

'Virtual dietician' service available to care homes

The word "saffron" is written in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font in a golden-yellow color. It is set against a dark blue rectangular background that has a thin vertical golden-yellow bar on its right side.

A web-based service that analyses menu plans and recipes to ensure they are meeting dietary guidelines and customer requirements, is now available to care homes.

With MPs calling for minimum enforceable care home food standards to be introduced and more focus being placed on preventing malnutrition, there is even greater pressure on the sector to prove it has a meal service providing the correct levels of nutrients to residents.

The **Saffron Nutrition** system, developed by software specialist, **Fretwell-Downing Hospitality**, recently played a pivotal role by providing the analysis of sample care home menus for the Food Standards Agency to assist caterers in menu planning.

Designed to make it easy for caterers and managers to use, the web version of **Saffron Nutrition** provides a cost-effective alternative to investing in expensive software.

By subscribing to the online service, care homes and their caterers can access the password-protected system and run an analysis on their own recipes or check against the nutritional values of bought-in products.

Up to 60 nutrients, from carbohydrate and protein levels through to vitamins and minerals, can be analysed, and with bar charts and tables, users will be able to see at-a-glance where menu plans will meet or fall short of guidelines such as the FSA's.

As well as maintaining a comprehensive record of the nutrient content of manufactured food products, **Saffron** enables individual recipes to be analysed using the industry's bible, the McCance and Widdowson composition of food database. Care homes can also obtain a detailed costing of their menu plans.

The system is already a proven ally in the education catering sector with local authorities and individual schools using the system to ensure that meals are in-line with the Government's forthcoming nutrient standards.

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Andrew Markwell, Fretwell-Downing Hospitality's business development manager comments:

"Saffron is already well established within the education sector and we are now being approached by care homes and their caterers who are looking for a solution in the face of more exacting demands on the meals served and the reassurances that clients now require.

"We have developed Saffron Nutrition to simplify the whole process when it comes to obtaining a detailed breakdown of the nutrient content of meals and interpreting the results, enabling users to amend menu plans quickly and easily."

For further information contact **Fretwell-Downing Hospitality** on 0114 281 6060 or log onto: www.saffronnutrition.com



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