

# AHP Day

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Dietitian



## **Where do you work within the Trust?**

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

## **What does your job role involve on a daily basis?**

My job role involves assessing a patient's nutritional status and risk of malnutrition. I work with individuals, other health care professionals and the medical team to implement the most appropriate plan to prevent and treat malnutrition. I do this by assessing an individual's medical condition, current weight and any weight loss, dietary intake, environmental considerations and the individual's personal preferences and views to develop a plan to improve nutritional status.

## **How does your role contribute to our delivery of Safe, Personal and Effective Care within ELHT?**

My role contributes to safe, personal and effective care as we develop nutrition plans based on the safest and most effective route/ type of diet for the individual. By having dietitians as part of the multi-disciplinary team we are able to advise medics and nurses on specialist nutrition needs. Dietitians are involved in both medical decisions regarding nutrition and as a therapy to promote recovery. Therefore, without dietitians individuals may not receive alternative feeding when needed or may have longer hospital admissions due to delayed recovery. We also play a role in preventing hospital admissions in the community by optimising nutrition in groups highlighted as 'at risk' of malnutrition.

## **What do you most enjoy about being a dietitian?**

I enjoy working directly with individuals and their families. I find this rewarding when I see an individual make positive progress. Dietetics can be challenging as it is often not a black and white decisions, the plans we develop vary depending on individual preferences and views.

### **Why did you want to become a dietitian?**

I initially completed a degree in nutrition due to my interest in food and nutrition. However, I had always wanted to work in a hospital due to my interest in science and medicine/healthcare. I also knew that I wanted to work directly with patients. Therefore going onto study to become a dietitian allowed me combine all of these.

### **Are there any frustrations, myths or things you find people often don't understand about your profession which you'd like to take this opportunity to say a few words about?**

I think a common mis-conception is that dietitians primarily deal with obesity and weight loss advice. Whilst this is an option to specialise in, most of the areas we work in are malnutrition based such as; oncology, enteral feeding and stroke.