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Dear Anna,

Letter of support for the Sustain 'Hospital Food Voices' project

I am writing to give my support both as a Nutritionist and as Campaign Director for Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH), World Action on Salt and Health (WASH), Action On Sugar, FoodSwitch and as Chief Executive of Blood Pressure UK for the application by Sustain to the Wellcome Trust for their 'Hospital Food Voices' project as part of the Campaign for Better Hospital Food.

CASH, WASH, Action on Sugar and FoodSwitch are a group of linked organisations run by collaborating scientific specialists concerned with salt, sugar and its effects on health. They are successfully working to reach a consensus with the food industry and Government over the harmful effects of a high salt and a high sugar diet and bring about a reduction in the amount of salt and sugar in processed foods as well as salt added to cooking, and the table. Blood Pressure UK, their sister charity, is the only charity solely dedicated to lowering the nation's blood pressure to prevent disability and death from stroke and heart disease.

As a group of organisations we fully support the work of the Campaign for Better Hospital Food to reduce the availability of high sugar, fat and salt foods in hospitals – therefore improving the food environment for NHS staff, visitors and patients. Indeed the campaign has been a key and highly valued partner for our work in this area. The establishment of NHS England Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) targets to reduce the salt, fat and sugar on sale in hospital retail outlets, after pressure from the Campaign for Better Hospital Food, and others, has been instrumental to reducing the obesogenic environment in hospital foyers and reducing the consumption of food and drinks high in salt and sugar on hospital sites. Importantly, this work has set an example we have been able to use to call for similar standards to be applied beyond the hospital environment.

The Campaign for Better Hospital Food's 2017 'Taking the Pulse of Hospital Food' report into the quality of hospital food in Greater London was ground-breaking in both its ambition and its findings and as a result we are now able to describe the food environment in London hospitals for the first time. Expanding this pilot to incorporate the rest of NHS England hospitals and collect data on the quality of their food provision, alongside staff and patient views and reviews of food quality, is crucial to continue the momentum towards a hospital food system that is open, transparent, responsive and health promoting.

Continued progress on this work is key to improving hospital food provision and as such we are in very strong support of the application for funding for the three year 'Hospital Food Voices' project. We would be proud to partner with Sustain should the application be successful and I will personally continue my role as chair of the Campaign for Better Hospital Food working party, to help guide progress on these very important issues. We are very optimistic that this project can be of real long-term and immediate benefit to patients and NHS staff and help continue our current progress towards transforming our hospitals into healthier food environments.

Yours faithfully,

Katharine Jenner

Katharine Jenner RNutr
Campaign Director
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