

## INTRODUCING LENI WOOD

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**My name is Leni Wood and I am Nellsar's in-house nutritional advisor. As a qualified Nutritional Therapist, I use my knowledge of biomedicine, biochemistry and nutrition to advise our teams on enhancing our residents' health and well-being with a holistic approach.**

I joined the Nellsar team in July 2017. As an advocate for better nutrition in healthcare, it is a dream

of mine to see a shift in the approach to food – for the kitchen to be used to its full potential when providing sustenance to vulnerable people in compromised states of health.

It is true that the foods you eat have far-reaching effects throughout the body – especially those consumed on a regular basis. I have seen the benefits that making small adjustments in food choices can bring; Swapping high-sugar nutrient-empty foods for nutrient-rich alternatives. There is a world of evidence-based research out there to support the benefits of a nutrient-rich diet.

The older generations are often overlooked with regards to their diet and it is sometimes challenging to encourage our loved ones to even eat at times. I feel as though this is why the 'easy options' are often used. Biscuits, jelly, angel delight *"At least it's something! Right?"*

'Easy' options are often high in sugar. When eating refined sugar on a regular basis (*especially combined with a sugary cup of tea*) inflammatory processes within the body can become exacerbated. This causes far-reaching negative effects on an already compromised immune systems, making it harder to fight off infection.

In some cases, when all options are exhausted, then yes, something is better than nothing. Equally, we love and respect our elderly enough to not deny them the few delights they have left in life – that would be wrong. However, wouldn't it be better to enhance the nutrient density of what they eat by making your very own treats? For example, luxury homemade mousse or homemade biscuits with protein and mineral-rich ingredients? Or putting less sugar in tea rather than more? All the while gradually phasing sugar out and noticing whether or not this is acceptable for our loved one.

There is always room for improvement in any area of life. At **Nellsar**, we are consistently expanding our **Nutrition and Hydration department**; The team consists of myself, our **Head Chefs** and **Nutrition Champions within the Homes**. We are dedicated to improving nutritional knowledge and practises in order to share these ever-growing skills through education and training throughout the company.

Positive changes in the best-interest of all residents are taking place. I for one am proud to be part of the process, surrounded by a skilled and dynamic team. Henceforth, I will be sharing evidence-based research and breaking it down into bite-size, easy-to-follow articles!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leni Wood." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Nutritional Therapist for Nellsar Care Homes.**