

## **Nutrition Knowledge and Attitudes of a Multidisciplinary Team in an Elderly Assessment and Rehabilitation Hospital**

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**Introduction:** Nutrition plays a major role in the morbidity and mortality of older adults. A lack of nutritionists and dieticians is prevalent in clinical settings citing the need for nutrition to be included in the curricula of all professionals.

**Aim:** To determine a multidisciplinary team's: level of education; level of nutrition specific education; source of nutrition knowledge; perceived level of nutrition knowledge; perceived adequacy of nutrition knowledge; profession; and the factors refraining participants from advising patients on nutrition matters. The studied factors were then compared to the sample's level of nutrition knowledge.

**Research Design:** Research was carried out by means of an incidence sample of 50 members of staff from Zammit Clapp Hospital. The research design was that of a non-experimental descriptive cross-sectional survey, utilising quantitative research methods.

**Results:** Participants were generally found to have a low level of nutrition knowledge. Higher levels of nutrition knowledge were evident with: increasing levels of nutrition education; lower incidence of postgraduate studies; pharmacists; those who obtained their nutrition information primarily from courses; those who perceived they had poor levels of nutrition knowledge; and those who perceived non-compliance as a primary barrier to nutrition counselling. Levels of nutrition education were found to be low and 82% did not feel that they had enough nutrition knowledge to counsel patients. This was also found to be the primary barrier stopping individuals from counselling patients. The majority of studied individuals obtain their nutrition knowledge primarily from the media.