



*With a little  
help from  
my friends*

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**HCA NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND  
DEVELOPMENT FORUM 2016**

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# “Let’s unwrap the NHS Menu!!”

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**Food and beverage packaging  
identified as a contributing  
factor to malnutrition among  
elderly patients in hospital**







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**“Food packaging is a major barrier to nutrition. If patients can’t open it, they can’t eat the food!”**

The Institute of Hospitality in Healthcare - <http://ihhc.org.au/>





# The Australian Study

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- At least **40%** of patients had **difficulty** opening packaging
- Typical items included
  - Milk and juices
  - Cereal
  - Condiments
  - Tetra packs
- **All staff** (nursing, dietitians and food service) reported:
  - Patients asked for help opening food and beverage packaging
  - **39%** had **difficulty** opening certain packaging



## Concluded

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“given the serious nature of the problem for our nutritionally vulnerable, unwell elderly trying to access hospital food and beverages, pressure can be applied to package designers to improve packaging accessibility by older people and people with disability, thus promoting wider health benefits.”

A solid red horizontal bar spanning the width of the slide at the bottom.

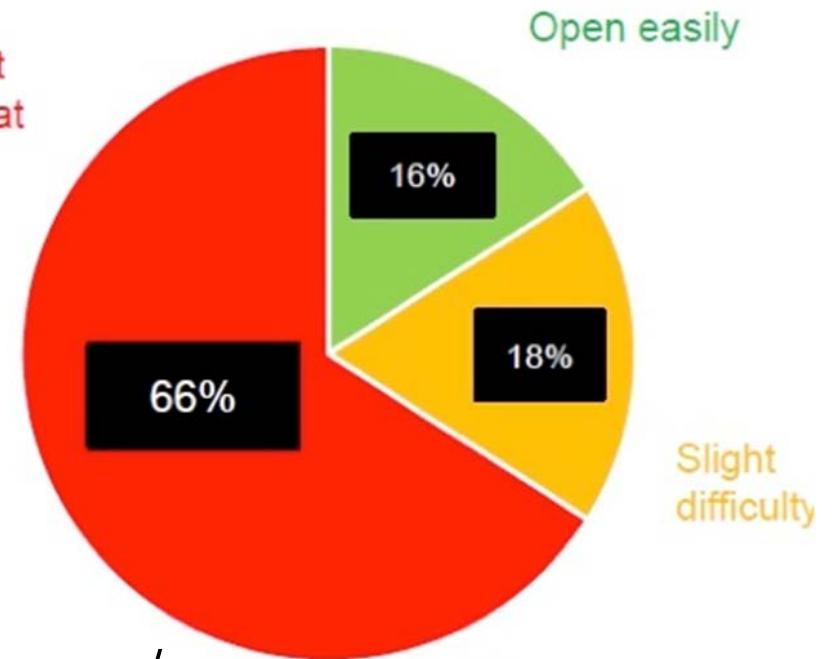


## Patients - Aged 71+

Opening existing fruit cup packaging



Could not  
open/great  
difficulty



The Institute of Hospitality in Healthcare - <http://ihhc.org.au/>





## There is a bigger picture...

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- We are currently facing an ‘**agequake**’ – are you ready??
- The Consumer Goods Forum state:  
*“As the global population grows older, the human race is about to experience an unprecedented social revolution. The effects on retail and manufacturing industries will be enormous.”*
- Globally the older population is increasing at a rate of 2.6% annually
- By 2050 there will be 2 billion people in the over-60 group
- **We are seeing this demographic already in our hospitals**



## What have we been doing about it?

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- Working with a range of colleagues from the HCA, industry, manufacturers, NHS Supply Chain & Sheffield Hallam University to:

*“get suppliers and manufacturers of individually portioned, pre-packed, ready to consume products, who currently may or may not provide products that meet the NHS patient food packaging requirements to provide, for catering operators, easy to open consumer product packaging by testing to and complying with ISO17480 guidelines so that the product is easy to consume and individual nutritional needs are met”*

In short ....

We are trying to get easy to open food packaging into the NHS.....

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## Two key pieces of work..

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- Testing food and beverage packaging currently used in the NHS against the ISO standards – more of that to come...
- NHS Supply Chain approached suppliers of pre-packed/ready to be consumed products to better understand:
  1. The consideration suppliers give to 'easy to open' packaging in the products they supply
  2. Awareness of the recent ISO Packaging Standard, and to highlight this standard
  3. How receptive suppliers would be to testing products to this standard in the future



## Initial Responses

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- Suppliers selected were all those where one or more pre-packed products they supply may be opened by patients/end users.
- 18 suppliers consider ease of opening by the end user
- 12 suppliers aware of the ISO standard
- 19 would consider testing to this standard in future



## In general

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- Awareness of the aging population and challenges/opportunities it brings
  - Some suppliers had their own people responsible of packaging – used internal test protocols
  - Some suppliers are involving end users in packaging evaluation, or replicating users conditions
  - Some suppliers felt they had limited influence over packaging or would be driven by the requirements of their key retail customers in relation to changes or testing
  - Most open to considering the ISO Packaging Standard but felt there might be cost implications which could be passed on
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## Why is this important to you?

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- Your patients have a **negative** experience of your meal service
- **Increased** food waste
- **Increased** costs



## What next

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- Developing an initial list of products to be tested
- Finding a home for all information (likely to be HCA website)
- Working with DH to consider inclusion into PLACE for 2017
- Engaging widely – are there things we can learn and share

But you need to help.....

- By purchasing ‘easy to open’ food and beverage products



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**We have a real opportunity  
to make a difference**

