**Main points from the Evaluation of the Greater Manchester Nutrition and Hydration Programme:**

This is a summary of the evaluation into the impact of the Greater Manchester Nutrition and Hydration programme in identifying and preventing malnutrition in older adults. The evaluation is based on data collected at week 1 and week 12 of the research study for 67 participants which shows that 81% had a positive response to the intervention in terms of gaining weight or stopping weight loss.

The full report analyses how participants responded to the intervention and identifies where the programme was more likely to have had a positive outcome in terms of weight gain or maintenance. The report identifies a series of critical success factors for the intervention, the most important of these is the frailty level of the participants, many of whom are living with a significant health condition such as dementia. The other factors such as the participant’s level of social isolation and access to services are shown to have a counterbalancing effect – enabling them to overcome their barriers to nutrition.

The second part of the report looks at how the intervention has been adopted and adapted by the programmes partners in local authority, NHS, private and third sector services. It also shows how the programme has started to make an impact to health and social care in the participating localities – Bury, Bolton, Rochdale, Oldham and Stockport.

**Key findings from the evaluation:**

**Key findings 1**: Identifying malnutrition and providing nutritional advice and signposting, helps prevent malnutrition in older adults.

Research suggests that using the PaperWeight Armband© with the other materials in the GM Nutrition and Hydration Programme has a made a positive difference in terms of weight gain or weight maintenance. Small changes in diet have also been shown to be effective in enabling participants to gain weight.

**Key finding 2:** Clinical frailty has emerged as a significant factor in malnutrition among older adults and is itself a barrier to nutrition and hydration.

The intervention has shown positive outcomes across all frailty levels. In fact from the sample, people with a Rockwood© frailty rating of 1-3 (Very Fit, Well or Managing Well) had **100%** positive outcomes.

**Key finding 3:** Social connectivity is a key factor in overcoming frailty and preventing malnutrition in older adults.

Evidence suggests that attending lunch clubs, social activities or having a good network of family and friends has a significant impact on your ability to overcome barriers to nutrition including higher frailty levels.

**Key finding 4:** Living conditions in terms of the type of housing an older adult is living in, has a significant impact on their health and nutrition. In the study, **100%** of the participants in extra care schemes and **92%** of people in sheltered accommodation had positive outcomes.

**Key points from the evaluation:**

* Recruited 83 participants, 75% of these are women and 30% are aged 85 or over – eldest is 99
* The median weight was 48.3kg (range from 31.8kg-72kg)
* 67 recruits have been followed up for 12-week review of these **81%** (n54) have had a positive outcome, recording either weight gain (65.7%) or no weight loss (14.9%) at 12 weeks
* In total 44 have gained weight at 12 weeks and the mean weight gain is 2.1kg
* Frailty scores range from 1 to 8; 34 (41%) had a frailty rating of 6 or above
* Those with frailty levels of 5 or below were more likely to have a positive response to the intervention
* Cost Benefit Analysis for the programme used an assumption that 30% of people engaged would have a positive outcome and this will need to be revised to **81%** based on the evaluation’s findings

**Recommendations for further development:**

Based on the findings from the evaluation the following areas should be targeted as potentially the most rewarding for refining and embedding the intervention across Greater Manchester:

* How the benefit to the participants can be sustained
* How partners can integrate and embed the intervention into their own services
* How dependent are the partners on the Age UK Programme Manager for the intervention’s success
* How can the PaperWeight Armband© be developed as a tool for signposting issues around weight and malnutrition

For more on the evaluation including case studies on the participants who took part in the evaluation and interviews with the programme managers see the final report at: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/salford/about-us/improving-nutrition-and-hydration/>