

# Press Release

28<sup>th</sup> of May 2020

## **EFAD recognises the important role of dietitians and appropriate dietetic care after hospital discharge for individuals treated for Covid-19**

According to the World Health Organization, Europe had approximately two million confirmed cases of Covid-19 by the end of May 2020. From these cases, a high number were hospitalised and have recovered from Covid-19. The EFAD recognizes that most attention until now has been directed at the hospitalized COVID-19 patient in the most acute phase. Supporting post-hospitalized Covid-19 patients at home and community level is also important to ensure their full and fast recovery. EFAD recognises the significant role of dietitians as part of the multi-disciplinary team for the management of Covid-19 patients both in acute and community settings.

Current evidence and experiences from healthcare professionals demonstrate that at post-discharge, a high majority of patients treated for Covid-19 are malnourished, have suffered a significant loss of muscle mass and have a reduced appetite and food intake. Depending on the severity of the disease, many of these patients will not be able to cover their nutrient and energy requirement through food and many will need enteral or parenteral feeding or oral nutritional supplementation. Dietitians are skilled to assess the nutritional requirements and decide the appropriate nutritional pathway for these patients at post-discharge. Part of their role includes the identification of potential nutritional risks at home, such as people who are unable to access or prepare food safely and need further support. Dietitians also educate patients and their carers in order to provide them with the appropriate information and tools in order to facilitate nutritional self-management in the long-term.

EFAD is deeply impressed by the excellent initiatives from its' members and colleagues across Europe and further afield, who have been collaborating with medical societies and stakeholders to develop optimum post-discharge dietetic pathways for these patients. To this end EFAD has organized and undertaken a webinar on nutritional rehabilitation after Covid-19 infection, focusing on the support that dietitians can offer at primary care level in order to reduce risk of complications and to shorten recovery times. Eminent dietitians from Italy, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands presented evidence and shared their experiences and best practices for the nutritional rehabilitation of Covid-19 patients at home. The webinar took place on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of May with more than 600 viewers worldwide attending the event live and posing questions to the presenters. The webinar "Nutritional Rehabilitation After Covid-19 Infection: Homeward-Bound After Hospital Discharge" is available online and can be

accessed via EFAD website<sup>1</sup>. The high number of reviewers and interest expressed during the webinar highlights the great need for similar initiatives to increase awareness and support dietitians in this field.

## **MORE**

### **ABOUT EFAD**

EFAD is the voice of 35.000 European dietitians from 33 member associations, and the only organisation advocating for dietitians in Europe. ([www.Efad.org](http://www.Efad.org)).

The aims of EFAD are to:

- Promote the development of the dietetic profession
- Develop dietetics on a scientific and professional level in the common interest of the member associations
- Facilitate communication between national dietetic associations and other organisations – professional, educational, and governmental
- Encourage a better nutrition situation for the population of the member countries of Europe.

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## **ENDS**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.efad.org/en-us/covid-19/5-webinars-on-the-topic/nutritional-rehabilitation-after-covid-19-infection-homeward-bound-after-hospital-discharge/>