

About The Hydrant – Dehydration: a major healthcare issue

“46% of Nurses say there are not enough staff to ensure patients get the help they need to eat and drink”

www.rcn.org.uk/newsevents/campaigns/nutritionnow/news_stories/news_one

“30% of admissions to A&E from care Homes are due to dehydration related issues”

Thirst4life campaign – High Wycombe Primary Care Trust 2005

www.institute.nhs.uk/mtree/nhs_live_projects/thirst4life/details.html

Dehydration is a well known and potentially catastrophic problem within several areas of healthcare. Hospitals, Care and Nursing homes as well as Social Services have a duty of care to their charges and yet there has been no standard, easy to access drinking system until now. As a result many thousands of sick and elderly people are not getting enough liquid on a daily basis. Nurses are rushed off their feet, care home staff are in the same situation and social services often visit only once a day.

In its ‘Water, Sanitation and Health guidance’ the World Health Organisation advises that ‘water is a basic nutrient of the human body and is critical to human life’. Many dietitians call it the ‘first nutrient’, since all of the body’s important chemical reactions – such as the production of energy and healthy digestion – take place in it. The recommended daily intake of water for a healthy adult is 2.5 litres per day.

Where people are bed bound or have limited mobility this means that unless there is an easily accessible source of liquid that they can reach without assistance they are wholly dependent on someone to help them have a drink. This leaves many individuals at risk from the potential health problems brought on by dehydration such as constipation, kidney and liver problems, urinary tract infections, dizziness, poor oral health, skin conditions, bed sores, blood pressure problems and lethargy.

A well hydrated person will be less likely to develop these problems thus reducing the need for drugs, such as laxatives, and the possibility of a visit to hospital. Good hydration is very simple to achieve when you have the best tap water in the world – all that is needed is a delivery system that makes it easy to drink – **The Hydrant** is that system.