

# The Gazette

SUMMER 2023

Investing in CPD with the  
Nutrition Society Academy

Introducing free membership  
for nutrition undergraduates

New All-Party  
Parliamentary Group



# Be part of the advancement of nutritional science

## Contents

President's Report, **4**

CEO Update, **5**

Journal of Nutritional Science (JNS): Carpe Diem, **6**

Investing in CPD with the Nutrition Society Academy, **7**

A day in the life of an Industry Nutritionist, **8-9**

A letter from...the USA, **10**

Irish Section Update, **11**

The new All Party Parliamentary Group, **12**

Winter Conference 2022/23 Overview, **13**

Learned Societies in the 21st Century, **14-15**

Life with IUNS, **16-17**

A letter from...Tokyo, **17-18**

A quick guide to health claims, **18-19**

Introducing free membership for undergraduates, **20**

Get involved with the Society, **21**

Healthy Soil, Healthy Food, Healthy People (H3), **22-23**

Theme Update, **24-25-26**

Winter Conference 2023, **26**

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), **27**

## Editorial



**Dr Carrie Ruxton,**

Honorary Strategic Communications Officer

I am delighted to welcome you to the new look Nutrition Society Gazette. We might have a new logo and design, but our mission remains the same, to advance the scientific study of nutrition and its application to animal and human health. You can find out more about the new look on pages 14-15.

This issue focuses on you, the members. I am always fascinated to read about the excellent work members are doing to support the Society and nutrition science. From governance to conferences to publishing, you are at the core of everything we do, and we could not do it without you.

We start the issue with a final goodbye from Professor Julie Lovegrove as she reflects on her unprecedented four-year role as the Society's President (page 4). You can find out more about the role of our members on the International Union of Nutritional Sciences Council (page 16) and the recent International Congress of Nutrition in Tokyo, Japan (page 17). Members discuss how they have been involved with the Society as volunteers (page 21) and how you can be involved. We have 'A letter from... the USA' on page 10 where you can find out more about food deserts, and an overview of the role of a nutritionist working with the food industry (pages 8-9).

The Theme Leads update us on their activities from arranging their first Winter Conference, to the challenges of food security in the UK, to the HFSS advertising to adolescence (pages 24-25-26). You can top up your knowledge with our 'Quick guide to health claims' on pages 18-19 and the how the fibre gap is being addressed through H3 - Healthy soil, Healthy food, and Healthy people (pages 22-23).

I hope you enjoy this issue and appreciate, like me, the wonderful achievements of our members and the hard work of everyone who gives their time to make the Society a continued success.

**Registered Office:** Boyd Orr House, 10 Cambridge Court, 210 Shepherds Bush Road, London W6 7NJ

**Nutrition Society Gazette** © 2023 The Nutrition Society.

### Editorial Board:

**Dr Carrie Ruxton**, *Freelance Dietitian and Trustee for Strategic Communications*  
**Cassandra Ellis**, *Nutrition Society*

### Design:

**Juliette Gouaille**, *Nutrition Society*

### Founders:

**Sir Joseph Barcroft**, *Chairman of the Food Investigation Board*;  
**Dame Harriette Chick**, *Head of the Division of Nutrition, Lister Institute*;  
**Professor J. C. Drummond**, *Scientific Advisor to the Ministry of Food*;  
**Dr John Hammond**, *Animal Research Institute, Cambridge*;  
**Dr L. J. Harris**, *Director, Dunn Nutritional Laboratory, Cambridge*;  
**Sir Frederick Hopkins**, *Professor of Biochemistry, Cambridge*;  
**Professor H. D. Kay**, *Director, National Institute for Research in Dairying*;  
**Sir Charles Martin**, *lately Director, Lister Institute*;  
**Sir Edward Mellanby**, *Secretary, Medical Research Council*;  
**Sir John Boyd Orr**, *Director, Rowett Research Institute*;  
**Professor R. A. Peters**, *Professor of Biochemistry, Oxford*.



# President's Report

It has been a privilege to be your President for the past four years. Time has certainly flown and so much has happened. Who could have foreseen the challenges the Society would have to face, when the restrictions and lockdowns of COVID-19 took the world by surprise. I am extremely proud of how the Society responded to this unprecedented situation. Conferences were switched to online delivery and committee meetings run remotely. Trustees had to meet more frequently to deal with these rapid changes, and the Society soldiered on without faltering. We became accustomed to working from home and developed new IT skills and a vocabulary to cope with our circumstances, such as “you’re on mute”! As we emerged from the pandemic, we moved to hybrid conferences, symposia, presentations, and committee meetings, although I’m delighted that many of our events have returned to face-to-face format.

There were benefits to working online. It allowed greater engagement with overseas members and access to conferences to those who would otherwise not be able to attend and produced record attendances at all of our online and hybrid conferences. It helped in nurturing international relationships, which were further strengthened with collaborations and joint meetings with nutrition societies from Pakistan, Georgia, Korea, South Africa, France, and with societies including FENS and IUNS to name but a few. It has been an honour to be an ambassador for the Society and deliver presentations at these events, and to witness the respect and admiration for the Society held by so many countries.

An aspiration during my Presidency, has been to create further opportunities for our members to engage with the Society. It has been agreed that all undergraduate students will be entitled to free membership and retired members and Honorary Fellows can attend our conferences free of charge. I am especially pleased with the expansion of opportunities for Early Career Members. This includes reduced membership fees, opportunities to contribute as Theme



Leads, Conference Chairs, and Plenary speakers. Furthermore, the Nutrition Society Academy, another true success of the Society, offers invaluable support for continued professional development, including Early Career Members, a membership category which grew by 38%, more than any other this year. To build on these new engagement levels our new look has just been launched. It is a unique combination of language and looks to keep us authentic, impactful and recognisable, and presents a contemporary society attractive to all those interested in nutrition science.

Transparency of the Society’s business has been another key priority during my term of office. We published our 5-year Strategic Plan in July 2021, introduced Nutrition Society Vlog, Monthly Activity Round Ups, open recruitment for Editor-in-Chiefs and Theme Leaders, and recently founded an Appointments Committee for Council and Trustee positions. The Society have expanded their level of engagement with Parliament, with our newly founded All Party Parliamentary Group entitled Nutrition Science and Health, which had its inaugural meeting on 6 June 2023. We also continue to support ‘STEM for Britain’ and ‘Parliamentary Links Day’. Moreover, the Society has taken the initiative in providing a trusted, evidence-based voice on key nutrition issues.

There have been many occasions the Society has recognised and rewarded personal achievements. It has been a pleasure to present awards to Early Career Researchers, Senior Scientists and Honorary Fellows, and share time with these award winners, and other Society members.

When I joined the Society as a student member in 1988, I could never have conceived of becoming its President. The role has exceeded all my expectations and been a highlight of my career. The Society has weathered the storm of the pandemic and emerged stronger and more agile. This achievement has been made possible by so many. The efforts and unwavering support of the Nutrition Society team, led so ably by our CEO, Mark Hollingsworth, the hard work and wisdom of the Trustees and members of Council, and countless other members of the Society. It’s been a true privilege and a pleasure to work with you all. As I reach the end of my term, I leave the Society in the very safe and capable hands of our new President, Professor Mary Ward, and look forward to the Society’s continuing success in advancing nutrition science.

**Professor Julie A. Lovegrove**  
President

# CEO Update

One of the most challenging aspects of leading a charitable organisation is managing mission creep. By that, I mean the demands an organisation faces, as it grows in line with its success in delivering its charitable objectives. There is an inclination to take advantage of every opportunity by hiring a new member of paid staff. I have always believed this is the wrong approach, because at their core charities usually represent people. In the case of the Nutrition Society, it is the members, it is your Society. Therefore, wherever possible, it is the members who should undertake the activities of the Society, and only when all avenues to achieve this have been exhausted, should we resort to paying people to do it.

I was reminded of this principle, when I recently put a callout to members to see if anybody would like to help form a new Parliamentary Advisory Group, to help manage the increasing workload resulting from the Society’s pursuit of one of its key charitable objectives to become the trusted advisor to government and policy makers on evidence-based nutrition science. I had expected three or four members to volunteer to undertake this work. I was amazed when 12 suitably qualified members volunteered within days of the call going out!

Moreover, these 12 members were previously unknown to me, and this represented their first step towards volunteering and participating in the work of their Society.

I have been CEO of the Society for nine years. I still remember my interview with four representatives of the trustee board. It was towards the end of the interview when I asked the four what was the biggest challenge they felt they faced as an organisation. Their candid answer convinced me this was an organisation that I wanted to be a part of. They told me that they feared for the future. They were running out of cash, they had no strategy in place, they had just been through a redundancy process with 50% of the staff having been made redundant. But, it was their last observation that caught my attention. They felt as a trustee board that they were perceived



as a clique, elitist, out of touch with the membership, and it was the same 20 or so people rotating around most of the key volunteer positions. They called it a spiral, and they didn’t seem to be able to break out of it.

Fast forward to now and there have been 17 new trustees serving on the board in just eight years! All the major committees, all the journal Editors-in-Chief, have seen new faces around the table and in leadership positions. Moreover, the more new projects that are introduced, it seems that more members want to become engaged.

I think of the restructuring of the Theme Leads, and a lively recruitment to fill those positions. Look at the new Special Interest Groups, and the many members who have taken that project to extraordinary heights. We have also formed new committees for Strategic Communications and Membership, both of which continue to attract new faces, and deliver superb outcomes.

I therefore write this in a reflective mood. My notes from my 2014 interview show that there were 2600 members in the Nutrition Society that summer. In January of this year that number had decreased to 2136, but in the six months since then it has grown month on month to 2262. All the more remarkable to consider that the number of members now actively involved in the Society, as a percentage of the overall membership, is at an all-time high! The level of engagement is now unprecedented. Long may it continue.

**Mark Hollingsworth, CEO**





# Journal of Nutritional Science (JNS): Carpe Diem

JNS, the Society's pioneering Open Access (OA) journal, is now in its twelfth year having been launched in February 2012. In the inaugural Editorial, Professor Philip Calder, the founding Editor, highlighted the then emerging importance of the OA model of scientific publishing<sup>1</sup>. OA has, of course, increasingly become the norm and academics in the UK, for example, who engage with REF (Research Excellence Framework) know that they are expected to publish by this route. Equally, the European Union and other funding organisations have increasingly introduced a similar requirement. The Society was certainly ahead of the curve, and other Learned Societies have since followed, including the American Society for Nutrition with the launch of *Current Developments in Nutrition* in 2017.

The initial vision was that the Editor-in-Chief of the *BJN* would also be the Editor-in-Chief of *JNS* with the two journals also sharing a common Editorial Board. This arrangement pertained during the tenure of Philip Calder and Graham Burdge, the first two Editors-in-Chief of *JNS*. However, it was always envisaged that as *JNS* matured and established its own distinct identity it would gradually move apart from the *BJN*. This process began when I took over as Editor-in-Chief in 2017, Graham Burdge continuing as Editor-in-Chief of *BJN*, and some divergence of the two Editorial Boards was initiated.

Although the core aim was to provide a fully OA forum, it was also envisaged that *JNS* would provide a route for the publication of articles that though scientifically sound did not meet the criteria for acceptance by the *BJN* - which at the time was receiving more quality manuscripts than it could accept, or indeed publish within a reasonable timescale. From the beginning, *JNS* offered two different routes for submission; direct, as with other journals, and by transfer from the *BJN* (and subsequently *PHN*). Initially, most submission came through transfers, but the majority (>two-thirds) are now by direct submission. As with most OA journals, *JNS* was always intended to be exclusively online, no printed copies being produced.

*JNS* is open to submissions across the full spectrum of nutritional

science - from molecular biology and nutrigenomics to public health and policy. The remit is interpreted widely, the journal being open to submissions beyond the traditional boundaries of the subject. There has been a marked upward trajectory over the past 3-4 years, and *JNS* is now a firmly established forum. The number of submissions has grown to >200 a year



and while just 18 articles were published in the first volume, 105 were published last year in volume 11. There is a wide geographical spread in the location of authors with those based in Ethiopia, USA, Iran, Japan and the UK being the most frequent source of manuscripts.

An impact factor will be accorded for the first time this summer and a CiteScore has been available for several years. A review article on flavonoids by Panche et al in 2016<sup>2</sup> has been exceptionally highly cited with >2,300 citations (Scopus) to date. Such a remarkable level of citation would place this paper in the top 3 most cited articles of all time for the *BJN* with its 75+ year history.

Change is, of course, the norm for both scientific publishing in general and individual journals in particular. *JNS* is no exception, and after six years in the role I am stepping down as Editor-in-Chief this summer. I am delighted to welcome my successor, Professor Bernard Corfe, who will take the journal to the next level. Bernard is, of course, well known to many members of the Society.

Editing *JNS* and overseeing its development has been a privilege - and serendipitously, my connection with the journal goes back to when Philip Calder asked me to write an article<sup>3</sup> for the launch of volume 1. Philip and the Society, together with Cambridge University Press, should be applauded for their foresight in founding *JNS* as a pioneering, fully OA nutrition journal.

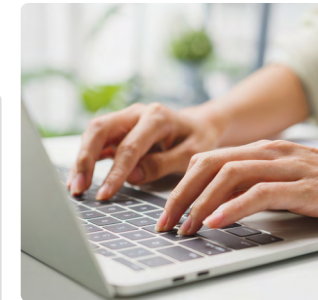
Finally, on a personal note I would like to express my profound thanks to the Editorial Board, the staff at CUP and to the Honorary Publications Officer, Professor Jayne Woodside, for their considerable help and support during my tenure as Editor-in-Chief.

**Professor Paul Trayhurn,  
Editor-in-Chief, JNS 2017-2023**

#### References

1. Calder PC (2012) The Nutrition Society fully engages with the Open Access model of publishing: *Journal of Nutritional Science*. *J Nutr Sci* 1, e1. doi.org/10.1017/jns.2012.1
2. Panche AN, Diwan AD, Chandra SR (2016) Flavonoids: an overview. *J Nutr Sci* 5, e47. doi.org/10.1017/jns.2016.41
3. Trayhurn P, Denyer G (2012) Mining microarray datasets in nutrition: expression of the GPR120 (n-3 fatty acid receptor/sensor) gene is down-regulated in human adipocytes by macrophage secretions. *J Nutr Sci* 1, e3. doi.org/10.1017/jns.2012.3

# Going the extra mile for your team: Investing in CPD with the Nutrition Society Academy



#### What is the Nutrition Society Academy?

The Nutrition Society Academy's globally accessible subscription-based platform hosts over 50 webinars and courses, focussing on the development of nutritional science knowledge and enhancing professional skills. New webinars and courses are launched each month, covering the latest evidence-based research.

#### Who is the Academy for?

Whether you are an individual user or part of an institution there is something for everyone. The Academy's university and corporate packages mean that groups such as students and nutrition, dietetic and health care professional teams can now benefit from packages that provide instant access to Continued Professional Development (CPD), anywhere, anytime. Not only this, your students or team can keep track of their progress, with personalised certificates issued after each webinar or course completed!

Are you a course leader looking to provide your students with extra-curricular benefits, within budget?

Then we offer great university packages...

You can encourage your students to build credible CPD portfolios and enrich your course curriculum with instant access to world-leading experts discussing the latest research.

#### University packages

#Subscribers in group	Annual fee per person
<10 subscribers	£ 45.00
10-20 subscribers	£ 40.00
20-50 subscribers	£ 35.00
50-100 subscribers	£ 30.00

#### Perhaps you would prefer a commercial package?

At the Academy we understand that nutrition teams are often small, with limited resources and access to the latest evidence-based research. Provide your team with subscriptions to the Academy to supply them with instant CPD and accelerate their knowledge and impact. There is even a section on helping them with their career and professional skills, a win-win for both you and your team!



#### Commercial packages

#Subscribers in group	Annual fee per person
3-5 subscribers	£ 90.00
5-10 subscribers	£ 85.00
10-15 subscribers	£ 80.00
15-20 subscribers	£ 75.00

Contact [academy@nutritionssociety.org](mailto:academy@nutritionssociety.org) now to build your package and go the extra mile in supporting your colleagues CPD journey.

<https://nutritionssociety.academy>



## A day in the life of... An Industry Nutritionist

A nutritionist working in Industry can sometimes get a bad rap – they’ve gone to “the dark side” some might say. I never thought this to be true. Why? I believe that working within Industry is one of the best vehicles for bringing about the change all nutrition professionals want to see. As you’ll see, I have worked on all sides of the fence - from policy, non-for-profits, to academia - and my most impactful experiences for promoting tangible change in today’s society have come from my time in Industry.

I’ll start by taking you back to 2013, an incredible year of applied learning as a placement student for the Institute of Sport in Sydney, Australia, before returning to finish my BSc in Sport & Exercise Science at the University of Bath. The wellness industry was booming and as I became prey to every cleverly marketed wellness trend and diet fad, I found myself deviating from reading physiology journals and burying my head in the latest research in nutritional sciences. I couldn’t believe the amount of misinformation I was reading in popular media, and I was keen to learn the truth behind the headlines.

In 2014, I completed a MSc in Nutrition at King’s College London. My eagerness to know everything there was about nutritional sciences didn’t stop there. Shortly after my MSc, I gained a PhD studentship at KCL. For four years, I investigated if “an apple a day keeps the doctor away”, by looking at the effect of an apple polyphenol extract on postprandial glycaemia. I can’t say I enjoyed every minute of my PhD – I even had times when I felt like quitting – but I am incredibly grateful for it, because it was during this time that I found my passion for science communications. During those four years, I entered every science comms competition and used any opportunity to hone my skills in communications. It was through these experiences that I secured a fellowship at the Parliamentary Office of Science Technology; I published briefing notes for Parliamentarians on nutrition policy.

It’s reasonable to suggest that informing policy is the vehicle through which, as nutritionists, we can bring about the greatest health benefits to the population, but my time at POST made me eager to explore the other ways we can promote change. I secured an internship at the World Sugar Research Organisation and became their Science Policy & Communications Manager, a job which married my research and communication skills. Later, I was approached by Yakult Europe after connecting with their Science Director during my time on the European Nutrition Leadership Programme. I became their new Yakult Science Manager across the UK and Ireland last year.

I want to take a moment to reflect on my career path to date. On paper, it all looks very logical; a chronological stepwise process. But what those previous paragraphs don’t capture are all the times I felt like a square peg in a round hole, feeling like I wasn’t in the ‘right job’, and worried I wasn’t progressing up the career ladder at a fast enough pace. For anyone who still feels like this, don’t panic. The greatest thing about being a nutritionist is that we can take the squiggly career route.

We can wear different hats, try on different roles for size and say yes to lots of different paths. There is no right way of doing this gig, so take the pressure off yourself and remember:

- Your first job isn’t the rest of your career – hardly anyone lands their ‘dream job’ straight out of your studies. You have a long career ahead of you.
- Throw your hat in the ring – you likely have more experience than you think when it comes to a job advert, so apply!
- Join the party of nutritionists out there – start building your network of nutrition professionals. I know you’ve probably heard this advice all too many times, but trust me, it works! I am an example of landing a job I have always wanted, simply by networking.

Today, I lead the Yakult UK and Ireland Science department in communicating the latest research on the gut microbiota and probiotics to healthcare professionals (HCPs). I devise effective strategies to disseminate this research and build awareness of the Yakult Science brand - everyone knows that “little bottle”, but there is less understanding about the education we offer to HCPs. We provide CPD through a range of activities, everything from hosting the Microbiome Matters podcast, organizing webinars and events, publishing factsheets and educational videos, to offering grants for HCPs to attend trainings/conferences. With so many activities to oversee, it’s difficult to give you an accurate representation of “a day in the life” because no day is ever the same. Here is a flavour of what a week in my life looks like:

**Monday:** Record interviews with leading experts for new series of the Microbiome Matters Podcast.

**Tuesday:** Represent Yakult at external scientific conference, showcasing what we offer. Present talk on “Communicating Gut Health Messages” to GP audience.

**Wednesday:** Attend regulatory working group meeting, to instate the use of the term “probiotics” on food products; draft scientific article for HCP magazine.

**Thursday:** Meetings with Science Team in UK and Europe to provide updates, and with Yakult Science Partners to discuss ongoing external activities.

**Friday:** Review cross-department activities, e.g., social media posts, marketing department advertisements, PR campaigns for accuracy of scientific details.

My job has seen me travel abroad to different cities, meet leading experts in the field, and hone my science communication skills. I am excited about where my squiggly career will take me next, but for the time being, I am happy to continue my mission of bridging the gap between academic research and Industry to promote health through nutrition, on this side of the fence.

**Dr Emily Prpa, Science Manager, Yakult UK & Ireland**

“ I believe that working within Industry is one of the best vehicles for bringing about the change all nutrition professionals want to see.”



# Examining food deserts and cardiovascular disparities in the U.S.

The dietary and health landscape in the United States presents a compelling paradox, characterised by both substantial advancements and persistent disparities. An important problem deeply embedded in this situation is the existence of food deserts, a powerful term first used by the Scottish Nutrition Task Force in the U.K. during the early 1990s and now widely acknowledged in the U.S. It refers to areas where people encounter significant difficulties in finding affordable and healthy food.



## Food deserts in the U.S. context

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines food deserts as low-income regions where residents have to travel more than 1 mile in urban areas or over 10 miles in rural areas to reach a supermarket. Under this definition, an estimated 18.8 million people, or 6.1% of the U.S. population, live in food deserts (USDA, 2023). While these distances are inconsequential for families with private transportation, they become significant barriers for those who lack personal transportation or have insufficient public transit systems near their home.

These conditions are at the root of food security. As a result, residents of food deserts often rely on convenience stores and fast-food locations, which predominantly offer processed and nutrient-poor food, because full-service grocery stores and markets are not readily accessible.

## Food deserts' impact on cardiovascular health: review of studies

Food deserts can detrimentally affect cardiovascular health due to a scarcity of nutritious food and an abundance of unhealthy choices. For example, a study

by Lloyd (2023) found a higher risk of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE) (hazard ratio 1.040 [1.033 to 1.047];  $p < 0.001$ ) and all-cause mortality (hazard ratio 1.032 [1.024 to 1.039];  $p < 0.001$ ) after adjusting for covariates.

Similarly, Morris (2018) showed that living in a food desert was associated with an increased risk of repeat all-cause (hazard ratio 1.39 [1.19 to 1.63];  $p = 0.03$ ) and heart failure-specific (hazard ratio 1.30 [1.02 to 1.65];  $p = 0.03$ ) hospitalisations. Nadadur (2019) found living in a food desert was associated with a 14% increase in all-cause hospitalization (hazard ratio 1.14, [1.07-1.22],  $p < 0.001$ ), and a 16% increase in hospitalization due to cardiovascular causes (hazard ratio 1.16, [1.07-1.27],  $p = 0.001$ ).

In comparative analysis of these studies, it is evident that the methodologies and populations vary but the studies converge on the negative impact of food deserts on cardiovascular health. Other studies also show significant associations between residency in food deserts and several other health conditions, including type 2 diabetes (Adeniyi, 2021), wound complications

following surgical procedures (Smith, 2021), inflammatory bowel syndrome (Paripati, 2022) and endometrial cancer (Jones, 2019).

## Potential interventions and future research directions

Several strategies have been explored, including urban farming, mobile markets, and community-supported agriculture programs. Future research on food deserts is needed on examining impacts of the following interventions on nutrition and health outcomes in food deserts: (i) changes in agricultural, zoning, and transportation policies, (ii) technology-based solutions such as grocery delivery apps, (iii) teaching food literacy, (iv) infrastructure changes, such as the addition of green spaces or pedestrian-friendly walkways, (v) adopting cardiovascular targeted dietary recommendations, such as DASH diet within the constraints of a food desert, and (vi) developing targeted solutions for specific sub-populations.

**Maria Tavares Balhara, Strategic Communications Committee Member**  
Broward College, USA

# Irish Section Update

In February of this year, University College Cork were the hosts for Irish Section's 32nd Postgraduate meeting which was held in the Metropole Hotel in Cork on 8-10 February. The local student organisers, Lisa Kelliher, Ursula Leonard, Sarah Kate Walsh and Aidan O'Sullivan, did a fantastic job, along with academic organisers Dr Alice Lucey and Professor Mairead Kiely, and we congratulate them on such a fun and highly successful meeting.

As a reminder, this conference is open to any student members from across the Society to participate, and it continues to be a highlight for our student members, particularly the Irish Section. The conference offers a friendly forum in which to present, and indeed for many students, it may well be their first conference presentation. The success of this meeting has led to the Nutrition Futures conference adopting a similar, simplified approach to the abstract submissions process, and you will hear more about this in coming months.


I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr Patricia Heavey and the local organising team at TUS Athlone for their Irish Section Conference held on 14-16 June 2023. The conference was centred on the impact of sex and gender on nutrition requirements and health, and we learned about the different nutritional needs of individuals and population subgroups, and the key role that sex and gender can play. It was a lively and engaging meeting. Our Section meeting was also held during the conference, and we will be welcoming a new student and ordinary member to the Irish Section Committee later this Summer.


Later this year, many of us will meet at FENS 2023, from the 14-17 November in Belgrade, Serbia. Chaired by Professor Sladjana Sobajic, on the theme of 'Food, Nutrition and Health: Translating science into practice'. A lot has happened in the world since the 2019 FENS, and we look forward to being able to meet again in person after the COVID years in between.

Key in our calendar for next year will be the inaugural Nutrition Society Congress 2024, which will be hosted by the Irish Section. We are excited to announce that the conference venue has been recently confirmed as the Assembly Buildings, Belfast, and will be held from **2-5 July 2024**. The theme will focus on Nutrition Science in 2024: new data-focused approaches and challenges. The local organising committee, co-chaired by Professor Jayne Woodside and Dr Anne Nugent at Queen's University Belfast, are working hard to finalise the overall conference sessions and speakers, and we look forward to welcoming you all to Belfast next year for what promising to be an inspiring first meeting.

**Dr Emma Feeney, Secretary of the Irish Section**

## Irish Section Conference 2023

 **141**  
in-person delegates

 **140**  
#NSIrish23 tweets

 **54**  
Original Communications

 **4**  
Symposium

 **19**  
Guest speakers







## The new All-Party Parliamentary Group on Nutrition: Science and Health

There have only been a few times as CEO of the Nutrition Society when I can say history was made. I think of the 75th Anniversary of the Society in 2016, hosting the FENS 2019 Conference, major financial decisions made during the COVID pandemic, creating the new *Gut Microbiome* journal, the naming of Boyd Orr House as the home of the Society. I can now add to that list 6 June 2023, when the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Nutrition: Science and Health was formed in the House of Commons.

The APPG had been planned for many years, but political uncertainty and instability had made it difficult to move beyond an aspiration to a reality. However, in late 2022 recruitment of founding members was complete, with Tracey Crouch CBE MP as Chair, Andy Slaughter MP, Chi Onwurah MP, Baroness Boycott, Baroness Ritchie and Lord Brooke. The objective of hosting the APPG is to examine the evidence for the vital role of nutrition in tackling major health problems in the UK.

The APPG will conduct, in its first year, an expert inquiry into malnutrition, cognitive ageing and empowering front line health workers with a focus on nutrition science. Taking evidence from leading UK and Irish academics, the inquiry will examine how implementing cutting-edge nutrition science can make a difference to health and support the work of the NHS. The first meeting on the 6 June, in Committee Room 13 in the

House of Commons, considered 'The dual health burden of malnutrition and obesity in the UK', focusing on the costs and burdens of poor diet, hidden hunger and malnutrition. We were delighted to have three expert guest speakers attend to discuss these issues.

Professor Charlotte Hardman discussed 'Food Insecurity and Obesity – Understanding the lived experience to inform interventions.' Her presentation took a lived experience perspective to address potential explanations for the association between food insecurity and obesity. She provided insight into individual-level factors such as mental health, and wider systemic issues including affordability of healthier foods and access within local food environments, and how these could be tackled to create a healthier and fairer food system for all.

Professor Greta Defeyter then discussed 'School meals and the Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF): A nutritional safety net?'. In her presentation data was presented that compared the dietary intake from children attending HAF versus a non-attending day, and findings regarding the nutritional quality of food provision at HAF holiday clubs, particularly hot/cold and vegetarian/non-vegetarian meals. These findings highlighted areas for improvement in HAF holiday clubs with a tendency for food provision to appear less ideal for attendees for those aged

11–18. She concluded that children from low-income households having access to a healthy diet is crucial to reduce UK health inequalities.

Professor Ian MacDonald completed the presentations by discussing 'Malnutrition and Obesity – health consequences of unbalanced diets.' His presentation addressed the development of obesity and energy overconsumption relative to dietary requirements and associated risks. In addition, the lack of nutritional balance and inadequate intakes of important vitamins and minerals, increase the risk of disturbed metabolism and physiological processes, contributing further to ill-health. He explored the benefits of dietary interventions for people with obesity and a high risk of type 2 diabetes and the associated improvements in diet composition and physical activity following an initial period of weight reduction on a low energy diet.

The APPG will provide parliamentarians and policy-makers with the latest evidence-based information and guidance and will provide a much-needed voice for nutrition in the UK at the highest political levels - one of the key strategic priorities for the Society. An historic moment!

**Mark Hollingsworth, CEO**

## Winter Conference 2022/23 Overview

### Architecture of Food: Processing, Structure and Health

24-25 January 2023  
The Royal Society, London, UK

Leading experts in food science and nutrition came together across two days to discuss the role of the food matrix and the impact of food processing and changing dietary patterns on health. The programme took a deep dive into how food structure and processing not only affect the bio accessibility of nutrients and non-nutrient bioactive food components, but also the potential consequences for health of manipulating food structure.



**234**  
in-person delegates



**64**  
online delegates



**47**  
Original Communications



**4**  
Symposium



**19**  
Guest speakers



**114**  
#NSWinter22 tweets



# Learned Societies in the 21st Century

Our keen-eyed members will have noticed that this issue of the Gazette, issue no 62, looks rather different to previous issues.

In 2023, many Learned Societies are facing some of the biggest challenges of their histories, and we are no different. Our main income source, publishing, is changing, leading to tighter budgets. Costs continue to increase, both for individuals and organisations, leading to difficult choices of how to spend our money. Above all, in a world of ever-evolving change, we need to remain relevant to current and future members, and the community. But, as we look to become more contemporary, we must remember and respect our history.

Our Trustees and Council Members engaged an external agency to help us ask these questions. The answer is a new look and feel, a renewed sense of purpose, fit for our ambitions for 2023 and beyond. Our appearance is not the only aspect changing, but our full identity, from the way we communicate to how we support the nutritional science community.

Our mission is not changing – it remains the same as in 1941 when it was first created: *‘To advance the scientific study of nutrition and its application to the maintenance of human and animal health.’*

How we will deliver on that mission is where the changes are happening. A new focus, based on our values:

**Leading** – A commitment to excellence and advancement of the field of nutritional science

**With integrity** – Our independence allows us to be transparent, operating at the highest ethical levels

**Equitable** – Committed to openness, fairness, diversity and equality

**Collegiality** – Focused on community-building and building long-lasting relationships

**Pushing boundaries** – Fostering innovation, creativity, and interdisciplinary collaborations

Our brand is more than just a logo or a colour palette – it’s who we are, what we stand for, and why we’re different. It is a unique combination of language and looks that will keep us authentic, impactful and recognisable. We are calling our new logo, and surrounding 3D patterns, The Nutrition Society Pattern. It is inspired by, and represents, a multiplying effect of people and science coming together – a powerful network.

We hope you’ll agree, that after many months of work, this latest evolution of The Nutrition Society supports this work and provides a contemporary society that any nutritionist would want to be a part of.

## Logo evolution

1980s



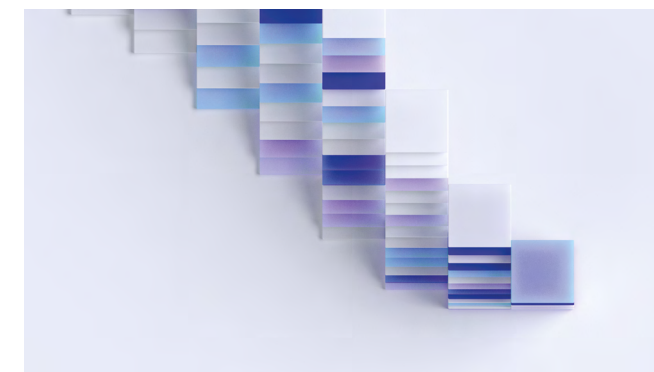
2011



2023



## The Nutrition Society Pattern



## The home of evidence-based nutritional science

- Keep up to date
- An opinion you can trust
- Access to all you need to know

## Joined-up thinking on nutritional science

- Building a powerful network
- Connected to the bigger picture
- Coming together to share

## Empowering nutritional scientists globally

- Building the next generation of nutritional professionals
- Access to training, tools and funding opportunities
- Equity

## Science backed innovation for real-world impact

- From research to practice
- Scientific information for the public
- A coalition of scientists



## Life with IUNS

In 2013, the Nutrition Society (NS) submitted my name for election for the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS) council on the assumption that candidates would have to have experience on the general council before taking on an officer role. However I later discovered at the AGM that the American Society, the ASN, of which I am also a member had recommended me for Secretary General. IUNS had omitted to ask me or inform me of this so at the AGM during the International Congress of Nutrition (ICN) in Granada, I was surprised to find myself elected to this post which I held for nine years, having been re-elected in Buenos Aires at the end of the first 4 year term, the 9th year due to the delay of the next ICN in Tokyo until 2022 due to covid.

As the role came to me unexpectedly it was a steep learning curve as no chart of activities and their timing was available. At that time the Secretariat was with a professional conference organiser in Amsterdam. This was successful for a while but was very expensive and when Argentina chose another company to run the 2017 ICN in Buenos Aires the company lost interest and their support diminished. At the same time, I was President of the Nutrition Society and on discussion with the councils of NS and IUNS, it was decided to transfer the secretariat to the Nutrition Society where it has successfully remained to date. An early priority was to prepare a Gantt chart so that the list of activities and their timings could form a clear guide.

As many readers will know the main activities of IUNS are the four yearly ICN, the Task Forces on topics of special interest that are not adequately covered by other bodies, collaborations with other international organisations, and support of early professionals in career development by providing funding to help them attend scientific meetings and to access online nutrition courses.

One of the important tasks of the first Council (2013 to 2017) of which the President was Professor Anna Lartey of Ghana, who started at the same time as Director of the Nutrition Division of FAO, was to revise the statutes. Two of the issues that needed correction was the length of time that Council member could remain on Council, and the time of selection of the country host of a subsequent ICN. The then statutes allowed a total of 4 four-year sessions on Council i.e. 16 years which meant that there could be a very slow turnover of members, so we reduced it to three sessions with a maximum of two in the same post, apart from the President who was, and continues to be, restricted to one session. For the selection of the ICN host, Adhering Bodies were previously asked to submit bids eight years in advance. This meant that by the time the ICN came round many of the people who had submitted the bid could have moved on or retired and the situation of the host country or society could have changed. Therefore, we changed it to four years so that the election of the next ICN will occur at each ICN.

The following Council (2017-2022), of which the President was Professor Alfredo Martinez of Spain, focused on Capacity Development in Nutrition in addition to standard

activities, including website improvement and lists of reputable online nutrition courses that are either free or for which IUNS provided financial support. During that Council, IUNS reached the age of 75 years and it was decided to mark the event by updating the history of the IUNS. Two short histories had previously been written, the first in 1963 by Dr Leslie Harris who was the first Secretary General entitled '*The International Union of Nutritional Sciences - A Brief History*', and the next in 2001 by Professor Barbara Underwood, President from 1997 to 2001, entitled '*IUNS: An Overview*'. In 2021, Dr Margaret Ashwell and I were asked by Council to do the updating. We did so by reviewing available documents and interviewing people who had links to IUNS, such as past Officers and general Council members, and members of Task Forces. The resulting short book was entitled '*Reflections on 75 years of the International Union of Nutritional Science*' by Catherine Geissler and Margaret Ashwell.

This was launched at the 2022 ICN in Tokyo and is available online at <https://iuns.org/about-iuns/history/>.

With the advent of Covid in 2019, face to face meetings of officers and Council were curtailed and replaced by zoom.

There was a long debate about the Tokyo congress originally planned for 2021, and whether to hold it electronically or to postpone. It was eventually postponed but even up to the very late stages of the revised date, there were urgent discussions about the format – electronic or face to face or hybrid. Japan opted for face to face to be held in December 2022.

The congress was held in a vast arena in central Tokyo, the Tokyo International Forum, with 3345 registered delegates despite the ongoing uncertainties due to covid. Face masks were mandatory for all and were used throughout Tokyo. The opening ceremony included an address by her Imperial Highness Crown Princess Akishino, followed over the six days of the congress by oral lectures and symposia in nine thematic tracks with 1810 abstracts. Educational, cultural



## A letter from Tokyo

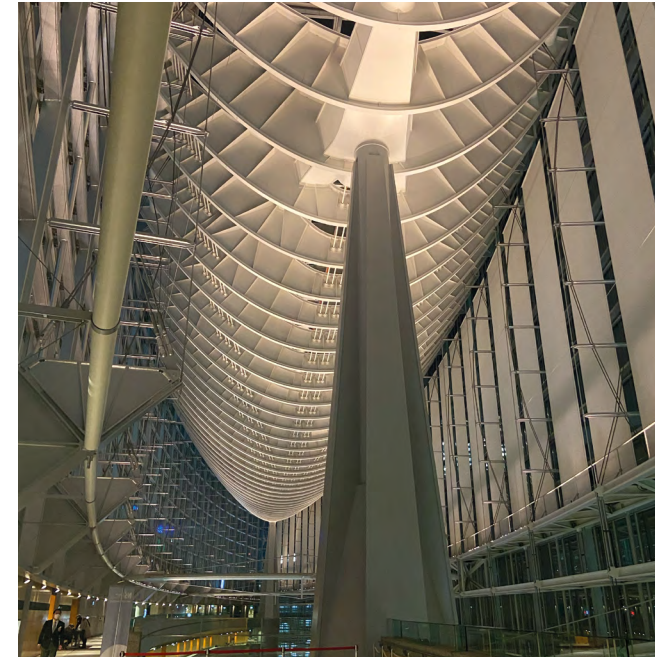
The IUNS was formed in 1946 by the British Nutrition Society, for the purpose of uniting nutritionists from all over the world to discuss and find science-based solutions for global nutritional problems. The 22nd IUNS International Congress of Nutrition (ICN) in Tokyo in December 2022 would mark its 75th anniversary, an event aptly celebrated in '*Reflections on 75 years of the IUNS*', by Professors Catherine Geissler and Margaret Ashwell. A lifetime of exposure to international conferences has curbed my enthusiasm for such events. On one hand, they're an exciting, immersive experience that can inspire and satiate a hunger for knowledge. On the other, they're behemoths, and like poor nutrition, can leave you feeling under par and out of pocket.

Originally postponed from September 2021, the final go-ahead for a face-to-face meeting in Tokyo was released just weeks before the event. Registration, flights, and hours of form-filling to '*Visit Japan*' could finally begin. While visa requirements had been recently relaxed, entering Japan was still no easy task. Arrivals at Tokyo airport brought new meaning to the importance of the Japanese invention of Quick Reference (QR) codes, in this case for immigration, quarantine, and customs. It was with great relief that I managed to retrieve the correct QR code from my iPhone at each stage and proceed to the next level on the gaming platform.

The venue for the Congress, the Tokyo International Forum, was a sumptuous building, with an atrium resembling the interior of a giant airship. While this oversized dirigible could easily accommodate the population of a small town, it never fulfilled its potential as a space for delegates to interact and network. This was primarily because the congress had no coffee breaks, or lunches. While provision of these services for 3,345 delegates over 6-days, would not be inexpensive, I was perhaps naïve in expecting the exorbitant registration fee to cover the cost of such essential ingredients. Lunches were outsourced by means of coupons, to cover the cost of a bite-sized snack in participating cafés and restaurants. However, in our experience, the search for these elusive venues only served to increase the social distancing of delegates.

The first event in the programme of the Congress was the opening ceremony. While I hadn't expected an Olympic event, any expectation of a colourful, cultural experience was soon dashed by an endless series of welcoming speeches. Once over, the somewhat bemused audience, still waiting for the main event, were told to leave the auditorium. I thought to myself, things could only get better, until I opened the programme book.

While packed to the gunnels with all manner of symposia, there was no coherent structure to the scientific programme, in terms of a logical, systematic grouping of themes.



and sightseeing tours were also available as well as a Gala buffet party which was a good opportunity to meet friends and colleagues. IUNS financially supported 72 early professional nutritionists from 38 countries with travel grants to attend the congress. At the closing ceremony many awards were presented including the IUNS awards – IUNS Fellows, Lifetime Achievement Award, Living Legends and Scrimshaw prize.

At the AGM, my two session term as Secretary General expired and Jacques Delarue from France was elected to that post. He will also be organising the next ICN which will be in Paris in 2025. This means the current council will hold office for three years instead of four.

The current President is Professor Lynnette Neuberg from Canada. Her appointment as President echoes that of Professor Lartey in that she was simultaneously appointed as Director of the Food and Nutrition Division at FAO, as successor to Anna.

### The other current Council members are:

- **President-Elect** Professor Hyun-Sook Kim, Korea;
- **Vice- President** Professor Francis Zotor, Ghana;
- **Secretary General** Professor Jacques Delarue, France;
- **Treasurer** Professor Welma Stonehouse Australia;

### General Council Members:

Professor Sergio Paiva, Brazil; Professor Zhaoping Li, USA; Professor Rubina Hakeem, Pakistan; Professor Edith Feskens, Netherlands; Professor Barbara Burlingame, New Zealand; Professor Ali Dhansay, South Africa.

I wish the current council great success over their three years.

**Professor Catherine Geissler,**  
**Professor Emerita of Human Nutrition, King's College London**  
**Secretary General of IUNS 2013-2022**



Continued.

The programme was a heterogenous mixture of nutrition-related topics, with a seemingly random distribution across a timetable, annotated with days, times, and rooms.

The task of finding a specific talk or session was like looking for a needle in a haystack. I did manage to find my way to the Nutrition Society's own symposium; 'Can diet protect the heart and gut? The role of fats and fibre', which was a standing room only event, and resounding success. Another highlight was the informal celebration for the 75th anniversary of the Nutrition Society's flag-ship periodical, *The British Journal of Nutrition*, at which Professors Jeya Henry and Joe Millward received well-deserved awards of 'Honorary Fellow of the Nutrition Society', and 'Living Legend of the IUNS', respectively.

We left the Congress and Tokyo a day early, which as it transpired, was fortunate. Contrary to the optimistic theme of the Congress; 'The power of nutrition for the smiles of 10 billion people', nutrition throughout the conference was significantly underpowered, and the shortage of food left many people without smiles. However, it did encapsulate the slightly dispirited and underfed feeling of this conference, which left plenty of room for improvement at the next IUNS-ICN in Paris 2025.

Professor Bruce Griffin,  
Council Member for Academia



Scan to view  
the 75 years of  
IUNS book

#### A little health claims quiz to begin.

Which of these are authorised health claims in GB, and which are you, as a health professional, allowed to say in a commercial communication?

1. Calcium is needed for the maintenance of normal bones.
2. Scientific evidence suggests, but does not prove, that whole grains, as part of a low saturated fat, low cholesterol diet, may reduce the risk of diabetes mellitus type 2.
3. Oat grain fibre contributes to an increase in faecal bulk.
4. Hydrolysed collagen reduces fine lines and wrinkles.

Answers to be found at the end.



## A quick guide to health claims

By Dr Margaret Ashwell and Dr Carrie Ruxton

Prior to January 1, 2020, health claims were regulated at EU level by the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation (NHCR) (EC, 2006). Since leaving the EU, the NHCR has been adopted as law in Great Britain (GB) and this link will take you to the register of health claims : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-britain-nutrition-and-health-claims-nhc-register>

Health claims are defined as “any claim that states, suggests or implies that a relationship exists between a food category, a food or one of its constituents and health” (EC, 2007).

#### They fall into three categories:

- **Function claims** e.g., “vitamin D supports normal immune function”;
- **Reduction of disease risk claims** e.g., “vitamin D helps to reduce the risk of falling associated with postural instability and muscle weakness. Falling is a risk factor for bone fractures among men and women 60 years of age and older”;
- **Health claims referring to children's development** e.g., “vitamin D contributes to the normal function of the immune system in children”.

## claims

#### How do health claims get authorised?

There is a long, thorough, three-step process to get claims authorised which is summarised in the table below. When evaluating a health claim dossier, the following three aspects must be satisfied:

- The food/constituent is defined/characterised,
- The claimed effect is “beneficial to human health,” and
- Scientific evidence of a cause-and-effect relationship is established.

In their Position Paper (Ashwell et al, 2022), the Academy of Nutrition Sciences recognised the strengths of the transparent, rigorous scientific assessment by independent scientists of the evidence underpinning claims in Europe, an approach now independently adopted in UK. Further strengths were the separation of risk assessment from risk management, and the extensive guidance for those submitting claims.

A cross-country comparison shows that EU and UK only authorise claims with strong scientific agreement, whereas other countries have systems for authorising claims ranging from the strongest scientific agreement to lesser levels where the evidence is not so strong (e.g., USA and Japan).

Australia and New Zealand also allow self-substantiation of claims in some cases.

#### What is Article 12c?

The major aspect of the original NHCR which remains controversial is Article 12(c) which states: “The following health claims shall not be allowed: claims which make reference to recommendations of individual doctors or health professionals” (EC, 2006).

It is understood that this prohibition was put in place due to: “concerns that, in commercial communications, the added weight of perceived professional expertise might unduly influence consumers and the objective of the Regulation is that consumers should not be misled in any way” (DHSC, 2021). Article 12(c) also singles out health professionals for special restrictions since current GB guidance (DHSC, 2021) states that the activities of celebrities and influencers are not in scope.

Given the lack of empirical data, we conducted a survey (Ruxton and Ashwell 2023) amongst UK-based nutrition professionals to assess their knowledge of, and attitudes to, Article 12(c). The findings revealed considerable confusion about the scope of the regulation and how it applies to working practices, with a considerable proportion of respondents being unable to recognise examples of commercial communications or health claims, indicating a need for additional training. There was also a broad interpretation of what nutrition professionals could, and could not, say about a hypothetical food product.

#### Conclusions

In their Position Paper, the Academy noted this concern and recommended that a dialogue is developed with the relevant national bodies about Article 12(c) in the Regulation. This should further clarify GB Guidance to avoid the current non-level playing field between health professionals, and untrained ‘influencers’ who are not covered by this Article, about the communication of authorised claims within commercial communications.

#### Answers to the quiz

Here are the answers to the quiz. Only #1 and #3 are authorised health claims in GB. #2 is a qualified health claim in USA and #4 is a self-substantiated health claim in Australia and New Zealand. However, health professionals, are not allowed to use even the authorised health claims (#1 and #3) in commercial communications because of the current interpretation of Article 12(c).

#### Further reading

European Commission [EC] (2006) EC Regulation No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods. *Official Journal of the European Union L12: 3–18*. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02006R1924-20141213&qid=1675868986692&from=EN>

Department of Health and Social Care (2021) Great Britain nutrition and health claims register. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-britain-nutrition-and-health-claims-nhc-register>

Department of Health and Social Care (2021) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nutrition-and-health-claims-guidance-to-compliance-with-regulation-ec-1924-2006-on-nutrition-and-health-claims-made-on-foods>

Ashwell M, Hickson M, Stanner S et al. (2022) Nature of the evidence base and strengths, challenges and recommendations in the area of nutrition and health claims: a position paper from the Academy of Nutrition Sciences. *Br J Nutr*, 1-18. DOI: 10.1017/S0007114522003300

Lockyer S, Ryder C, Jaworska S et al. (2020) Developing a digital toolkit to enhance the communication of health claims: The Health Claims Unpacked project. *Nutrition Bulletin* 45, 432-443.

Ruxton C, Ashwell M (2023) Dietitians' and nutritionists' knowledge and views on aspects of nutrition and health claims regulation in the UK: do we inadvertently shoot the messenger? *Nutrition Bulletin* in press



# Free membership for nutrition undergraduates

For some time now the Society has been considering options for extending its reach and how it could not only recruit more members but communicate with and support them. We know many students do not discover the benefits of the Society until they are doing their MSc or PhD and part of this is to show undergraduates the value they can get from joining much earlier.

It is with this in mind that a new pilot project will commence from September 2023. It will involve free student membership being offered to BSc nutrition students based in the UK and Ireland, and the trial will run for a period of three years. Students will be recruited via Course Directors and senior lecturers. All coordination and communication will be carried out via them. Directors of undergraduate courses will be asked to indicate an interest in signing up their students and a university specific discount code will be sent to enable students to join. Students joining via this method will be known as 'University Group Members.'

The trial will be evaluated along the way to look at levels of engagement, satisfaction, and retention. It is hoped by recruiting members early on, they will benefit from being part of the community at this stage of their studies and beyond, as they continue in their nutrition careers. BSc nutrition students will be eligible for the entirety of their course during the pilot term.

## Questions and Answers

### I am a student, am I included in the pilot?

Your University Course Director needs to be the person signing up for the pilot, please ask him/her to contact [membership@nutritionandsociety.org](mailto:membership@nutritionandsociety.org). If your university has signed up, the nominated staff contact will be sent further details in September and these, along with the special code, will be available to you to sign up for your personal free membership.

### How long will I get free membership for?

If you are a student included in the pilot, you will receive free membership for the duration of your time as an undergraduate student. Your membership will be renewed annually during this time.

### What type of course do I need to be a student of to be part of this?

The pilot is being run for nutrition students. Depending on the outcomes of this three-year pilot, other courses and students may be included later. However, if you are interested, please do discuss with your programme director and ask them to contact us at [membership@nutritionandsociety.org](mailto:membership@nutritionandsociety.org)

### Why does this only apply to students based in UK and Ireland universities?

The pilot will only include universities based in the UK and Ireland as it is easiest for us to find out about these and the course directors. Once we find out if the pilot has been successful, we will consider how we can extend the offer to students elsewhere.

### How will it affect me if I already have a student membership and I live in the UK or Ireland?

If you are a BSc student who signed up for student membership before the 1 April 2023, then your free membership will take over as appropriate. If you signed up after 1 April for your membership then you would not have paid for that membership and it will end on 30 September 2023, in readiness for the free memberships.

If you are a PHD or MSc student, you will join and renew as previously and will pay £20 for your membership.

### What if my university does not wish to take part?

If your university is unwilling or unable to take part in the pilot, then there are two choices – you can pay for your own personal student membership as normal at a cost of £20 for the year, OR you can get a group together and contact us with details, including the central point of contact if no staff member wishes to be involved. We can then communicate with you and decide how to proceed.

### I'm a PhD or MSc student – what happens to me?

As a PhD or MSc student you are currently not eligible for the free membership pilot at this time, but you can continue to join or renew as usual, for the low fee of £20 a year.

### Professor Eileen Gibney, Honorary Membership Officer

# Get involved with the Society!

I was delighted to have had the opportunity to take on the role of Nutrition Society Irish Section Student Representative and join the Irish Section Committee from June 2020 – June 2022 and I am extremely grateful for all of the fantastic experiences gained throughout my two-year term and to have had the opportunity to work with two other brilliant student representatives, Laura Kirwan and Lisa Kelliher, Nutrition Society committee members and also connect with students across the Irish and UK sections. Some examples of the many opportunities provided throughout this role include the very enjoyable experience of organising Nutrition Society events, for example, being on the local organising committee for the Irish Section Postgraduate Conference in 2022, and also the opportunity to chair sessions at various Postgraduate Conferences. In addition, I have also had the opportunity to develop skills in communications by running various Irish Section 'Twitter Takeovers' and designing newsletters for Irish Section members.

More recently as a student member, I was provided with the opportunity to contribute to the Nutrition Society Academy by hosting a webinar and sharing my PhD research. I also applied for a travel bursary which enabled me to attend the IUNS-ICN in Tokyo last December. I am very grateful to the Nutrition Society for all of the amazing experiences I have gained throughout my PhD and I would strongly encourage students to get involved to avail of the many opportunities as both a student member and student representative.

### Lauren Devine, Former Irish Section Student Representative



I could not speak more highly of my time as a Nutrition Intern at The Nutrition Society. From my first day, I was greeted with warmth and open arms from the team that made me feel welcome in the tight-knit community. Coming from the United States, I didn't know what to expect in terms of cultural changes, but I really enjoyed trying new foods, exploring the neighbourhoods of London, and of course experiencing British humour.

Over the course of my internship, I helped write articles for the Society's Gazette, and external partners, I wrote summaries of the webinars hosted by the Nutrition Society Academy, and supported with smooth delivery of the Winter Conference 2022/23. Additionally, I had the incredible opportunity to represent the Society at the Voice of the Future event hosted by the Royal Society of Biology at Parliament. It was awe-inspiring to see thought-provoking panels with Members of Parliament that led to discussions among a variety of scientists and students in the STEM field.

There is no doubt that my time at the Society solidified my interest in nutrition and public health nutrition. I am so grateful for my time in London and the connections I made from this internship.

### Sara Jacobs, Former Nutrition Society Intern



# Healthy Soil, Healthy Food, and Healthy People (H3)

## Targeted initiatives to help bridge the fibre gap in lower socioeconomic groups

There is a global shortfall in fibre intakes, such that an important gap exists between the daily amounts of fibre recommended in the human diet and that which is actually consumed<sup>1,2</sup>. In 2015, the UK Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) reviewed the evidence on the consumption of fibre and a range of health outcomes including colorectal cancer, weight maintenance, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and bowel health to ensure the government's position on consumption was up-to-date<sup>3</sup>. In this review, the SACN set new recommendations for all age groups, measured using the Association of Official Analytical Chemists' (AOAC) method. The new recommendations represented an increase from the previous recommendations and were set based on a level above which the greatest health benefits were observed. For adults, the greatest level of health benefit from fibre require a daily intake of 30 g/day for adults. Dietary modelling of the feasibility of meeting the SACN 30g/day fibre recommendation whilst adhering to other dietary guidelines demonstrated that it is possible to consume 30g of fibre a day if all meals are based on wholegrain starchy foods and potatoes with skins, approximately 8 portions of fruit and vegetables and high fibre snacks are consumed daily<sup>4</sup>. This dietary pattern is not reflective of dietary habits in the UK and would require a significant change to people's daily habits.

Since the SACN report in 2015 and new AOAC fibre recommendations, the benefits of increasing fibre intake from whole grains, fruits, and vegetables have been promoted by public health campaigns and the food industry have implemented some reformulation and innovation efforts to increase fibre in products. Despite this, fibre intakes have remained low and below the current recommendations. The mean dietary fibre intake from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) years 9 to 11; 2016/2017 to 2018/2019 for adults (19-64 years) is 19.7g and just 9% meet the recommendation<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, fibre intakes have remained fairly constant over time since the 2010s. Recent evidence has demonstrated a small increase of 0.09g/day year in male adults from 2008/09 and 2016/17<sup>6</sup>. This is negligible in comparison to the gap between estimated mean fibre intake in adults and recommendations.

There are also important socioeconomic differences in fibre intakes in the UK. Low socioeconomic status (SES) populations have the lowest fibre intakes. The NDNS income analyses of Years 1 to 9 of the Rolling Programme (2008/2009 – 2016/2017) indicates that AOAC fibre intake increases significantly with increasing household income for most age and sex groups, but the increase was greater in females compared to males<sup>7</sup>. Females aged 11 to 18 years, 19 to 64 years and ≥65 years showed a significant increase in AOAC fibre intake of 0.6g/day, 0.5g/day and 0.9g/day respectively for every £10,000 increase in equivalised income (7). Moreover, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs statistics on family food and drink purchases demonstrates that the average quantity of fibre purchased per



person per day is lowest for the lowest equivalised income deciles between 2001/02 – 2018/19. Hence, the potential health inequalities from inadequate fibre consumption in low SES adolescents should be a key research and public health priority.

Targeting health behaviour change interventions at low SES groups is a means to reducing dietary-related health inequalities, however, differential effects are reported according to SES. A systematic review with meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials reviewed the effectiveness of interventions targeted at changing the diet, physical activity or smoking of low-income groups and demonstrated limited benefit<sup>8</sup>. The meta-analysis estimated a post-intervention standardised mean difference (SMD) of 0.22 for diet, 0.21 for physical activity interventions and a relative risk of smoking abstinence of 1.59 for smoking interventions<sup>8</sup>. For dietary behaviour change, this effect was equivalent to the intervention groups eating just under half a portion of fruit and vegetables more than controls a day. Systematic reviews in general populations tend to report larger effects for diet (e.g. SMD 0.31)<sup>8</sup>. This suggests that some dietary interventions may increase inequalities by disproportionately benefiting less disadvantaged groups – known as 'intervention-generated

inequalities'. These findings may be due to researchers not tailoring dietary interventions specifically to low SES groups. This highlights the need to tailor fibre interventions for low SES groups as a method to reduce health inequalities. Previous reviews have identified four key suggested explanations for the ineffectiveness of nutrition interventions among adults with a low socioeconomic status: 1) lower health literacy, 2) lack of economic resources, 3) lack of social resources and 4) the convenience of unhealthy food<sup>9</sup>.

Encouraging people to make sustained changes to their dietary behaviour is notoriously difficult. Alternatively, reformulation of the everyday products may be effective in improving nutritional intakes. A statistical modelling study published last year on UK data estimated the impact of a fibre reformulation on intakes and health outcomes<sup>10</sup>. The study looked at 915 foods and beverages that are eligible for fibre fortification such as bakery products, yoghurt drinks, fruit smoothies and malt-based powdered beverage drinks. The fibre reformulation intervention demonstrated a 2.2 g/day increase in fibre from baseline in the UK population aged 2-94 years<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, the study estimated significant effects of fibre reformulation on health outcomes, such that 5.9 % of people could achieve a weight reduction, 72.2 % a reduction

in cardiovascular risk and 71.7 % a reduced risk of type two diabetes with fibre fortification under the modelled scenario.

We aim to help bridge the fibre gap in lower SES groups as part of our on-going research project funded through UKRI's 'Transforming UK food systems' programme called: Healthy soil, Healthy food, and Healthy people (H3)<sup>11</sup>. The H3 project aims to transform the UK food system 'from the ground up', through an integrated programme of research. It is structured into six interconnected work packages and three cross-cutting themes. Work Package Five aims to answer the question: How can we most effectively increase fibre intake in low SES populations? We are tackling this in a multifactorial approach. Firstly, through fibre reformulation and innovation focussing on foods that are already an established part of people's diet in the UK where dietary fibre can be most effectively increased in a 'health by stealth' approach. Secondly, through community interventions with low-income consumers, including foods hubs, banks, cafes and pantries. Thirdly, via school meals and school breakfast programme in schools with high deprivation. Finally, using in vitro models of gastrointestinal digestion and absorption to assess the role of dietary fibre on nutrient release, absorption and metabolism. Taken together, these interventions exemplify a multi-scale approach to improving fibre consumption among low SES groups, via reformulations, increased access and changes to processing, knowledge and attitudes.

**Dr Katie Adolphus,**  
School of Psychology, University of Leeds, UK

### References

1. Stephen, A.M., Champ, M.M.J., Cloran, S.J., Fleith, M., van Lieshout, L., Mejbourn, H. and Burley, V.J. Dietary fibre in Europe: current state of knowledge on definitions, sources, recommendations, intakes and relationships to health. *Nutrition Research Reviews*. 2017, 30(2), pp.149-190.
2. Miketinas, D., Tucker, W., Patterson, M. and Douglas, C. Usual Dietary Fiber Intake in US Adults with Diabetes: NHANES 2013–2018. *Current Developments in Nutrition*. 2021, 5, p.1061.
3. SACN. *Carbohydrates and Health*. London: The Stationery Office, 2015.
4. Hooper, B., Spiro, A. and Stanner, S. 30 g of fibre a day: An achievable recommendation? 2015, 40(2), pp.118-129.
5. Beverley Bates, David Collins, Kerry Jones, Polly Page, Caireen Roberts, Toni Steer and Swan, G. National Diet and Nutrition Survey Rolling programme Years 9 to 11 (2016/2017 to 2018/2019) - A survey carried out on behalf of Public Health England and the Food Standards Agency. [Online]. 2020. [Accessed 09/05/2022].
6. Gressier, M. and Frost, G. Minor changes in fibre intake in the UK population between 2008/2009 and 2016/2017. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2022, 76(2), pp.322-327.
7. Beverley Bates, David Collins, Lorna Cox, Sonja Nicholson, Polly Page, Caireen Roberts, Toni Steer and Swan, G. National Diet and Nutrition Survey Years 1 to 9 of the Rolling Programme (2008/2009 – 2016/2017): Time trend and income analyses A survey carried out on behalf of Public Health England and the Food Standards Agency. [Online]. 2019. [Accessed 09/05/2022].
8. Bull, E.R., Dombrowski, S.U., McCleary, N. and Johnston, M. Are interventions for low-income groups effective in changing healthy eating, physical activity and smoking behaviours? A systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMJ Open*. 2014, 4(11), p.e006046.
9. van Meurs, T., Oude Groeniger, J., de Koster, W. and van der Waal, J. Suggested explanations for the (in)effectiveness of nutrition information interventions among adults with a low socioeconomic status: a scoping review. *Journal of Nutritional Science*. 2022, 11, p.e50.
10. Canene-Adams, K., Laurie, I., Karnik, K., Flynn, B., Goodwin, W. and Pigat, S. Estimating the potential public health impact of fibre enrichment: a UK modelling study. *Br J Nutr*. 2022, 128(9), pp.1868-1874.
11. Jackson, P., Cameron, D., Rolfe, S., Dicks, L.V., Leake, J., Caton, S., Dye, L., Young, W., Choudhary, S., Evans, D., Adolphus, K. and Boyle, N. Healthy soil, healthy food, healthy people: An outline of the H3 project. 2021, 46(4), pp.497-505.



# Theme update

## Food Systems

Food insecurity is on the rise in the UK, from 15.5 percent of households experiencing food insecurity in 2022 to 17.7 percent in 2023. People are trying to cope. Food banks distributed 50% more food between April and September of 2022 compared with before the COVID-19 pandemic. Increased food bank needs are due to persistently high food price inflation, reduced incomes, and reduced availability of foods. About half of adults in Great Britain are buying less food as a coping mechanism, and fruit and vegetable consumption has decreased. These trends, as well as worsening food price inflation, signal that there are some deep imbalances in the UK food system.

The *Opinions and Lifestyle Survey* covering September 2022 to January 2023 found that 94 percent of adults in Great Britain stated “the price of my food shop has increased” when asked about their experiences of cost-of-living increases. While overall price inflation has decreased slightly from an annual 9.2 percent in February of 2023 to 8.9 percent in March 2023, food prices have continued to increase more and more, going from an 18.2 percent annual increase in February of 2023 to a 19.2 percent annual increase in March of 2023, which is the fastest food price inflation rates in 45 years.

Even when food price inflation does start to ease, food prices will still be increasing. As inflation (hopefully) slows, food prices will be increasing slower than before, but reaching an acceptable level of food price inflation could take years. The *Office of National Statistics* offers an interactive, online *Shopping Prices Comparison Tool*, with which consumers can fill a virtual basket of their usual purchases to see how much they are spending now compared to last year. The tool shows that prices for basic staples including for wholemeal sliced bread have increased by 27 percent, milk have increased 38 percent, and eggs have increased by 32 percent over the past year.

While some low-income households will receive increased cost-of-living support from the government this year, this supplemental income will not fully cover the increased costs of food especially as the costs of other necessities is also rising.

People are, understandably, not able to shift all their spending to purchase the same basket of food as before, and dietary quality has already declined. There will be long-term negative health impacts if people are not able to afford varied and balanced diets, and deep inequities in who is affected most by high food prices. Lower-income households spend a greater share of their incomes on food and other necessities, so any price increase will hit these households harder.

The UK government has many tools at its disposal for reducing the dangerous impact of high food prices on its population. First, increasing the cost-of-living assistance especially for those who are disabled, have children in the household, or who are pensioners is essential. Second, reducing or eliminating both tariff and non-tariff barriers to food trade is necessary, to allow producers and consumers alike to take advantage of global markets. Finally, the government must continue to invest in research and development of the UK agricultural sector to make it more sustainable and more productive. Unfortunately, the UK *Farm to Fork Summit* on May 16, 2023, seems to have fallen short when it comes to supporting consumers.

Any impacts of the planned initiatives, such as precision agriculture, genetic improvement, increased labour, and investment in production schemes will take a very long time to affect food prices in the UK. Indeed, the policy summary of the summit has generated unnecessarily conflict between farmers and consumers by stating, “farmers should be paid a fair price for their produce.” While no one would deny that farmers should have a good livelihood, the reality is that consumers are facing an unprecedented crisis and the summit has effectively ignored the fork in favour of the farm. Health is not mentioned in the summary document except with respect to animal health. Nutrition is not mentioned at all, nor is dietary quality. This summit clearly does not represent a food systems approach for the people of the UK. Researchers, advocates, and professionals in the UK with a food systems approach are encouraged to keep up their terrific work.

**Amelia Finaret, Theme Lead**  
University of Edinburgh, Scotland

## Novel Nutrition Research Methodologies and Technologies

I am delighted to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Novel Nutrition Research Methodologies and Technologies Theme Lead. Firstly, I would like to thank my predecessor, Dr Ruan Elliot, for his dedication to the development and leadership of this Theme throughout the last five years. I certainly have some rather large boots to fill following his exceptional efforts in organising such a successful Winter Conference 2022/23 together with the Nutrition Society team.

I first joined the Society as an undergraduate student, and I have benefitted greatly from my membership over the years. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend many of

the summer conferences, supervise Society funded summer studentships and more recently contribute to the Textbook Series. Stepping into this role as Theme Lead seems like the perfect opportunity to support and contribute to a Society that has helped me in so many ways. The collegiate and supportive nature of the Society is already a pleasure to be a part of.

It is an exciting time within the world of nutrition, particularly within this Theme. Novel methodologies and technologies continue to push the boundaries of our scientific understanding of both animal and human nutritional science. Artificial Intelligence, precision nutrition, the microbiome, citizen science, wearable technologies and the ‘omics are just a drop

## Nutrition and Optimum Life Course

If you can remember back to your school days, whether you got a chocolate biscuit was probably as exciting as school lunch boxes got. Nowadays, those of you with school-age children are probably well-acquainted with the multitude of “must-have” food and drink fads. Recently, expensive water bottles with fruit-scented inserts, tricking the brain into thinking that the water is flavoured, were banned in my daughter’s primary school as they were becoming too much of a distraction. At the end of last year it was reported that a range of “Hydration” and “Energy” beverages (Prime drinks, promoted by popular YouTubers ) were so sought after by children that queues formed in major supermarkets when they were launched in the UK, with reports in the media of scuffles breaking out between desperate parents, and prices soaring in independent retailers to £45 a bottle or more. Incredibly, you can even download an app designed to locate retailers near you that have these drinks in stock. Whereas the “Hydration” drinks contain flavourings, sweeteners, and added vitamins and amino acids and are considered safe for children – although the effect of sweeteners on appetite regulation is a point of concern for some researchers – the “Energy” drinks contain as much caffeine as you would consume in three shots of espresso coffee! In May, news outlets reported that a child was rushed to hospital with heart problems after consuming one of these high-caffeine drinks.

Although this specific product has grabbed the headlines, it does highlight a broader challenge experienced by parents when trying to ensure healthy diets for their children. The power of branding and social media influencers can have a



in the ocean when considering examples of ground-breaking approaches currently transforming our world of nutrition research. With this in mind, I am keen to encourage and support the development of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Member Led Meetings (MLMs) associated with this Theme. Participating in SIGs and MLMs are excellent ways to engage with the

much greater impact on the pre-adolescent/adolescent brain than parental guidance and healthy eating messaging from authorities.

Research in this area is a particular strength in the UK and Ireland nutrition community. The winner of the Nutrition Society Prize in the 2023 STEM for Britain competition for early career researchers, Rebecca Evans (University of Liverpool), presented some compelling research into the exposure of adolescents to high levels of high-fat, high-sugar food marketing via videogame livestreaming platforms. Her findings<sup>1</sup> showed that influencer and digital game-based food marketing was highly persuasive in under-18 year olds, and that positive attitudes could be directly linked to greater purchase and consumption of these foods. Potential approaches to tackling the onslaught of online marketing strategies targeted at older children include using a digital approach to implementing healthy eating interventions (with research being presented on the Health4Life digital lifestyle intervention in Australian schools at the NS Summer conference in Liverpool); bringing in regulations to prevent marketing less healthy foods targeted at young people; and creating healthy eating promotion campaigns delivered via gaming platforms and targeted social media. Currently planned government restrictions on TV and online advertising of high-fat, -sugar, and -salt (HFSS) foods (including social media and gaming platforms) in the UK have been delayed until October 2025 for economic reasons. This delay could have lasting harmful effects on a generation of children exposed to powerful marketing ploys and it remains to be seen how far-reaching the legislation will be in the face of the pervasive reach of the online influencer.

**Dr Wendy Hall, Theme Lead**  
King's College, London, UK

1. <https://stemforbritain.org.uk/2023-Posters/Rebecca%20Evans.pdf>

World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. (2016) Tackling food marketing to children in a digital world: trans-disciplinary perspectives: children's rights, evidence of impact, methodological challenges, regulatory options and policy implications for the WHO European Region. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/344003>

Society whilst sharing and developing expertise in novel methodologies and technologies. Networks and communities formed may lead to future collaborations and research grant ideas. I would also like to invite members who are in the early stages of their career to reach out if they would like to propose an idea for a SIG and/or MLM. I look forward to working with you all to develop and shape this Theme throughout the coming years. Please contact me via the Member-Connect platform <https://membership.nutritionssociety.org> or the membership team at [membership@nutritionssociety.org](mailto:membership@nutritionssociety.org).

**Dr Lisa Coneyworth (RNutr), Theme Lead**  
University of Nottingham, UK



## Nutrition in the Treatment, Management and Prevention of Disease

Over the past year, our Theme has welcomed the launch of two Special Interest Groups (SIGs), which aim to champion novel areas of nutrition research and build research capacity. These include the Diet and Health of Ethnic Minority Groups SIG (co-chaired by Professor Basma Ellahi and Dr Hibbah Osei-Kwasi) and the Phytochemicals and Health SIG (co-chaired by Dr Ana Rodriguez-Mateos and Dr Charlotte Mills). Applications for new areas of interest are also welcome – these are considered by the Society on a rolling basis.

The Society's upcoming Winter Meeting (5-6 December 2023) 'Diet and lifestyle strategies for prevention and management of multimorbidity' will be held in The Royal Society, London. This two-day conference will begin with a plenary overview by Professor Naveed Sattar (University of Glasgow) on the importance of advancing diet and lifestyle research to address the increasing burden and complexity of multimorbidity. The symposia then focus on 'Pathways for prevention of multimorbidity across the lifecourse' and 'Ageing and Multimorbidity'. Day two will start with a symposium that focuses on 'Diet and the Gut-Brain-Heart Connection'.

Dr Oonagh Markey, Theme Lead  
Loughborough University, UK

The final symposium broadens the remit to consider 'Lifestyle strategies for prevention and management of multimorbidity'. Over the course of the conference, machine learning and precision nutrition approaches for addressing research challenges in multimorbidity will also be considered. The scientific programme will close with a plenary by Dr Tazeem Bhatia (Office of Health Improvement and Disparities) which will focus on dietary recommendations for prevention of multimorbidity.

We look forward to welcoming you to a conference which has been designed to inform and be of interest to a wide audience, including members of the scientific community, food industry, policy makers, clinicians, health professionals, as well as students and graduates in the field of nutrition and dietetic-related subjects.

This is also a timely opportunity to inform you that the abstract submission page will officially open in late September. We very much hope that you will submit an abstract and showcase your research at Winter 2023. Further details are available on the Upcoming Conferences section of the website.

## Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

The Trustees, the Society's Members and the employees have always upheld the highest ethical standards when supporting the work of the Society. It remains a matter of considerable pride that there have been no recorded incidents of discrimination within the Nutrition Society. Equality of opportunity continues to be embedded in our thinking and actions, and the continued increased transparency across all aspects of the Society's activities has reinforced this.

We look to continue to cultivate an inclusive nutrition scientific community in which everyone feels welcome, respected, and able to develop to their full potential in an atmosphere of equality of opportunity.

As a next step Trustees agreed, at their April meeting, to begin to collect additional data from members (when they join/renew membership with the Society) and delegates attending conferences and other Society events. The data to be collected was agreed at: age band, nationality, sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, and employment (whilst noting each category will require a 'prefer not to say' option). Moreover, Trustees agreed the rationale for collecting this additional data would need to be publicly made clear and transparent - and have agreed a Clarity of Purpose Statement.

### The importance of monitoring EDI data

At the Society, we want to create inclusive environments for our members, partners, delegates and stakeholders (referred to for simplicity in this statement as the 'community') to develop within. To do this, data monitoring is an integral tool.

### EDI data collection and monitoring:

- gives deeper insight into the impact of our services, products, practices and policies,
- enables us to plan our services' and product delivery to ensure we provide excellence, inclusive of all our community,
- enables us to identify and take action to address any potential inequality.

### What are the benefits?

- We can take targeted action if we understand the composition within our community.
- Identifying specific problems and barriers our community face can inform actions to support, empower, and maximise the potential of our community.
- Using EDI data means that any initiatives undertaken to create an inclusive community through the services, products, practices and policies we offer are based on evidence, not assumptions.
- Publishing data to show that initiatives have improved our services, products, practices and policies, enhances our reputation as a leader in our sector. Our community will have confidence that we will do our best to support, represent and proactively understand their individual needs, acting where we need to.
- Collecting and monitoring EDI data demonstrates that we take our community's experiences seriously. We are interested in who they are and what their needs are, and we are proactive in shaping services, products, practices and policies to be inclusive.

### Choice

It is entirely up to an individual whether they choose to share their personal EDI data with us.

### Summary

The Society will use the data to ensure we provide the right services, products, practices and policies to the right people in the right way. We are committed to being an inclusive learned society and the data helps us to do this effectively and understand who our community is.

### Diet and lifestyle strategies for prevention and management of multimorbidity

5-6 December 2023  
The Royal Society, London, UK

The conference will explore pathways for prevention of multimorbidity across the life course, the role of ageing, the gut-brain-heart connection, and [lifestyle strategies for prevention](#) and management of multimorbidity.

It will also consider machine learning and precision nutrition approaches for addressing research challenges in multimorbidity.



Register  
today.

[nutrition society.org](https://nutrition society.org)



*The Nutrition Society Gazette ©*  
*Issue No 62*

