

05th August 2010.

Dear Val,

I'm writing this letter to both thank you and congratulate you on the cook book "*Truly Tasty*".

On a personal level I thank you as I am currently back on dialysis for the second time after having a transplant for 8 years, it is hard enough facing dialysis again without all the restrictions. I really didn't know which I was dreading more the dialysis or the diet?? - potatoes and veg double boiled so there is no taste or flavour left, fruit restrictions, fluid restrictions not to mention no chocolate or tasty treats (you know the ones we all know are bad for us but we all need a little of).

Then I found your book. I have tried lots of the recipes- my favourite so far being the sticky toffee pudding. What I really love is that I can make something the whole family can eat, instead of separate pots for me. They truly enjoy the recipes too. I have also been able to invite friends over and cook for them without any hassles or worrying about sticking to my diet. We have all agreed that the recipes are very tasty and that the book was well named. It really does help me feel like part of the dinner table again instead of a burden.

For this achievement I congratulate you, it is a credit to you and you should be very proud. I thank you again for the commitment and time that you put into creating this book especially when you no longer need to stick to a restricted diet. I wish you every success in the future not only with your book "*Truly Tasty*" but also with your transplant.

I look forward to your next book!

Thanks again,

Kind regards,



Sonia Treacy

06th August 2010

Dear Valerie,

I just had to put pen to paper to sincerely thank and congratulate you on producing a fabulous, normal cookery book for people living with kidney disease.

I've spent the last 8 years on dialysis wondering why I had little or no appetite. Answer, my diet sucked! I'd been eating bland, tasteless food, why, because renal diets and recipe's are designed for good health NOT the palate. Then this truly fabulous cookbook came along, *Truly Tasty*. A quality, imaginative and colourful cookery book, by the best of Irish Master-Chefs.

Tarragon Plaice Papillote, with Julienne Vegetables? Like most 32 year old males I'd no idea who Julienne was or what 'Papillote' is, but after having my first dinner party, serving this exact recipe, that everyone enjoyed, I'm now regarded as a bit of a master-chef myself. That's great, what's even better thou, is that I can healthily eat this wonderful food in confidence as the book is designed with Renal Patients in mind! I had to go and buy my mother the *Truly Tasty* cookbook as it was costing too much to continually keep photocopying!

Prior to this inspirational cookery book I've had several "Renal Diet" (photocopied) black and white recipe 'handouts' with NO pictures. These offered "safe, plain, bland, boring food" things like Cheese-Burgers, WITHOUT THE CHEESE! What a breath of fresh air the *Truly Tasty* Cookbook is for me and other people living with kidney disease. Mouth watering recipes created by great chefs, quality pictures and all designed specifically for me.

My only complaint is that I've been waiting (on dialysis) 8 years for this book. My rush to get a transplant has now diminished as my appetite's are now firmly fixed on cooking my way through this book.....

Thanks Valerie, dietitians and Chefs, It genuinely means a lot.

Yours sincerely,


Darren Cawley



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

10/08/10

Mr. Dylan Conway,
Irish Healthcare Awards,

Dear Mr. Conway,

Re: Best Patient Lifestyle Education Project

I write in support of the submission from Ms. Val Twomey who is being considered for an award in the above category.

Val is a patient with kidney disease and diabetes of many years duration. She has been a tremendous advocate for patient empowerment in patients with kidney disease. She has been an invited speaker at many national and international professional, NGO and governmental meetings. She has always been an inspirational presence in these roles.

More recently she has led a multi stake holder team in developing the "Truly Tasty" cookbook. This endeavour has merged the skills of some of Ireland's leading chefs, clinical nutritionists and publishers. For the first time patients with kidney disease can access medically and nutritionally appropriate recipes that compare to the best products of celebrity chef kitchens. This book has been an enormous success and is a manifestation of the best in patient centred, patient empowering projects.

I cannot recommend her suitability for this award highly enough.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liam Plant', written over a horizontal line.

**Dr. Liam Plant,
National Clinical Director,
HSE National Renal Office.**



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

**DEPARTMENT OF RENAL MEDICINE
CORK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL**

JE/ROS/

29 July, 2010

RE: Irish Health Care Awards: Best Patient Lifestyle, Education Project
"Truly Tasty" by Val Twomey

Dear Judges,

I am delighted to be able to write this letter of support for Ms. Twomey's recently published book, 'Truly Tasty' for an Irish Health Care Award in the category of best patient lifestyle education project.

Ms. Twomey's book is both highly original and truly unique. It provides both a tremendous resource as well as a unique educational opportunity from patient's who suffer from advanced chronic kidney disease.

To put this in perspective, patients who suffer from severe kidney disease are unable to excrete many of the normal constituents of the average diet, particularly potassium and phosphate, which may therefore climb to levels that cause serious medical complications. As a consequence, patients are required to follow a stringent diet that leads to restriction of many of the common food staples in the Irish diet. This dietary restriction often results in diets that are bland and unpalatable with as a result poor compliance. There is currently available a variety of suggested dietary plans and recipes both in text books of nutrition as well as in patient educational material. Yet the vast majority of these focus on what the patient must cut out and avoid in order to optimise their dietary health.

What Val has done, that is truly unique in the realm of renal dietetics is to assemble a group of high visibility, renowned chefs and used their work to illustrate that the health renal diet can be one that is both interesting and tasty, as well as being medically appropriate. This does much more than providing a wider range of dietary options to patients with kidney disease. It truly demonstrates that with a little bit of work it is possible to achieve a satisfying as well as satisfactory renal diet, and plays a major role in stimulating patients to seek out additional such dietary options and as a result has a tremendous potential to positively impact upon the health of patients with kidney disease and to greatly empower such patients, by showing them that a healthy diet does not necessarily have to be an unpalatable diet.

This area is of tremendous importance, especially in younger patients with chronic kidney disease, by virtue of helping to reduce the level of social isolation that becomes an inevitable element of extreme dietary restriction.

The best accolade that I can provide for Val's work is that it empowers an increasingly large proportion of the population with kidney disease, to do something that most of us take for granted, the ability to cook a meal for oneself and ones friends, especially for a special occasion and to be able to truly enjoy it.

The great success of this project is directly the result of Val's unfailing energy and dedication in developing this idea, in seeking sponsorship to help offset the cost of producing the book and allowing it to be affordable for patients, and in getting the help and input from the many famous cooks who have contributed to this book and facilitated subsequently in the organising of cooking events that have helped popularise and draw attention to the issue of high quality dietary intervention for patients with kidney disease.

If I can provide any further details regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With Kindest Regards,

Yours Sincerely,



Dr. Joseph Eustace
Consultant Nephrologist



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Dylan Conway,
Medical Publications Ireland,
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Dublin 7

Friday, 13 August 2010

Re. Truly Tasty

Dear Declan,

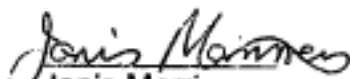
The Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute are delighted to have been involved in such a unique project and to have been one of the key stakeholders in bringing Truly Tasty to people living with kidney disease in Ireland.

For people living with kidney disease the renal diet is a cornerstone in the management of this chronic condition. However it is extremely challenging and in many cases overwhelming for many people to grasp the principles of the diet. Protein, salt, potassium and phosphate all need to be monitored and controlled in the diet. As dietitians simply educating on the principles and how to incorporate into a daily routine takes hours.

Truly Tasty is fantastic for health professionals working in the multidisciplinary team and the patients as it allows patients, friends and family access to great tasting recipes which they can incorporate into their renal diet with ease and confidence due to the in depth coding system on every recipe.

Feedback on the ground from dietitians, patients and their families has been fantastic. Truly Tasty gives inspiration and motivation to get interested in their food and explore more choice and flavours than before.

Regards,


Janis Morrissey
President, INDI



Re: Irish Healthcare Awards: Best Patient Lifestyle Education Project
Truly Tasty by Valerie Twomey

Dear Val,

I am delighted that *truly tasty* is been submitted for an Irish Healthcare Award. It is most apt that an education category for the book has been selected. I don't know how to choose between them. Best Patient Educational Project – Pharmaceutical and Best Patient Lifestyle Education Project. I would pick both if I had my way.

The forensic detail involved in producing this accurate Renal Diet Book is invisible to the naked eye. This book has achieved something that I would have said was the impossible.

The combination of the expert Chefs culinary flare within strict nutritional guidelines, and food photography of the highest quality all with Valerie Twomey's drive for excellence has produced a new world standard of Cooking Book for Renal Patients'

More and more patients are returning comments on how much they have enjoyed learning about the renal diet via the book. It has succeeded in making the Renal Patient Diet attractive.

Kind Regards,

Mark Murphy,
Chief Executive.

DEPARTMENT OF RENAL MEDICINE
CORK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

5TH August 2010


Dear Val,

I am writing to let you know how well your recent cookbook "Truly Tasty" has been received. The feedback from patients, carers and staff has been overwhelmingly positive. It has become an invaluable resource. It is a great asset to those with chronic kidney disease both in the pre dialysis phase and while on dialysis. As you know diet is an integral part of treatment for a person with chronic kidney disease. It is wonderful to have "Truly Tasty" available for patients and their families. It is fast becoming our food bible.

Many thanks to yourself and all others involved in bringing this project to fruition. May I also particularly thank all of the renal dietitians who gave so selflessly of their time and expertise.

Wishing you continued success with all your future endeavours.

Yours Sincerely



Phil O'Driscoll
Renal Nurse Specialist



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Ambulatory Care,

Renal Unit,

Ext. 2321

18th August 2010.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

I was lucky enough to be invited to the recent cookery demonstration in citywest launching *"Truly Tasty"*. I never imagined that some of Ireland's top chefs could meet the challenge of compiling such delicious recipes bearing in mind the dietary restrictions that people with renal disease live with on a daily basis. The result is a beautifully illustrated book that enables people with renal disease indulges in a variety of tasty meals with the knowledge that they can stay within their restrictions.

A healthy balanced diet is of the utmost importance in people with any form of renal disease. The renal diet can be restrictive and sometimes offer some challenges in trying to produce meals that are healthy, nutritious, and tasty but above all cater to the person's individual dietary requirements.

I have worked in nephrology for fifteen years, ten of those I spent in haemodialysis, three in transplantation and currently I work in the nephrology outpatient setting with pre – dialysis as well as transplant patients. I often sympathised with patients as they struggled to come up with ideas that didn't involve having to cook two separate meals, one for them and one for the rest of the family. I myself enjoy cooking and could never imagine cooking an entire dinner without using salt!!! Then along came *"Truly Tasty"*

"Truly Tasty" is indeed unique in that it offers the renal patient an easy to use cookbook that includes plenty of excellent menu choices that are both tasty and more importantly specially adapted to the renal diet. I was particularly impressed with the bookmark, a simple idea but yet a reminder to the person of their individual daily allowances. The easy to use guide detailing dietary allowances per portion is an excellent education tool but summarised in a user friendly way. From a professional point of view I feel that the positive effect that the book is having on my patients is helping with dietary compliance as well as helping them in dealing with their restrictive diet. As one patient commented, "at last I can cook a meal for my friends without cheating".

Above all *"Truly Tasty"* has had a very positive impact on the renal population as well as their families. I have experienced many conversations in the clinics which have led to people once again rekindling their interest in food in a very mainstream way. The impact has not just been in Ireland but internationally. Recently a close relative of a recently transplanted patient was so impressed that a large donation was made to the renal unit with the intention of purchasing *"Truly Tasty"* and distributing to patients who otherwise would not be able to buy it. He himself been an avid foodie from the states had tried unsuccessfully to source a cookbook of a similar nature.

This book has educated and encouraged renal patients in such a positive way that it has reawakened their interest in food. The renal diet is no longer bland and uneventful; it is now a gourmet experience. Well done *"Truly Tasty"*.

Yours Faithfully,



Sr. Olive McEnroe, Ambulatory Care



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16th August 2010.

To whom it concerns

On behalf of the staff and patients of the Dialysis Unit, Waterford Regional Hospital we would like to congratulate and compliment Valerie Twomey on her wonderful production of her book Truly Tasty. Having worked in the Dialysis Unit for many years the renal diet has always been the one challenging area for both patients and nurses. This book has given all of our patients a real chance at varying their diet and thus better adherence.

I believe that Valerie Twomey is a true inspiration for all. Having been on dialysis herself, then to receive a transplant she continues to think of other patients and strives to make their lives on dialysis better. She has put an incredible amount of time and energy into the making of this book which will enhance the lives of all patients on dialysis. Valerie also highlights the need for awareness of organ donation and the positive effect it creates.

We wish Valerie every success in all aspects of her life and remind her of the difference she constantly makes to peoples lives.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda Ronan CNM II".

Brenda Ronan

CNM II, Renal Dialysis Unit.