

# 2018 - 2021 Strategy Plan

Looking towards the next 70 years



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## The Aims & Objectives of the Association

By continuing to foster strong links with the Government, and other influential bodies and fellow associations, the Hospital Caterers Association (HCA) aims to raise the status of the Association, encourage greater respect for the role of hospital catering and increase understanding of the operational and financial challenges that face hospital caterers.

The HCA aims to act as the voice of our members and be seen as the leading consultative body to the Government on all matters relating to the future developments of hospital and healthcare catering.

# Empowering Recovery Through Food



# Executive Summary

As the Association celebrates its 70th Anniversary, it is appropriate that we should review our forward-looking strategy. Much has happened since the last document, issued in 2013. Healthy-eating trends continue to evolve, whilst the development of software and what it can offer the hospital caterer has advanced significantly, helping make the service we provide safer, more efficient and, ultimately, easier to access. However, everything from remote temperature monitoring to food trollies that remain at optimum temperatures rely on people to operate them correctly. Many of those people are our members and the teams they represent.

This document sets out a clear path to keep the Hospital Caterers Association at the forefront of patient care, whilst addressing the needs of our other customers - the staff and visitors. We recognise that we cannot do this in isolation, so the document also takes the opportunity of reaffirming our commitment to working with the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), and allied professional organisations, including the British Dietetic Association (BDA) - the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists - in the Power of Three.

Keeping our Members abreast of current trends and representing them at the highest table is something that the Association's Executive and Council Representatives are fully committed to, as is the continued growth in Membership. It is the ambition of the Association to have representation within each Trust and Health Board across the 4 Nations.

Training and development of everyone within hospital catering remains a key objective within the Association and we are proud of the part we have played in the Professional Cookery in Health and Social Care Catering qualification. It is also our ambition to see modern apprenticeships established for our sector. The Association will continue to use its funds to help develop our current membership, and future generations of hospital caterers, to ensure that, through sound succession planning, we have a strong and viable Association ready to celebrate our 100th Anniversary and beyond.

## **Stewart McKenzie FIH**

National Chair of the Hospital Caterers Association

## **Craig Smith FIH**

National Vice Chair of the Hospital Caterers Association



**Stewart McKenzie**  
National Chair 2017 - 2019



**Craig Smith**  
National Vice Chair 2017 - 2019



# Welcome from our President & Chair



**The Rt Hon Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, PC, OBE**, President, has been a member of the House of Lords since 1997. He is currently Shadow Spokesperson (health and social care) for the House.

"The HCA is an impressive organisation that has done so much to raise catering and nutrition standards in the NHS. I see it having a vital role to play in the future.

"You cannot underestimate its importance. We know that malnourished patients in hospital stay longer and are more likely to develop complications. This is why investing in high standards of catering is so important.

"I am keen to persuade Boards to give this more attention and focus."



**Stewart McKenzie, FIH, HCA, National Chair**, has more than 35 years' experience in the NHS. He joined the service in 1982 where he worked his way up the trade ranks within the NHS currently holding the Senior Management position of Sector Facilities Manager within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

"I am a passionate supporter of the benefits of membership and Association objectives. The HCA network is the single largest group of healthcare catering providers within the NHS and is the recognised voice of hospital catering. As an Association, we aim to promote, develop and improve the standards of catering in hospitals across all 4 nations. Our focus is to provide a truly patient-centred service.

"We continue to raise the profile and professionalism of our Members to drive and improve the quality of hospital catering, from caterers' menus and ingredients, to dietitians, safeguarding nutritional content, and the final ward-end delivery – supported by clinical teams. By working together, we can deliver excellence to each and every patient in our care."



**Craig Smith, FIH, HCA, National Vice Chair**, also has more than 35 years' experience working with the NHS, having joined as an Assistant Catering Manager at Lister Hospital, Stevenage, in 1979. He progressed to being District Catering Advisor for North Hertfordshire Health Authority before joining the fledgling healthcare service provider Mediclean as their first catering manager at the Bristol Royal Infirmary, and associate hospitals.

Craig is now Head of Corporate Affairs at ISS and retains a strong interest in hospital catering.

"I was encouraged to join the HCA by a very passionate catering manager, John Bainbridge, then at Winnick Hospital. I owe him so much because the Association has been central to my career ever since. I am immensely proud to be part of the HCA."



The Association consists of 15 Regional Branches that represent the 4 Nations that make up the United Kingdom. The Branches are:

East Anglia	East of Scotland	London and South East
Merseyside and North Wales	North West England	Northern (England)
Northern Ireland	Oxford	South West England
Trent	Wales	Wessex
West Midlands	West of Scotland	Yorkshire

Each Branch elects its own Officers including a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and a Representative who attends the Association's Council, thus ensuring that everyone's voice is heard.

## Executive Management

Executive is required to deal with all matters as delegated by Council:

- to act on behalf of the Association Council between Council Meetings
- to report and make recommendations to the Association Council
- to take appropriate action on behalf of the Council in the best interests of the Association and its aims and objectives.

There are eight members of Executive, which comprise of:

- National Chairman
- National Vice Chairman (Committee Chairman)
- National Secretary
- National Treasurer
- Assistant National Secretary (Committee Secretary)
- Three members elected from Council
- The editor also attends the executive in a non-voting capacity



# Background & Vision

Formed in 1948, the Hospital Caterers Association (HCA) is the professional body representing almost 400 senior healthcare managers who provide a wide range of food services for patients, visitors, hospital and medical staff in NHS hospitals and healthcare facilities nationwide.

With more than 300 million meals served every year and approximately £500 million spent on food annually by around 300 NHS Trusts/Boards across approximately 1,200 hospitals, the NHS is the UK catering industry's largest provider of meals.

Founded by 25 London Hospital Catering Officers, the HCA was one of the first professional associations to be formed within the National Health Service. Whilst its first Branches were established in the North and Scotland in the 1950s, the HCA has now grown to 16 Branches throughout the UK. With more than 250 NHS Trusts/Boards represented in its membership, the HCA network is the single largest group of health care catering/facilities providers within the NHS.

The HCA supports its members by involving them in a nationwide network of 16 regional branches. It creates networking opportunities that facilitate the exchange of views and information through holding regional meetings, study days, regional conferences, educational visits and an annual Leadership and Development Forum all of which are intended to help broaden the knowledge, expertise and potential of its Members.



The HCA's network of Members is responsible for the jobs of 35,000 people, 55 per cent of which are hospital chefs and kitchen-based catering staff. Amongst its Associate Membership are more than 100 suppliers who are responsible for supplying millions of pounds worth of food, services and equipment to the hospital catering sector.

Although the provision of meals for patients is their principal function, hospital caterers are also responsible for meals for doctors, nurses and ancillary hospital staff, and the hundreds of relatives and other visitors who use the hospital restaurant, dining room or cafe facilities on a daily basis. Through these additional services, hospital caterers help to generate more than £150 million worth of income for the NHS.

In order to provide its Members with the appropriate knowledge, support and assistance in achieving and maintaining the highest standards of catering service, the Association implements a range of specialist services and high-profile initiatives, which are detailed in this document.

As well as the Hospital Food Standards, the HCA fully endorses the implementation of the Standards for Food, Fluid and Nutritional Care in Scotland, Minimum Nutritional Standards for Catering in Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland and the All Wales Nutrition and Catering Standards for Food and Fluid Provision for Hospital Inpatients.

## Nutrition & Hydration

The Nutrition and Hydration 24/7 365 campaign aims to raise awareness about an important part of quality care for patients and residents in a health or social care setting. It focuses on the importance of good food and hydration, the risks of malnutrition and what can be done to prevent malnutrition in health and social care environments. The initiative builds on the HCA's campaign to improve patient screening during hospital admission to identify those most at risk of malnutrition.

The HCA will promote the preventative role caterers can play to help reduce malnutrition-related illnesses, which often require complex treatment and have prolonged recovery periods. They will work to endorse good nutritional practice as a key part of quality care for patients, to ensure they are best supported in their recovery with a balanced meals suitable for their needs.

**“Unfortunately, despite a greater awareness of nutrition and hydration, malnutrition continues to affect millions of people in the UK each year. As caterers, we understand the importance good nutrition and hydration can play in supporting a patient’s recovery and the benefits of a healthy, nutritious and balanced meals..**

**Good nutrition is at the heart of every HCA Member, and we will continue to do our best to provide it to patients every day, week and month of the year, every year.”**

**Stewart McKenzie, Chairman of the HCA**



# Training and Development



**Professional Cookery in Health and Social Care Catering** - In partnership with the National Association of Care Catering and the Institute of Hospitality, we have successfully developed and had approved the first accredited professional catering qualification for health and social care.

Qualification is designed to complement existing NVQ qualifications in professional cookery and tackles the important subjects of nutrition and hydration and food modification in healthcare settings.

Learners will study the impact of nutrition and hydration on health and wellbeing, how it relates to population subgroups, and understand the roles of multidisciplinary teams, national standards and guidelines. They will also learn about the effect of dysphagia on patients and how to plan, prepare, cook and finish food for patients with the condition.

The structure of the qualification consists of working towards Professional Cookery in Health and Social Care Catering - Level 2 Award, with 65 guided learning hours, one knowledge test and one practical assessment.

There are two units:

Unit 1: Nutrition and Hydration

- Understand the impact of nutrition and hydration on health and wellbeing
- Understand nutrition and hydration for popular subgroups
- Know the roles of multidisciplinary teams, national standards and guidelines

Unit 2: Food Modification - Health Care Setting

- Understand the impact of dysphagia on patients and residents
- Plan, prepare, cook and finish food for patients & residents suffering from dysphagia

Potential candidates can find further information at the following Approved Centres:

- Barnet & Southgate College, London
- HIT Training
- Centre approval visits will continue to establish a network, so we can expect others to join in

Candidates can express their interest via the Hospital Caterers Association website, [www.hospitalcaterers.org](http://www.hospitalcaterers.org) and may be eligible for support via the Bursary funds.

The HCA seeks to rollout this initiative across the other three nations.





# Other Strategic Initiatives to 2022

## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are great for developing a sustainable workforce whilst giving the support to acquire the skills required by the sector. It gives the opportunity to build valuable skills and work experience that can be transferable to future positions. Not only will you be building your skill mix and diversity and be a part of a structured career pathway but will be working towards an accredited qualification at the same time.

"I believe as an Association we can assist in supporting learning and development in healthcare catering. There are many all-round advantages to offering apprenticeships in the workplace. We have a duty to the young people in our country to encourage as many as possible to sign up to a career in our field of catering."

Stewart McKenzie, HCA Chair

## The Last Nine Yards

The campaign presents the case for food quality and enjoyment at ward level, arguing that food must form part of the patient's recovery plan. It highlights that if food is not eaten it can do no nutritional good and food waste is money wasted.

"The HCA believes that good nutrition and hydration is vital to aid recovery, and that a team approach is critical, focusing on the point of service, ensuring an enhanced meal experience for every patient. Nutrition and hydration should also be an integral element of a medical student's training. Medics should have the knowledge to be able to advise patients on diet and lifestyle choices to improve their health and prevent illness."

Stewart McKenzie, HCA Chair

## Membership Growth

The Association has continued to grow with a current Membership of more than 600 Members from within catering and hotel services, represented by 15 Branches throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Many senior Members now hold positions in general management, such as hotel services, commercial and facilities management.

The Association promotes:

- the continued improvement of catering standards in hospitals and healthcare services.
- the education and training of persons engaged in the healthcare, including the encouragement of persons to join healthcare services.
- the protection and improvement of the professional interests and status of those engaged in healthcare catering services.

It achieves these objectives through:

- A Code of Practice
- A Code of Conduct
- National Leadership & Development Forum and Study Days
- Branch organisation and events – a national representation of 15 Branches
- The Hospital Caterers Association magazine, Good Practice Guides and numerous other communications
- Representation on National Bodies

There are four Membership packages dependent on eligibility; Full Membership, Associate Membership, Life Membership and Guest Membership.

Applications are to be sent to any Branch of the Association or through the HCA National officers for processing.

## Focused Qualifications

The Association will continue to place a strong emphasis on upskilling staff, professional development and the sharing of industry insight. As a consequence, it offers several bursaries, including the UK Burlodge Bursary, to help Members attend professional training and development opportunities.

Financial support is available to attend the annual Learning & Development Forum and relevant conferences. It also offers bursaries to attend diploma or degree-level further education, short courses, study days and UK placements via formal applications that are considered on their own merit.

"I returned to work after the Forum totally motivated and inspired to keep up the good fight for hospital catering."  
Michelle O'Connor, Northern Ireland Branch Member

## The Power of 3

The HCA's 'Power of 3' campaign seeks to bring together three complimentary disciplines; catering, dietetics and nursing, to improve the patient experience and increase nutritional outcomes.

"The current system is not perfect, but caterers can become bigger than the sum of our parts by working in collaboration with other NHS professionals, particularly nurses and dietitians.

We all have colleagues in other disciplines and I would like to see more clinical collaboration with caterers and urge all Members to reach out to our partners in dietetics and nursing to create a truly holistic and 360-degree approach to nutrition and hydration."

Phil Shelley, former HCA chair

# Deliverables

## Waste Management

Members of the Association represent the largest group of caterers in the country, producing millions of meals each week, but with this comes a huge challenge of what to do with the resulting waste.

Untouched food that has been delivered to a ward simply cannot be used elsewhere and, because of the risk of cross contamination, cannot be sent to animal feed. Natural waste such as vegetable trimmings could be sent for composting but the logistics of this present economic pressures for the caterer.

The HCA will work with other interested groups such as local authorities, equipment suppliers and waste management specialists to look at any opportunity that will help healthcare establishments play their part in reducing unnecessary refuse being sent to landfill.



## Reduced Sugar

The key aim of the CQUIN - Commissioning for Quality and Innovation framework is to secure improvements in the quality of services and provide better outcomes for patients. The HCA continues to support the CQUIN principles and raise the standards in good, healthy nutritious mealtimes within hospital and care establishments. It will also continue its support of the SUGAR SMART Campaign.

“The health of the nation is being driven positively and is gaining momentum. As members of the public, we have been purchasing food with a lack of care and attention. The amount of sugar, salt and additives in our food is reducing and suppliers have realised that they must lead this conversion.”

Stewart McKenzie, HCA Chair



## Sustainability - Plate to Planet

Simply by the nature of hospital catering, our Members generate large amounts of waste material. With advances in recycling it is imperative as a nation that we seek to find alternatives to the current materials that are harmful to the planet.

The Association will work with government, suppliers and user Groups to establish best practice (See WRAP and HCA webcasts 'Preventing waste in the Healthcare Sector' and 'Menu planning for preventing food waste').

The Association encourages all healthcare establishments to consider alternative products that enhance the patient stay, with better consideration to packaging that is easier to access. In light of this, the Association will continue to support the research into packaging at Sheffield Hallam University.



**FOOD IS THE BEST FORM OF MEDICINE**

## Salt & Saturate Fats Reduction

A small amount of fat in your diet is essential but too much, especially saturated fats, can raise cholesterol, which increases the risk of heart disease. Furthermore, whilst high salt intakes contribute to high blood pressure, which can also increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.

The Hospital Caterers Association recognises that 'food is the best form of medicine' and our Members have a responsible role in helping not only patients recover but enabling staff to make sensible, informed choices about the food they consume at work. The Association fully supports the various initiatives that seek to provide health and well-being for all, so will continue to play its role in the reduction of salt and saturated fats in the menus provided across all catering within healthcare.

## Enhanced Retail

It is widely recognised that the healthcare establishments are now expected to offer 'high street' standard retail for the staff and visitors that enter the buildings each and every day. Many Trusts and Health Boards seek to divorce the patient catering from the retail and have been inviting high street brands to fill the space, believing that this will maximise the financial returns. This isn't always the case and many believe that this, perhaps, does not reflect the real needs of the staff, who keep the hospital running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The Association believes that it has a role to play in assisting the catering manager to compete in the retail space, publishing 'Retail and Commercial Service Standards - An operational guide to services'. This publication is now due for review, but will continue to provide tools to run a successful retail offer in the NHS.

## Ward-Based Services

The Association will continue to support the Power of 3 campaigns by:

- developing technology that benefits the patient
- working collaboratively - with caterers providing a lead
- creating Champions for food and drink at each hospital
- promoting Trust/Board Directors of Nursing who ensure that food and drink is embedded into the trust's core ethos - food is the best form of medicine
- providing a full UK-wide approach
- involving end users at an early stage
- delivering menus led by patients and caterers
- respect and dignity - food and drink
- training of catering staff
- easy-to-open packaging.



# SUPPORTING CLINICAL NEEDS

We promote, develop  
and improve the  
standards of catering  
in healthcare



To join or for further information  
please visit  
[www.hospitalcaterers.org](http://www.hospitalcaterers.org)

