



Appendix A:

NICaN AHP Brief Research Proposal Template

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The proposal (max 2 x A4 pages)

The clinical question – hypothesis:

Hypothesis:

The Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) can appropriately identify patients at risk of malnutrition in the oncology setting.

The study background:

The malnourished patient is in a vulnerable condition with malnutrition being recognized as a poor prognostic indicator for cancer treatment, significantly impacting on survival and performance status (Dewys et al., 1980; Van Bokhorst-de van der Schueren et al., 1999). Therefore it is critical to identify a validated screening tool for this patient group. NICE recommends MUST for the nutritional screening of adults (NICE, 2006) and it has been validated across various settings such as hospital wards, outpatient clinics, general practice, community settings and care homes. Stratton et al (2004) compared MUST to a variety of nutritional screening tools. This showed it had fair-good and excellent concurrent validity but was tested on a wide range of diagnosis which only included a small number of cancer patients.

The rationale for the new research:

MUST has not been trialled exclusively on oncology patients in a wide range of treatment settings.

A basic study plan:

An observational study within the Northern Ireland Cancer Centre to include inpatients and outpatients receiving chemotherapy, radiotherapy, radical and palliative care.

Supporting references:

Dewys, W.D., Begg, C., Lavin, P.T. (1980) Prognostic effect of weight loss prior to chemotherapy in cancer patients. *AM J MED*, **69** (4), 491 – 497

NICE guidelines (2006) Nutrition Support in adults

Stratton RJ, Hackston A, Longmore D, Dixon R, Price S, Stroud M, King C, Elia M. (2004) Malnutrition in hospital outpatients and inpatients: Prevalence, concurrent validity and ease of use of the 'malnutrition universal screening tool' ('MUST') for adults. *Br J Nutr*, **92** (5), 799 - 808.

Van Bokhorst-de van der Scheren, Van Leeuwen, P.A., Kuik, D.J. Klop, W.M., Sauerwein, H.P., Snow, G.B., Quak, J.J. (1999) " The impact of nutritional status on the prognosis of patients with advanced head and neck cancer". *Cancer*, **86** (3), 519-527

Signed:

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