

Falk Foundation/Guts UK Awards 2025

DIETITIAN PRIZE WINNER:

Miss Chloe McMurray

PROJECT: Improving Nutritional Management of Pancreatic Disease



Miss McMurray is a Specialist Hepato-pancreato-biliary (HPB) Dietitian at University Hospital North Tees. She is currently seconded to the role of Personalised Cancer Care Prehabilitation Lead at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Miss McMurray explains:

'Prior to 2020, there was no dietetic provision within the hepato-pancreato-biliary (HPB) multidisciplinary team (MDT) at our District General Hospital (DGH), despite the complexity of and need for effective nutritional management in pancreatic disease. To address this gap, a project was initiated to introduce a Specialist HPB Dietitian to the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) and then to assess the impact on patient care and professional practice.

'I have always been passionate about my work as a dietitian within the Upper GI/HPB speciality. Sadly, pancreatic cancer is generally not a curable cancer and so I have always felt it was incredibly important that patient quality of life was optimised for as long as possible. As a dietitian, this meant supporting the patient's relationship with food, and their enjoyment of eating, to continue for as long as possible. Additionally, being able to eat well had the potential to provide patients with a sense of empowerment which may have now become absent from other areas of their lives. Therefore, when this project came up I felt this would be a great opportunity to trial a brand-new dietetic role, which had the potential to benefit both HPB patients and the HPB service as a whole. Further, I took on the role with a determination to highlight the value of including dietitians within an MDT and, from that, the case for funding for it to continue.

'The weekly joint dietetic and consultant clinic was launched in January 2020 headed up by a new consultant gastroenterologist who had a special interest in HPB. As the service grew, we obtained a 0.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) dietitian funding, which allowed me to attend three weekly clinics and weekly MDT meetings. Outside of these hours I also completed non-medical prescribing training and attended the Think PEI Masterclass, further enhancing the service.

'From this start, my role then expanded beyond clinical care to include education and training for consultants, doctors, nurses and student dietitians, strengthening MDT collaboration and increasing trust and awareness around pancreatic nutrition management. A Trust pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy (PERT) guideline was also co-developed.

'As part of my role, I carried out continuous evaluations which showed that since the inception of my role, patient care has significantly improved. An initial audit showed only 32% of pancreatic cancer patients were referred to a dietitian

in 2018–2019; after the introduction of the specialist dietitian, this rose to 81%. Further, joint clinics have reduced appointment burdens, delays in dietetic care and enabled earlier nutritional intervention, particularly for cancer patients.

'Patient outcomes taken from an electronic survey showed that 100% of patients achieved their personal nutrition goals, with 79% achieving or partially achieving dietary goals and that 100% of patients felt well supported by the HPB service. A survey of MDT staff found that confidence in providing PERT education rose from 36% to 100%, and staff likelihood to refer increased from 45% to 100%. Most MDT members found the specialist role beneficial for both patients and professionals with 91% agreeing that having a specialist HPB Dietitian sitting within the MDT clinics was very beneficial for them professionally, whilst 82% felt this was beneficial or very beneficial for the patients.

'To have such a specialist role within an MDT is not the norm and I feel very privileged to have been able to take part in this project. Without doubt, this initiative demonstrated the positive impact and potential of a fully funded Specialist HPB Dietitian role in improving nutritional outcomes in HPB care.'

Miss McMurray's Line Manager, Carys Robinson, Dietetic Team Leader North Tees & Hartlepool Dietetic Service comments:

'Chloé has worked with the dietetic team and the gastroenterology team working in hepatobiliary to develop and expand this service, improving patient care and patient outcomes.

'Chloé is a dedicated and valued member of the Nutrition and Dietetic team who prioritises patient experience and safety and constantly strives to improve the quality of life for her patients and excellence in her practice. She is passionate about her role within the clinical area and continues to work with the HPB MDT to identify and implement new and improved ways of working to improve patient care. She works to educate both her colleagues and other healthcare professionals both regionally and nationally and has contributed to the development and implementation of trust wide guidance on PERT.

'Her work within this role is of exceptionally high value to both the patients and the MDT.'

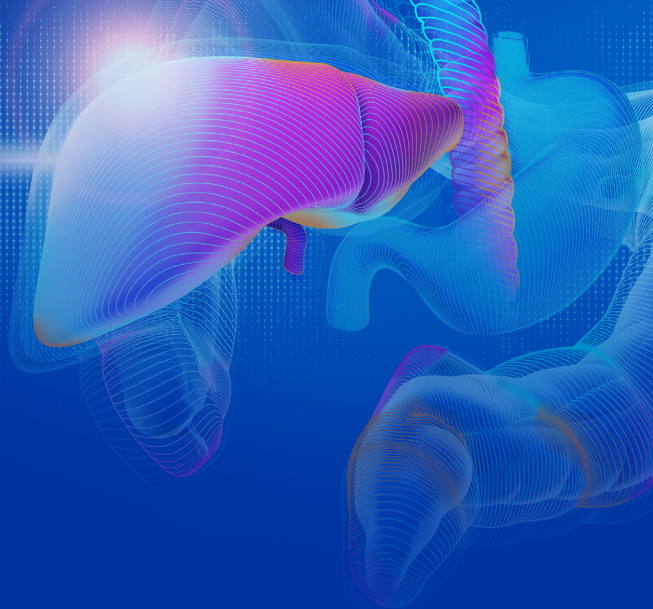
Miss McMurray states:

'I feel incredibly honoured and grateful to accept this award and I hope that it helps to highlight the role of specialist dietitians within pancreatic services and in particular working within an MDT.

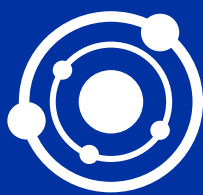
'I am extremely passionate about ensuring that pancreatic patients receive optimal nutritional care, and my work with pancreatic cancer patients has been highly rewarding. I am very proud of the work I have achieved and look forward to continuing this important and innovative work with a wider demographic of patients and staff.'



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Unit K, Bourne End Business Park,
Cores End Road, Bourne End SL8 5AS

UK_IE@falkfoundation.org

Company Registration Number: 2307698

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