

REFRESH study

Nutrition Interventions For malnourished older adults in care Homes

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REFRESH is a study to test how best to treat undernutrition in older adults living in care homes



REFRESH trial

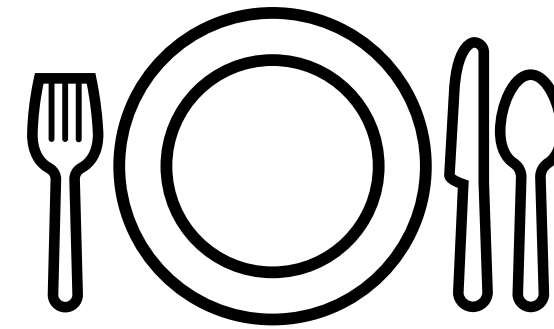
nutRition intervEntions For malnourished
older adults in care Homes



Background

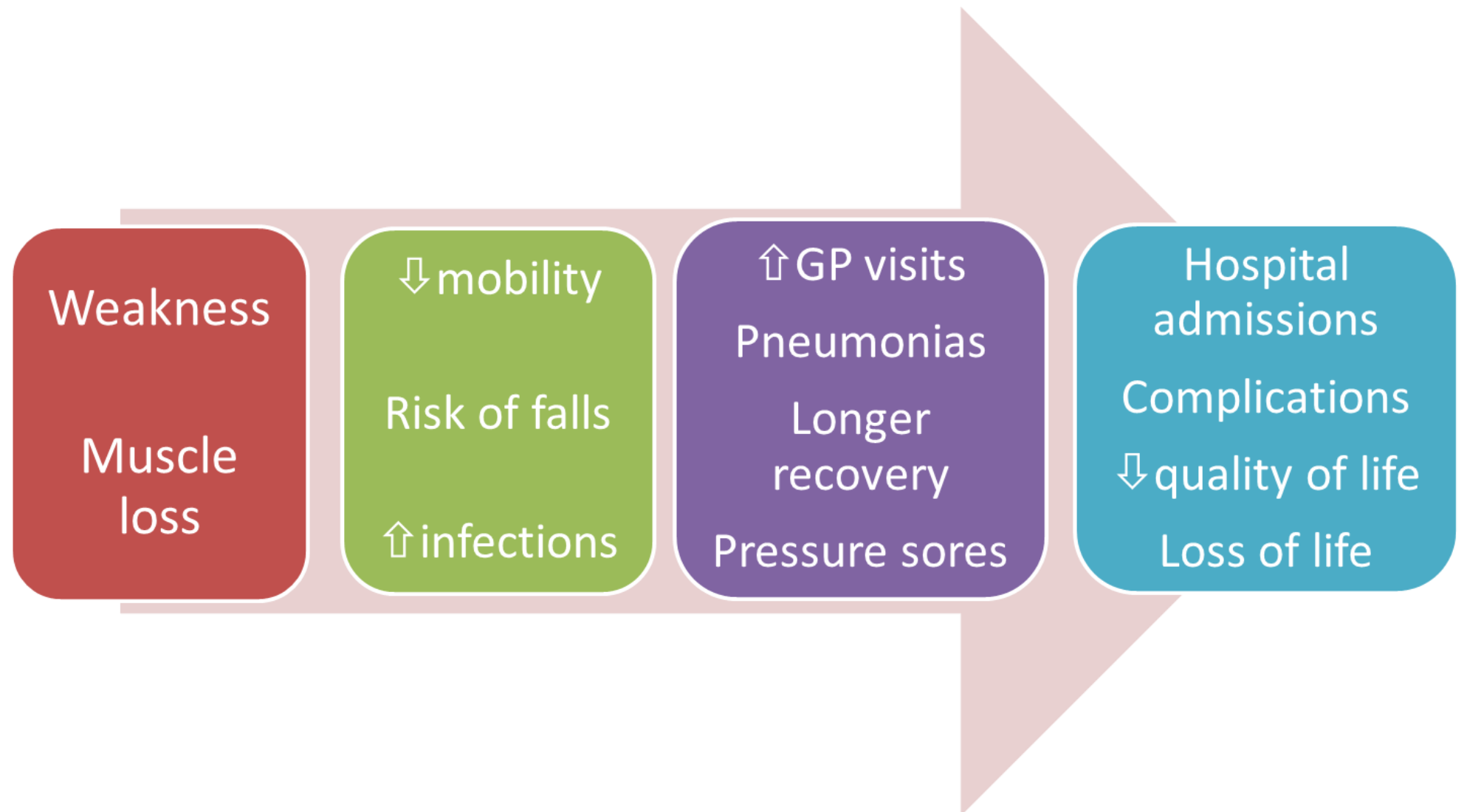


~361,000
80% complex needs



26-42% at risk of
under nutrition

Consequences of under
nutrition



Current guidance for treating malnutrition

**Nutritional support for those identified with or at risk of malnutrition
(NICE (CG32):**

Food-based:

Dietary counselling (meal adaptation on food intake)

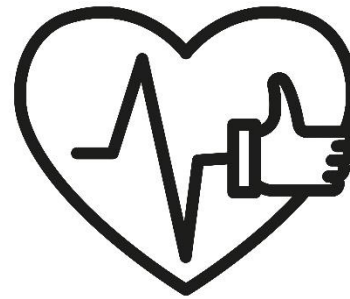
Food fortification (increased energy and nutrient content without increasing portion size)

Prescribed:

Oral Nutrition Supplements (ONS)

Better management of malnutrition can....

↓ Mental and physical health deterioration



↓ Care burden

↑ Independence



↓ GP visits



↓ Hospital visits



↑ Appetite



Overall improved quality of life!

But...

- Huge cost of oral nutritional supplements (ONS) - ~£14 million/month in England
- Malnutrition contributes to increased health and social care costs (£23.5 billion p.a.) including use of ONS (high wastage)
- Delivering a highly flexible, individually centred food service in care homes can be costly so recommendations not always followed
- Few large trials in care homes
- Little evidence to support effectiveness or cost-effectiveness of ONS in older adults with or at risk of malnutrition (Thomson et al 2022)
- Thus, need for robust research in care homes to provide new evidence to inform high quality person-centred nutritional care

Study aim?



REFRESH trial

nutRition intervEntions For malnourished
older adultS in care Homes

What is the clinical- and cost-effectiveness of oral nutritional supplements and fortified food on quality of life and nutritional outcomes compared to routine practice in older care home residents?



Why participate?



Collaborate to improve nutrition management for residents



Nutrition training & support for staff in participating care homes



Free resources & reimbursement for participation



We aim to....

Recruit 90 care homes in three cohorts:

Duration of the study for each care home is **1 year**

COHORT 1

30 CARE HOMES

10 South West
10 West Midlands
10 Dorset/Hampshire/Bath/Bristol

Set-up starts: April 2025
Recruitment to start: November
2025

COHORT 2

30 CARE HOMES

10 South West
10 West Midlands
10
Dorset/Hampshire/Bath/Bristol

Set-up starts: April 2026
Recruitment to start: August
2026

COHORT 3

30 CARE HOMES

10 South West
10 West Midlands
10
Dorset/Hampshire/Bath/Bristol

Set-up starts: October 2026
Recruitment to start: April 2027

How will it work?

Care homes randomly allocated into **ONE** of **THREE** groups

Testing TWO approaches of managing malnutrition

ONS Group:

residents provided with oral nutrition supplements (ONS) & usual care

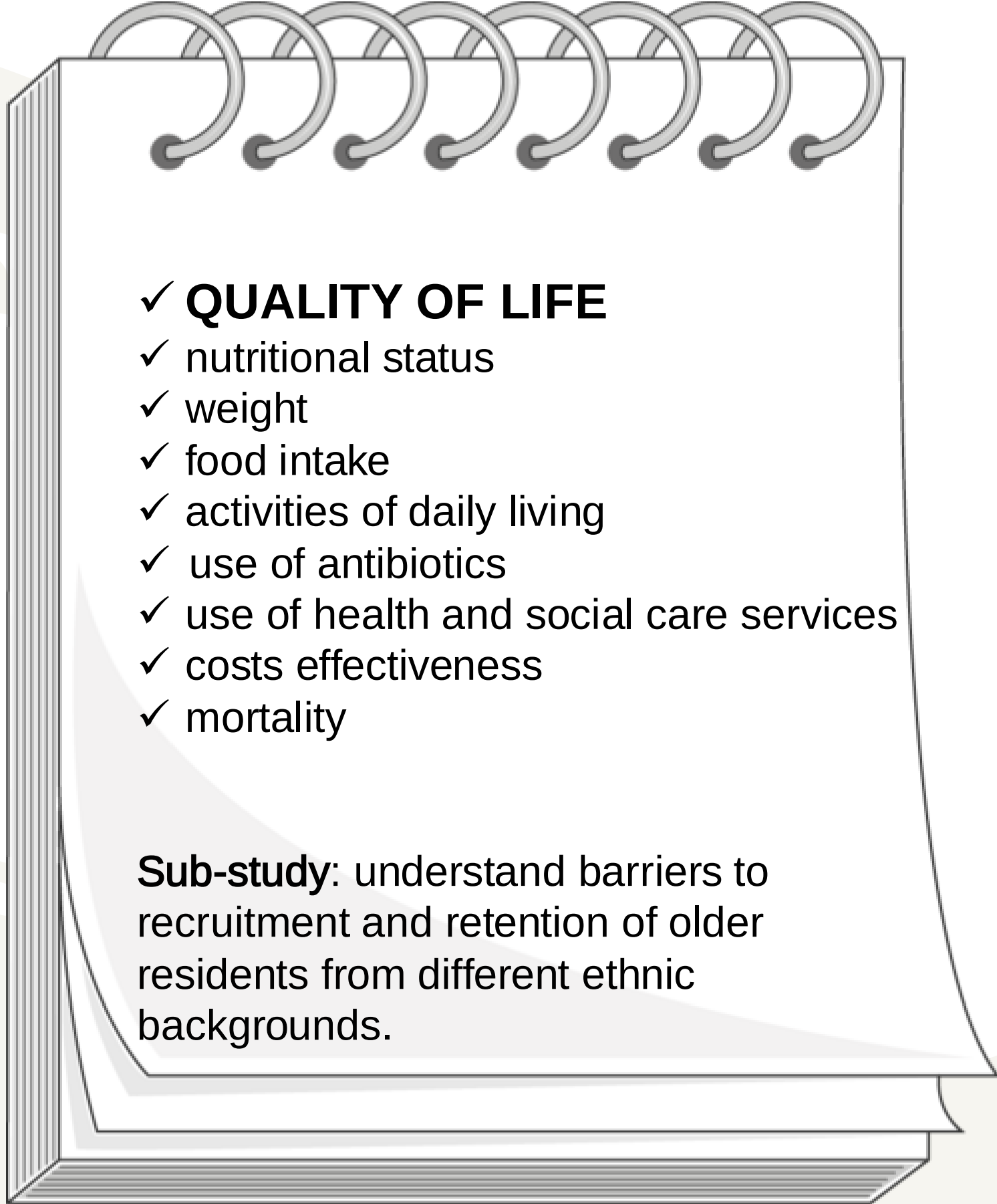


FF Group: residents provided with fortified food (FF) and drinks & usual care



Usual care group: carry on with usual routines for management of malnutrition

Information to be collected

A spiral-bound notebook is shown, open to a page with a list of items to be collected. The notebook has a silver spiral binding at the top. The page is white with a light gray shadow on the left side. The list is written in black text and includes a section header 'QUALITY OF LIFE' followed by eight items, each preceded by a checkmark. At the bottom of the page, there is a paragraph labeled 'Sub-study'.

✓ **QUALITY OF LIFE**

- ✓ nutritional status
- ✓ weight
- ✓ food intake
- ✓ activities of daily living
- ✓ use of antibiotics
- ✓ use of health and social care services
- ✓ costs effectiveness
- ✓ mortality

Sub-study: understand barriers to recruitment and retention of older residents from different ethnic backgrounds.

Who can join the study?

Care homes eligible to take part

- Long-term residential care setting where older adults receive 24-hour care and support.
- Have care homeowner permission to take part.
- Not taking part in other research studies that could affect study.



Residents eligible to take part

- Over 65 years (permanent residents)
- Able to eat and drink
- Risk of undernutrition or undernourished

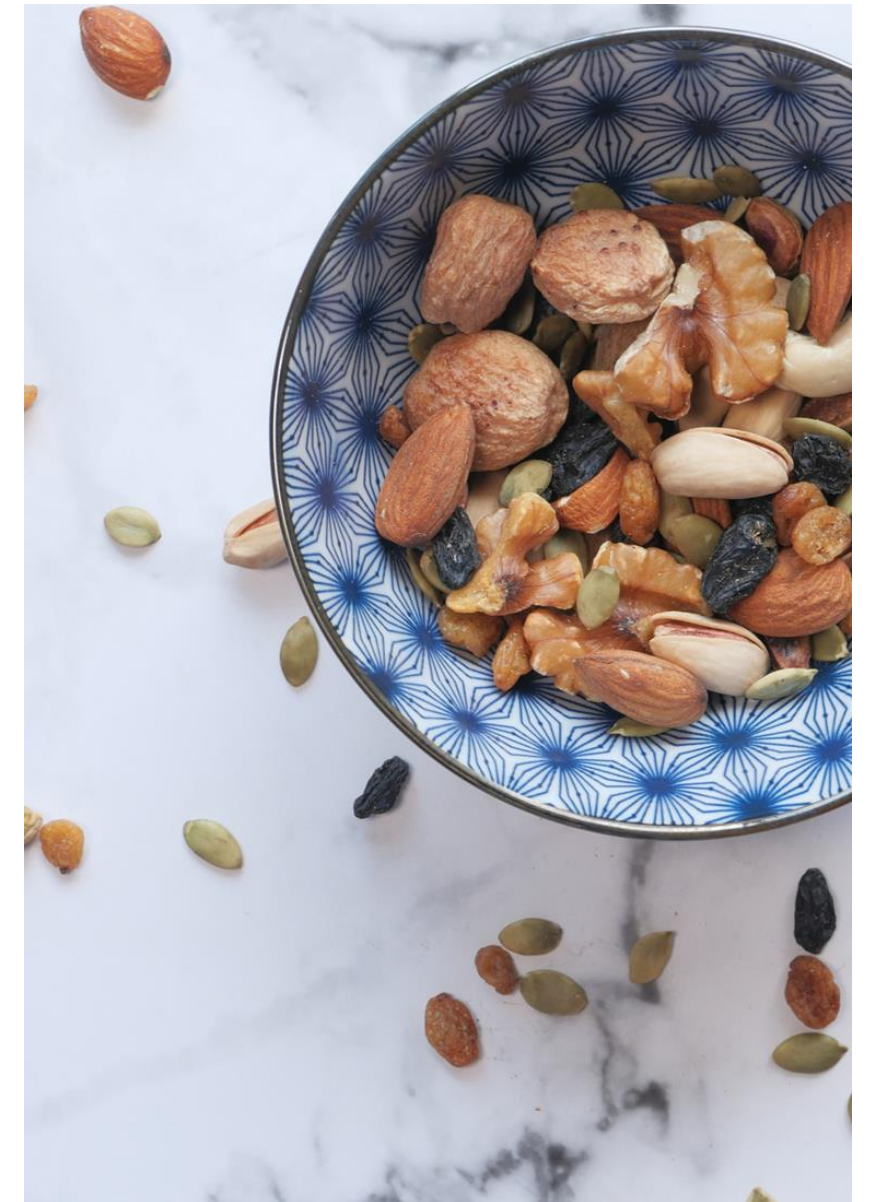
will include those living with dementia

Ineligible if

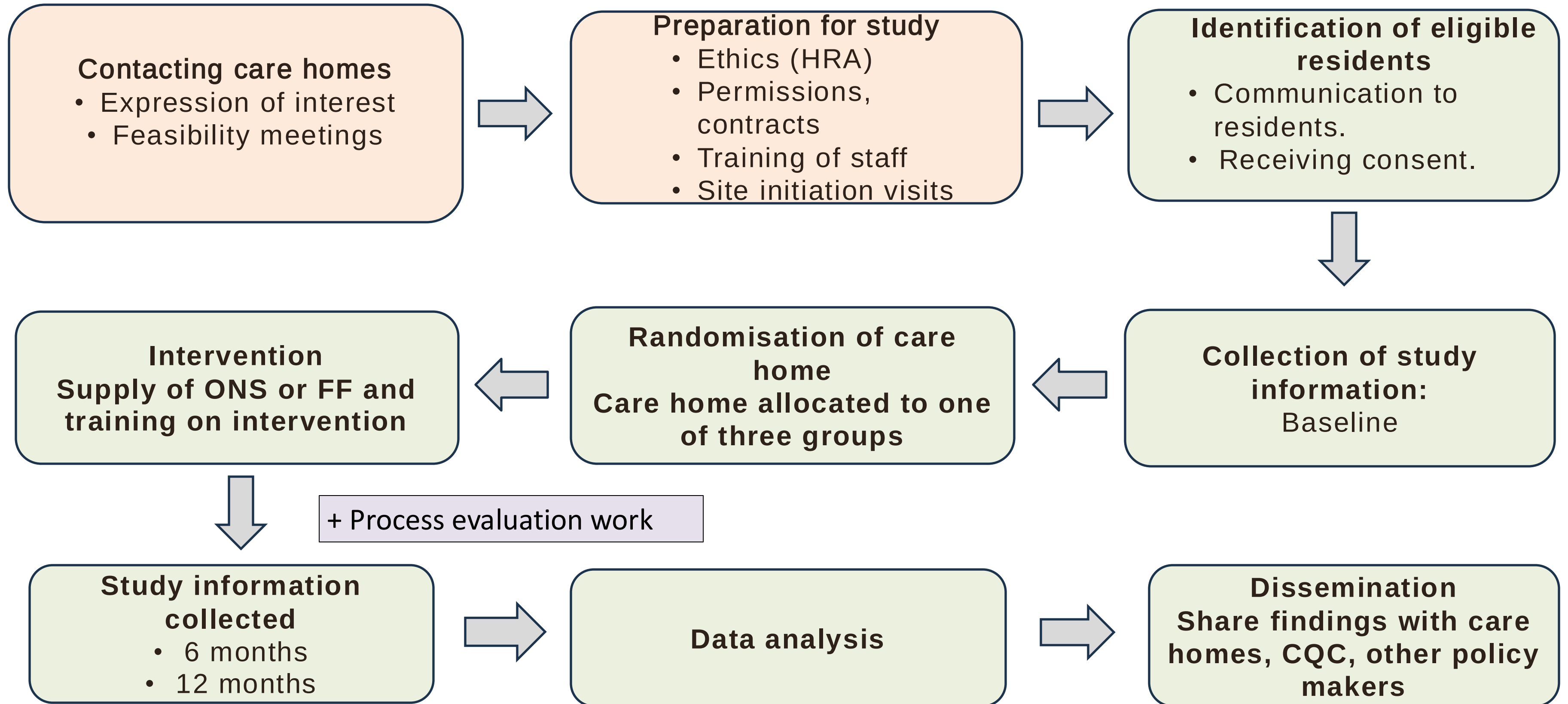
- on ONS or fortified meals
- on cancer treatment
- recent surgery
- end of life

Payments

- Costs associated with food fortification reimbursed
- ONS supplied by study
- Cost of time staff spent on project reimbursed



Study activities



For more information or how to get involved?

Scan QR code to find out more!

Visit our website

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/refresh-trial>

Contact: Dr Esther Muriuki

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Over to
Alison...

- Alison Smith-NHS Herts and West Essex ICB and member of British Dietetic Association (BDA) OPSG