



## ***Europe's Beating Cancer Plan Roadmap: MNI calls for nutritional care to be an integral part of cancer care***

**4 March 2020 – Brussels, Belgium** - The Medical Nutrition International industry (MNI) welcomes the European Commission's initiative 'Europe's Beating Cancer Plan' aiming to tackle the second leading cause of mortality in the European Union.

Treatment targets cancerous cells and tumours, however, it should also include measures against cancer-related symptoms such as pain, fatigue and malnutrition with the aim of improving quality of life of patients and survival. **1 in 3 cancer patients are at risk of malnutrition<sup>1</sup>**: malnourished patients may experience *inter alia* organ damage, immune system dysfunction and lean muscle loss. **They have a significantly increased risk of infections and complications, leading to diminished tolerability of chemotherapy, and impact on overall survival<sup>2</sup>**. The cost of their care increases, placing a significant burden to healthcare systems. Malnourished cancer patients are more frequently hospitalised, and experience longer hospital stays (+3 days)<sup>3</sup>. **In addition, it is estimated that not treating malnutrition in cancer costs an additional €17 billion/year in the European Union<sup>4</sup>.**

As highlighted by a recent WHO report, appropriate nutritional care helps cancer patients cope better with their illness and treatment. Nonetheless, cancer-related malnutrition often remains underdiagnosed and undertreated in current clinical practice.

MNI calls for a transformation of current oncology care models as follows:

- **Education on malnutrition & nutritional care in cancer treatment for healthcare professionals & cancer patients.**
- **Diagnostic/therapeutic approaches to be delivered by a multidisciplinary team, including a dietitian/nutritionist.**
- **Mandatory screening for malnutrition at diagnosis & follow-up throughout treatment to provide timely nutritional care for all cancer patients.**
- **Implementation of existing clinical guidelines on nutritional care for cancer patients in routine treatment protocols, including timely use of medical nutrition.**
- **Equal access to nutritional care for all patients; reimbursement of medical nutritional interventions by national healthcare systems.**

For more information:

- [Europe's Beating Cancer Plan Roadmap](#)
- [MNI contribution to Roadmap](#)
- [MNI infographic "Cancer care: why nutrition matters"](#)

### **ABOUT**

**MNI** - The Medical Nutrition International Industry (MNI) is the voice of the medical nutrition industry at international level. MNI gathers companies that offer specialised nutritional solutions and services designed to meet the diverse nutritional needs of patients. We strive to put nutrition at the heart of patient care and we aim at an environment that provides fair access to nutritional care throughout the world. MNI is dedicated to advancing better care through better nutrition, across all ages and healthcare settings.

More information at: [www.medicalnutritionindustry.com](http://www.medicalnutritionindustry.com) – E-mail: [secretariat@medicalnutritionindustry.com](mailto:secretariat@medicalnutritionindustry.com)

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<sup>1</sup> [Better care through better nutrition: value and effects of medical nutrition - A summary of the evidence base \(2018\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Huhmann MB, Cunningham RS. Importance of nutritional screening in treatment of cancer-related weight loss. Lancet Oncol 2005; 6\(5\):334-343.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [The economic cost of hospital malnutrition in Europe: a narrative review - Khalatbari-Soltani, Saman et al. \(Clinical Nutrition ESPEN, June 2015, Volume 10, Issue 3, e89 - e94\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [The economic costs of disease related malnutrition - Freijer, Karen et al. \(Clinical Nutrition, February 2013, Volume 32, Issue 1, 136 – 141\)](#)