

## Dear Head of Nutrition and Dietetic Services

Assurance of quality, competence, uniformity and efficiency in the delivery of cost-effective, appropriate nutrition services are critical goals for effective management in today's NHS. Dietitians are on the front line when it comes to meeting these demands. To position them to meet this challenge in nutritional care, the PEN UK Team at the British Dietetic Association and Dietitians of Canada (DC) invites you to consider a subscription to the PEN nutrition database. By doing so you will ensure your staff and students have ready access to the always-current nutrition practice reference – *Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition* [PEN].

### **What is PEN?**

Developed by Dietitians of Canada, and adopted by The British Dietetic Association, Dietitians Association of Australia and Dietitians of New Zealand, PEN is unlike any other nutrition reference covering the wide scope of dietetics – population health/lifecycle; health condition/disease; food/nutrients and professional practice issues. PEN contains the most current information synthesized from the scientific literature on a wide scope of practice topics. For each topic PEN provides the bottom line answer to practice questions, more detailed evidence statements, complete with references and links to the pertinent literature. The format of PEN is designed for the busy practitioner to save time in finding and appraising the literature. All the content in PEN is written and/or overseen by acknowledged experts and reviewed by practitioners to ensure its scientific integrity and practicality. An exciting new development is our international collaborations meaning reviews are conducted by practitioners from each of the partnership countries, making PEN a global resource for nutrition practice.

### **Important benefits of PEN to help achieve your organizational goals**

*Cost Effectiveness* - time spent searching and reviewing the literature is time lost to direct client/patient care. PEN provides ready access to succinct practice guidance, freeing up valuable time of front line staff. From an economic viewpoint, in an organization with 15 point 24 band 6 dietitians\*, if each one currently spends just two hours per week reviewing and synthesizing the literature (a conservative estimate) the cost in terms of man hours alone would be £28,880, equivalent to 0.8 FTE. This excludes the additional cost of journal papers and subscriptions, CPD courses and also books. Using PEN instead at a cost of £1012.50 per year for a 15 member group subscription and reducing the literature review time down to ½ hour each per week per will save the department the equivalent time and therefore costs of a 0.6 FTE (£20,000)\*.

Unlike static reference texts or clinical care manuals, PEN is regularly updated to reflect new evidence that necessitates practice change. This makes PEN a more cost-effective reference tool for practitioners and students. PEN reduces the need for many subscription journals as it draws on published research for formulating practice guidance.

Furthermore, using PEN to inform best practice brings timely evidence-based nutrition

therapy/intervention to patients with the potential to reduce medical complications due to more timely treatment, promote shorter institutional stays and result in better health outcomes.

*Consistency/quality assurance* - all practitioners can use PEN's knowledge base to inform their decision making for client/patient care, develop organizational policies, prepare for staff training or to respond to the media and all will draw from the same authoritative data source - PEN. Using PEN content, a consistent, evidence-informed message is delivered each time. There is no need for each work setting to spend time developing practice guidelines or client handouts – accessing those in PEN ensures resources have been well researched and are based on the latest and appropriate evidence, again freeing more time for direct client/patient contact.

PEN is also a great tool to help with training new staff and students so that they have a similar knowledge base in the appropriate topic areas. A PEN subscription also facilitates access by subscribers to subject area experts, since all contributors to PEN are acknowledged and linked by email on the website.

*Competence of staff & profile for the department* - PEN offers a means to enhance the profile of dietitians, as evidence-based practitioners who are the most trusted source of nutrition information. Using PEN provides excellent opportunities for CPD and in addition is an excellent professional development tool for dietitians who participate in building the content of PEN, enhance their own critical appraisal skills through the coaching and mentoring received from the PEN Team. Furthermore, reviewing an entire knowledge pathway in PEN builds knowledge among practitioners and provides another avenue for professional development that does not require travel or time away from work.

*Effective human resource planning* - PEN is a valuable tool for human resource planning in that it provides the evidence for effectiveness of nutrition care services.

### ***New PEN features to better serve users***

PEN is continually evolving to keep pace with best practices in knowledge transfer and evidence-based practice. Users/subscribers to PEN will benefit from new features to keep them on top of the latest in practice-based research in nutrition, and client and professional tools and resources. Some of these features include...

- ✓ new branding as shown on the letterhead and carried through to client and professional resources
- ✓ a more focused *What's New* section on the Home Page to direct you to the newest content in PEN more quickly
- ✓ an enhanced key word search
- ✓ a bimonthly *PEN e-News* that keeps you up to date on PEN and evidence-based decision making
- ✓ Notifications will be added later in the year to inform you as soon as new content is added to the PEN collection
- ✓ a streamlined subscription process for multiple-user licenses

### ***What evaluation results say about PEN as a knowledge translation tool***

With funding from the Canadian Council on Learning and in collaboration with Mount Saint Vincent University, DC undertook a formal evaluation of the PEN service in 2007/08. All PEN subscribers plus a random sample of an equal number of nonsubscribers were invited to participate, with an average response rate of 21% and 7% for subscribers and non-subscribers respectively. The findings were very positive, indicating that:

- 83% of respondents regularly use PEN to support practice decisions
- 91% have confidence in the quality of PEN content
- 89% indicate that PEN is a valuable tool for their practice
- 86% indicate that PEN enables them to take an evidence-based approach to practice
- 94% believe PEN enhances dietitians' credibility with other health professionals
- 82% rate the service as very good to excellent

### ***To subscribe***

A 12-month subscription can be purchased anytime of the year. Note the discounted rates for BDA members and student members. For further details and to subscribe visit <http://www.pennutrition.com/subscribe.aspx>

#### **Individual Licences**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Regular Price</b>
BDA Student Members	£45.00
BDA Members	£75.00
Non Member	£220.00

#### **Multiple User Licences**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Regular Price</b>
Group Licence – comprised of a minimum of 5 individual licences	May be comprised of a combination of BDA Student Members, BDA Members and Non Members. Fee is based on the rates for individual member licences (above) but with a 10% discount across the board.
Site Licence – Based on a minimum of 5 concurrent users. Designed for settings such as university or hospital libraries.	£1800.00 annual fee which allows any number of computers to access PEN and will allow 5 users to be logged on at any one time

To Contact PEN go to: [globalpen@bda.uk.com](mailto:globalpen@bda.uk.com) or find out more at [www.bda.uk.com/pen/](http://www.bda.uk.com/pen/)

\*Band 6 point 24 Salary AFC 2011 £28,470 plus NIC & pension costs. Savings may be more or less depending on staff banding.