

Long neglected nutritional training for doctors at all levels needed now

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The profession must take advantage of changes in medical education to ensure that all health professionals, but especially gut specialists, are given adequate training in nutrition, urge Dr Penny Nield and colleagues, in the launch issue of *Frontline Gastroenterology*, the new quarterly companion journal to *Gut*.

Despite its importance to every area of clinical practice - and not just gastroenterology - and a range of policy documents advocating a solid grounding in nutrition dating back several years, it is an area that has "long been notoriously patchy at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels," say the authors from St George's Hospital, London.

Technological advances in the diagnosis and treatment of disease and the emphasis on measurable outcomes have conspired to create "organ specific evidence based medicine" within which "the study, education, and treatment of nutrition in health and disease do not sit comfortably," they write.

The evidence shows that healthcare professionals in general know little about how to assess and manage [poor nutrition](#), and gastroenterologists in particular need to be able to provide advice and expertise in general nutrition, artificial nutrition support, and intestinal failure, they argue.

With changes in specialty [training](#) and the shift towards workplace based training and assessment, formal nutritional training in gastroenterology has now become not only feasible but also desirable, they suggest.

"It is to be hoped that the requirement for more standardised and structured core nutrition training will be recognised and included in the revised curriculum for gastroenterology to be published in 2010," they conclude.

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