form

Have you delivered one of our programmes or any nutrition sessions? We would love to hear more!

Your feedback as Tutors is important for evaluating and improving the programmes we provide.



Let us know if you would like to be added to our mailing list for updates on training and events!

Tel: 028 9615 2450

Email: PHdietitians@belfasttrust.hscni.net