The Role of Registered Dietitians in Cancer

Registered Dietitians play an important part in multi-professional team working, caring for people with cancer, in a variety of settings, throughout their cancer journey. Dietitians aim to optimise nutritional status and quality of life for patients throughout their illness and treatment. They also give dietary advice once treatment is completed.

They do this in the following ways:

- **By assessing** the patient's nutritional requirements. This assessment includes, height and weight, medical history, symptom management, reviewing relevant blood tests, dietary review. All this is done whilst taking into consideration the patient's prognosis, treatment and social circumstances.
- **By advising** on appropriate dietary alteration, modified consistency or nutritional support, which may be oral, enteral or parenteral. Appropriate feeding regimes are calculated for those fed enterally and parenterally.
- **By liaising** with Doctors, Nurses, Dietitians, patients carers and other health care professionals who are involved in the patient's care in the hospital, hospice or in the community. This can be done effectively as part of a multi-professional team.
- **By monitoring** the patient's progress and responding to their changing needs.
- **By arranging** nutrition support in the community working with the multiprofessional team to ensure ongoing nutritional support.
- **By organising** information and support for the patient and carers about appropriate nutrition in hospital and at home
- **By educating** patients and carers regarding nutritional issues
- **By participating** in the training of health care professionals and their students to increase awareness about the importance of nutrition and cancer
- **By raising** the profile of the role of Dietitians in cancer care
- **By promoting** evidence based practice through research and audit
- **By supporting** patients to make informed choices regarding alternative and complementary therapies
- **By advocating** healthy lifestyles