

FIGHTING HOSPITAL MALNUTRITION IN SPAIN:

A continuous improvement process of the Spanish Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (SENPE)

RATIONALE

- In Spain, as in other European countries, a high proportion of hospitalized patients are malnourished or in risk of malnutrition. However, malnutrition is still a neglected condition and malnourished patients remain undertreated.
- SENPE, a scientific society devoted to improve the organisation and provision of nutrition support in the National Health System have set-up a continuous improvement process with a final objective: ameliorate malnutrition and achieve better outcomes in hospitalised patients.

METHODS

- SENPE's strategy against malnutrition settled in a continuous improvement process.
- Different working groups were created to address key issues in this endless approach. First activities where designed to provide with basic knowledge, tools and directions to lay the basis for the strategy (see figure below).
- Emphasis on stakeholder involvement (see info clouds in figure below) was put to facilitate the implementation of initial and subsequent actions, so ensuring that all efforts would directly yield to improved healthcare quality and patient outcomes.

ACTIVITIES, IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

Study supported by the National Quality Plan for the National Health System (Ministry of Health) and hospital managers of 30+ centers through Spain. Partially funded by private sector.



PLANNING

- The white book provides with directions to help health authorities and hospital managers to incorporate current recommendations of the European Union on hospital malnutrition into the strategic decision making process. These activities should allow the implementation of recommendations on food and nutritional care in hospitals and ensure that these plans are implemented with the participation of all relevant stakeholders at a policy, community and practice level.

Involvement of different universities and healthcare organisations. Mass media coverage.

Involvement of other Scientific Societies, p.e. Spanish Society for medical documentation (SEDOM); Spanish Society of Medical Oncology (SEOM); etc

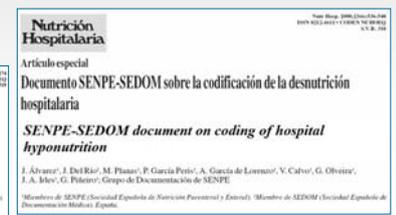
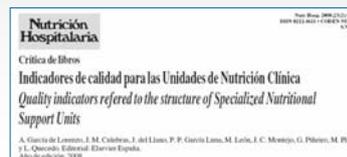
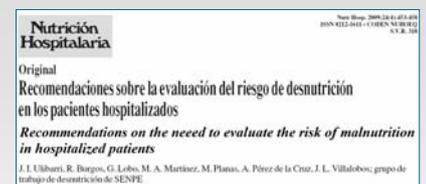
EVALUATION

- A nation-wide study was designed to assess the true prevalence of hospital malnutrition. More than 1700 patients from 30+ randomly selected hospitals are being screened with both NRS2002 and MNA at admission and discharge.
- A Web-based platform was built to initially support the prevalence study and also a parallel cost of illness study to estimate the economic burden of malnutrition for the National Health System. This platform may be suitable to future evaluative studies and implementation of regional/national registries to provide with updated data on hospital malnutrition and its clinical and economic consequences.



IMPLEMENTATION

- The availability of standardized screening procedures and instructions to help systematically include malnutrition in patient charts should increase the awareness of nutritional assessment and treatment as a comprehensive part of patients management, resulting in improvement of health care quality.
- Systematic coding of malnutrition according to the ICD-9-CM should improve DRG classification and reimbursement of hospitals, while allowing future evaluation of malnutrition evolution using administrative databases.
- The identification of a set of quality indicators provides with a useful tool to allow the implementation of quality assurance policies in clinical nutrition units in Spain.



CONCLUSIONS

- SENPE's strategy against malnutrition has set up a continuous improvement process that involves different stakeholders, including Government, universities, scientific societies, healthcare companies, media, etc
- Starting with a White Paper on hospital malnutrition, different tools have been developed and disseminated to help healthcare professionals incorporate nutrition assessment and treatment into usual clinical practice, and field studies have been carried out to provide with nation-wide and up-to-date data on hospital malnutrition and its clinical and economic implications.
- The continuous nature of SENPE's strategy against malnutrition guarantee that as new evidence become available and broader goals are identified, further actions will be implemented yielding to a quality improvement of malnutrition management in Spain.