

MEDIA RELEASE

18 January 2024



MUSHROOMS TO BOOST AGED CARE NUTRITION

FOODiQ Global and Australian Mushrooms have partnered with The Shoreline Luxury Retirement Living in Coffs Harbour to embark on a first-time research study focussing on enhancing vitamin D and overall nutrient intake among aged care residents. The "Mushrooms on the Menu" study explores the impact of incorporating a specially crafted chef and dietitian-designed mushroom-based menu in the Shoreline residential aged care centre. The study will investigate the feasibility of adding vitamin D-rich mushrooms to the menu, and their impact on nutritional intakes of the aged care facility residents, and their overall enjoyment of the menu.

With one in four Australian adults being vitamin D deficient, and seniors being at greater risk for deficiency, mushrooms are a problem-solving ingredient to incorporate into the menu, as they are the only natural non-animal source of vitamin D. Vitamin D is crucial for immunity and bone health³, especially important for seniors who may not be outdoors enough to get adequate vitamin D through the sun and other sources. 3 UV exposed* Cup mushrooms can fulfil a senior's entire daily vitamin D requirements.

CEO of FOODiQ Global, Dr Flávia Fayet-Moore explains that mushrooms are part of the Fungi kingdom with a unique set of nutrients found across different food groups, including vegetables, grains, nuts, and meats, as well as their own unique bioactive compounds that are beneficial for health.

"Research shows that many residents in aged care facilities have insufficient vitamin D. By simply including UV-exposed mushrooms in aged care menus, it could boost their vitamin D intake and potentially solve a serious nutritional issue in aged care facilities with a 'Food as Medicine' approach."

"Mushrooms have a unique umami and meaty taste profile, making it an excellent ingredient to 'blend' with minced meat to boost nutrient intake in a population at high risk of nutrient inadequacies. Mushrooms have no saturated fat and contain other essential vitamins and minerals such as B-vitamins."

Tammie Breneger, Director of Care at The Shoreline, says they are thrilled to be part of this partnership and study.

"We're glad we can offer our 150 residents helpful nutrition solutions to optimise health and wellbeing. Eating well is so important and vitamin D deficiency is an issue amongst adults that needs to be addressed, so we're looking forward to seeing the results of increased vitamin D intake."

As part of the program, Shoreline residents will be provided with chef and dietitian crafted meals and meal plans containing at least 75g of vitamin D-enriched mushrooms (Agaricus Bisporus variety) per person each day for 28 days with nutritional analysis done before, during and after the phase of increased mushroom consumption. Independent living residents will also be supplied with a punnet of mushrooms each week and a recipe booklet so they can consume the recommended daily mushroom servings throughout the program.

Participating residents are aged 65+, an age group that is more susceptible to vitamin D deficiency, with up to 80% of women and 70% of men living in nursing homes in Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia being found deficient⁴. Vitamin D deficiency is associated with higher risk of falls in this group, with vitamin D supplementation shown to improve fall rate⁵⁻⁷, meaning this study could improve the wellbeing and livelihood of many residents in aged care facilities.

The mushrooms used in the study are the Agaricus Bisporus variety, or cup mushrooms, high quality produce grown by Australian mushroom farmers in controlled environments. The cup mushrooms will already be exposed with sunlight to maximise vitamin D content before they are provided to residents.

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The Shoreline “Mushrooms On The Menu” study is part of a three-year research project with FOODiQ Global managed by the Australian Mushroom Growers Association and funded by Hort Innovation using the mushroom research and development levy funds from the Australian Government.

Food and health industry professionals can register interest to take part in the program and find further resources here: <https://australianmushroomgrowers.com.au/food-industry/>

MUSHROOM FACTS AND HEALTH INFORMATION

- **Sunbake your mushrooms:** Mushrooms are unique in that they produce vitamin D on exposure to UV light. One in four Australian adults has Vitamin D deficiency¹ and 100g of mushrooms can provide over 100% of daily vitamin D needs after being exposed to the sun for around 15 minutes².
- **Local mushroom statistics:** NSW mushroom growers produce 31% of Australian mushrooms. That equates to approximately 20,533 tonnes of mushrooms a year.
- **Mushrooms are good for**
 - Heart health: as they are low in kilojoules and sodium, while providing potassium.
 - Brain health and Immunity: as they contain the antioxidants and flavonoids that help our immune system and brain function.
 - Bone and muscle health: as they are a natural source of vitamin D.

ABOUT FOODiQ Global

FOODiQ Global is a global leader in the translation of food and nutrition science. It exists to empower people and organisations with food and nutrition information that is backed by science. They do this by being curious and challenging the status quo to mobilise and spark creativity, innovation and thought leadership in all that they do. They have a multi-disciplinary team of doctors, nutritionists, dietitians, and storytellers with a mission to empower organisations with research, education, and communication for meaningful impact on human health - <http://foodiq.global>.

ABOUT SHORELINE

The Shoreline provides premium residential aged care centered on quality services and compassionate care. It is dedicated to providing residents with highly nutritious and delicious meals - <https://theshoreline.com.au/>.

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