



SASPEN – Hot off the press...

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Every time I sit to type a letter for the *Journal*, my thoughts are about **time!** The realisation that another 3 months have passed so quickly is unnerving.

Which brings me to the issue of the International Nutrition Congress. You should have received an information booklet, detailing a full and exciting programme. Do not miss the early registration date.

Many thanks to Dr R Blaauw and Ms J Downs who have put many working hours into various committees. If you have not received a booklet, contact:

R Louw: secretariat@ebsconsulting.co.za, or go online:
<http://www.puk.ac.za/iuns>

I have recently received the end-of-year financial statement (2003/2004) and am pleased to note that membership has increased – thanks to your loyal support!

Tracey Moore

Addressing hospital malnutrition

Since the plight of the malnourished hospitalised patient was highlighted 30 or so years ago, continuing emerging evidence indicates that malnutrition among hospitalised patients remains unacceptably high and impacts adversely on clinical outcomes.

Recently, the Council of Europe (the Committee of Experts on Nutrition, Food Safety and Consumer Health of the Partial Agreement in the Social and Public Health Field) collected information regarding nutrition programmes in hospitals, and established a European network consisting of national experts from the Partial Agreement member states, which is chaired by Denmark. The Network identified the following contributing factors to the prevalence of malnutrition:

- Lack of clearly defined responsibilities in planning and managing nutritional care
- Lack of sufficient educational level with regard to nutrition among all staff groups
- Lack of influence and knowledge of the patients
- Lack of co-operation between different staff groups
- Lack of involvement from the hospital management.

A number of recommendations have been made which have been approved for implementation. For further information:

<https://wcm.coe.int/rsi/CM/index.jsp>