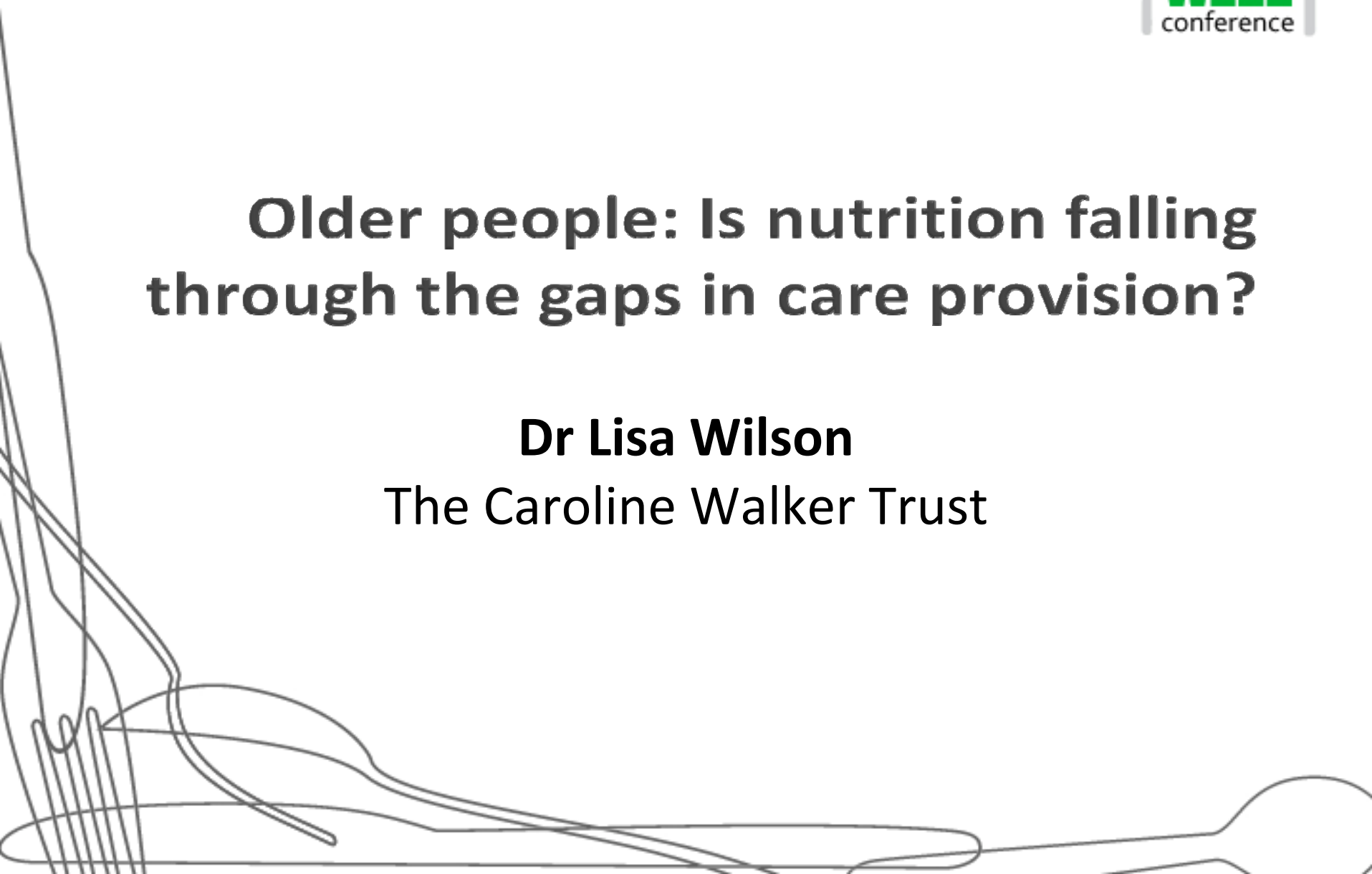


**Older people: Is nutrition falling
through the gaps in care provision?**

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Population change



- Ageing population is one of the three biggest challenges facing the UK government today
- In 2008 the number of people aged over 65 exceeded those under 16 for the first time
- 19% of population over state pension age in 2004 (11.4m people) - 23% by 2031
- Fastest growing group is >80s 4.5% population, 1.1m more than 1981

Older people in the 21st Century



- Average life expectancy continues to increase - 81 yrs for a woman, 76 for a man in 2002 (ONS, 2004)
- Poverty levels among older people continue to fall, dropping from 23% in the late 1990s to 17% in 2006 (JRF, 2007)
- 3/4 of people aged >90 were living in private households in 2001 (DWP/ONS, 2005)
- Many older people have a high awareness of what is healthy and enjoy the benefits of a healthy lifestyle including social contact, an active mind and keeping active. Age Concern (2006)

Older people in the 21st Century

- Whilst people are living longer, they are living more years of their life in ill health
- Older people are often at the sharp end of health inequalities
- One in 5 older people continue to live in poverty in the UK in 2007
- Older people have been found to have many barriers to leading a healthy lifestyle

Nutrition and older people



- BAPEN 2007, screening week 9336 people screened on admission
- Up to 1 in 3 of all adults of all ages at risk of malnutrition on admission to hospital, care homes & mental health units
- 25% from the community and 43% from care homes at risk of malnutrition
- Estimated at least 1 in 10 people over 65 living in their own homes are malnourished

Malnutrition: causes



- Depression
- Anxiety
- Ill health/disease
- Social exclusion
- Medication
- Dentition
- Mobility
- Transport
- Poverty
- Access
- Ability to cook

Barriers to good nutrition



- General awareness of malnutrition is poor
- The issue is slow in rising up the political agenda
- Professional training is poor – a recent UK survey found that 40% of GPs did not think malnutrition was a problem
- Malnutrition is under-recognised and under –treated
- Treatment guidelines exist, but are rarely applied in practice.
- Nutrition has ‘no place’ for some within health and social care budgets

Issues in care

- Screening
- Training
- Inspection issues re nutrition
- Specialist care
- Protected mealtimes
- Multi-disciplinary approach
- Nutritional standards
- Person centred care

What can we do?

- Work with and influence policy
- Screening across care and in community
- Address food poverty issues
- Transport
- Community support
- Social inclusion through community projects such as shopping clubs, food co-ops etc

Tackling malnutrition through policy change



- Campaigns
- Improving Nutritional Care – Action Plan (DH, 2007)
- Dignity in Care
- Social Care review
- Care Quality Commission

Call for Action



- Screening
- Training
- Raising awareness
- Clear information and advice
- Meals on wheels
- Maintaining choice and independence through levels of care suitable to each individual
- Talk to older people

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