

PE1708/A

NHS Tayside submission of 25 July 2019

Further to your email dated 11 July, NHS Tayside recognise that people from a variety of backgrounds are increasingly adopting vegan dietary practices for a number of reasons including religion, culture and personal choice. Since 2008 the Scottish Government has in place, explicit standards for nutrient and food provision for patients within hospitals. 'Food in Hospitals National Catering and Nutrition Specification for Food and Fluid Provision in Hospitals in Scotland' provides guidance on how these standards can be met including practical suggestions on food choices suitable for different dietary needs, including special diets such as vegan. Therefore NHS Scotland catering services are already required to develop and apply vegan recipes and menus that comply with the standards. In the retail setting the Healthyliving Award Plus criteria apply to all food provision generally but there is no specific requirement to provide vegan options.

Engagement events held in 2019 with NHS Tayside staff and patient groups highlighted an increasing demand for vegan diets. As a result NHS Tayside is currently considering how it can incorporate more suitable vegan (those excluding all animal meat and products, derived ingredients and additives, eggs, milk and dairy products) and plant-based options into its recipes and menus for both retail customers (staff and visitors) and inpatients. The greatest challenge is achieving nutritional adequacy (especially energy and protein) in recipes and menus due to the exclusion of the aforementioned foods. Therefore recipe and menu development require careful planning by the catering service and registered dietitians to ensure *alternative* plant based food choices achieve the current standards.

I trust the information above provides the Committee with a suitable response.