In Wessex, in 2016, 21% of the population were over 65 years old with an increase to 30% predicted by 2030 giving a total of 612,000 over 65-year olds living in the region*.

With an ageing population and the associated impact on health and social care provision and costs, the Healthy Ageing programme is focusing on opportunities to slow the onset of and reduce the severity of frailty via innovation and the rapid spread of new approaches.

The Patients’ Association Nutrition Checklist was launched in December 2018, with 2,000 hits during the first month.

INSCOPPe (Implementing Nutrition Screening in Community Care for Older People) has seen a four-fold increase in the number of patients screened at Southern Health Foundation Trust.

Completion of 6 month pilot project to improve hydration in 17 Hampshire County Council Care Homes (978 beds) saw 89 Hydration Champions trained and 1% reduction in hospital admissions and a 2% reduction in slips, trips and falls.

Ran a feasibility trial to agree design for hydration in domiciliary care project.

Working with Bournemouth University, we’ve developed the Nutrition Wheel and completed feasibility testing.

The Older Peoples’ Essential Nutrition OPEN toolkit has been endorsed by the British Dietetic Association. The toolkit has been adopted in Nottingham, Dundee, Brighton & Hove, and Waterford in Southern Ireland. The leaflet has had 2,998 views and there has been 93 downloads of the Malnutrition Awareness leaflet from the Healthy Ageing website.

*ONS Data, 2016
The Healthy Ageing programme

What was delivered 2018-19?

- The Wessex Acute Frailty Audit data collection has been completed and analysed with 100% compliance by the acute hospitals in Wessex. This was a collaboration between NHS Benchmarking and the Healthy Ageing Programme
- In collaboration with the Patients’ Association, Age UK, Bournemouth University and Nutricia, the Patients’ Association Nutrition Checklist was successfully launched in December 2018. The questions in the checklist have been successfully validated against ‘MUST’
- The national Malnutrition Task Force (including Age UK) have agreed to promote, own and support the Nutrition Wheel. The Nutrition Wheel publication has been designed, tested and finalised ready for launch mid 2019 and will be supported by the Malnutrition Task Force in Autumn
- Final evaluation for INSCCOPe project (Implementing Nutrition Screening in Community Care for Older People) has been successfully completed with the production of the final report, workbook and training videos
- The six-month pilot of Hydration in Care homes across 17 Hampshire Care Homes has been completed and case studies documented showing the positive impact on residents. A video has been made to showcase this.

Events and awards 2018-19:

- HSJ Value awards (June 2018) – received ‘highly commended’ for our project ‘A new integrated approach across health and social care to improve nutritional care for adults across Dorset’ in the category: Care of frail older patients
- Presentation at British Geriatrics Society South East and South West Thames Region Autumn meeting on the research validating the Patients’ Association Nutrition Checklist against ‘MUST’ – October 2018
- Presentation at British Geriatrics Society South East and South West Thames Region Autumn meeting on the research validating the Patients’ Association Nutrition Checklist against ‘MUST’ – October 2018
- Presentation at Improvement Nutrition Collaborative in London in January 2019 on the Patients’ Association Nutrition Checklist and Nutrition Wheel
- Presentation on nutrition and frailty for Wessex CLAHRC – March 2019
- Presentation on nutrition and frailty for Wessex CLAHRC – March 2019
- Presentation at NHS Benchmarking ‘Managing Frailty and Delayed Transfers of Care’ national event in February 2019 detailing emerging themes from the Wessex AHSN Acute Frailty Audit
- Is Wessex Frailty Fit? Workshop held in February 2019 with national and local executive leaders to identify best practice and opportunities for service improvement projects
- Webinar on the Patients’ Association Nutrition Checklist and Nutrition Wheel to the BDA Older Peoples group – March 2019 to over 130 people
- Presentation on the Wessex AHSN Healthy Ageing Programme and Wessex Acute Frailty audit at the Focus on Frailty conference (led by Southern Health NHS Trust) – March 2019
- Presentation on the Nutrition Wheel at the Wessex Public Health conference – March 2019
- Presentation on the Hydration in Care Home project at the Wessex Public Health conference – March 2019

Watch the Hydration in Care Homes video at wessexahsn.org.uk/videos
Being part of the Healthy Ageing Acute Expert Group and clinical coordinator for the Wessex acute frailty audit has been a hugely positive experience. It has been excellent to work collaboratively with multi-professional colleagues from across the Wessex region who share the same enthusiasm for improving pathways for older people and those living with frailty who are admitted to hospital. Thank you to the Healthy Ageing Programme and the Wessex AHSN for bringing us all together and making this partnership so effective.

Consultant Practitioner Trainee
Older people and Frailty pathway

Really impressed to see the joint work of NHS Benchmarking and the Academic Health Science Network in producing a stellar acute frailty audit across Wessex. It will be a linchpin for the improvement of care in this complex area.

Dr. Dawne Garrett
Professional Lead Older People and Dementia Care,
Royal College of Nursing

Want to find out more?
@WessexAgeing
E: healthyageing@wessexahsn.net
#WessexFrailtyFit

Plans for 2019-20:

- Development of a Wessex Community Frailty Audit to compliment the Wessex Acute Frailty Audit themes
- Service improvement project arising from the Wessex Acute Frailty Audit
- Identification of needs, signposting, real world validation and spread of appropriate innovations relating to healthy ageing and frailty
- Delivery and evaluation of Hydration in Domiciliary Care project
- Development of e-learning toolkit for hydration in care homes and domiciliary care to support wider spread
- National launch of the Nutrition Wheel in Autumn 2019
- Explore development of smartphone app version of the Checklist / Wheel
- Further research projects to evaluate the use and effectiveness of the Nutrition Wheel
- Support evaluation of the implementation of Red Bags across Wessex
About the Academic Health Science Network

Wessex Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) is one of 15 AHSNs set up by NHS England in 2013 and relicensed from April 2018 to operate as the key innovation arm of the NHS.

At Wessex AHSN we improve people’s health, achieve excellence in healthcare and boost transformation and growth in our region’s life sciences and healthcare sector.

We connect academics, NHS, local authorities, industry and citizens to bring fresh energy to old problems, inspired thinking to new ones and to spread innovation and best practice across health and social care.

10% of the workforce in Wessex is employed in the health economy

Wessex boasts over 250 life science companies in medtech, medbiotech, industrial biotech and pharma

The region’s life sciences industry employs 9,000 and has a turnover of £2.5 billion

The region’s population of 3 million is served by

- 10 CCGs
- 9 local authorities
- 11 NHS Trusts and
- 5 universities

Want to find out more?

The AHSN Network

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Watch our short video about what we do at wessexahsn.org.uk/aboutwessexahsn