



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Can a national programme to improve nutritional care deliver savings?: Comment

Charles Normand

Edward Kennedy Professor of Health Policy and Management

2015

It's simple and it's complicated

- **The effects of malnutrition on health and on health care is well understood**
- **The patterns of malnutrition in the population are increasingly understood**
- **Much of the problem is either invisible or off the radar**
- **The importance of detecting and managing malnutrition is not adequately understood**
- **There is resistance and hostility to some of the interventions that work.**

Getting the knowledge out there and changing attitudes

- **We need to be more vocal and focused**
- **This should rank above obesity as a public health and ageing issue**
- **We need to get the important to displace the urgent**
- **We need this to be high on the agenda in all parts of health and social care.**

Screening and case finding

- **What is not measured cannot be improved**
- **The causes and patterns may be complex, but most of the needs are easily found and managed**
- **Screening is generally easy to do and in many cases should be just part of good clinical practice**
- **It should be considered unethical not to know your patient's or client's weight.**

Does it matter?

- **In Ireland the cost of DRM to the health service is around the cost of private insurance or of out of pocket health spending**
- **Even if only part of this is solved it is likely to be highly cost-effective**
- **It is easy to make savings – it is more difficult to make these available for other uses (including better screening and prevention)**

Where next?

- **Lots of small things**
- **Working with primary care and social care**
- **Working in home settings and care homes/long stay hospitals**
- **Working in hospital settings and with key clinical staff (across the professions)**
- **Engaging management and governance bodies**
- **Getting good nutrition into national standards and quality assurance**
- **Be willing to be practical and pragmatic.**



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Thank You

