

Care Home For Adults Food Fluid and Nutritional Care Model Policy and procedures

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Although the literature contains best practice guidance for various aspects of food fluid and nutritional care there is currently no guidance on a model policy and procedures.

The information given in this document should not be regarded as a statement of The Care Inspectorate, nor relied upon as a comprehensive statement of best practice, but what The Care Inspectorate would expect to see in place for a service's food, fluid and nutritional care policy and procedures. The information is specifically relating to food, fluid and nutritional care and will need to be considered along with other relevant service information.

Policy and procedures help make clear the management arrangements for food, fluid and nutritional care of service users. It helps provide evidence about what food, fluid and nutritional care best practice guidance are being used to inform care. It also provides a basis for staff training.

Most services have some form of policy and procedures on food, fluid and nutritional care. Some of these may contain aspects of a catering policy while others have a separate catering policy. It is important that if the catering policy is separate that it is consistent with the food, fluid and nutritional care policy.

The Food, Fluid and Nutritional Care Hospitals 2003 NHS QIS now HIS set out the aspect of nutritional care:

- Policy and strategy
- Assessment, screening and care planning
- Planning and delivery of food and fluid
- Provision of Food and Fluid to patients
- Patient information and Communication
- Education and Training for staff

Although this was written for hospitals much of its content can be used in planning care in a care home and can be used as a framework when developing a policy and procedures for care homes.

The following are some examples of information that would be expected to have been considered and included in a service's food, fluid and nutritional care policy and procedures.

What should be the aims and objectives of a policy?

The policy would be expected to start with what the service was aiming to achieve in the food, fluid and nutritional care of its service, such as meeting the dietary and nutritional needs of service users to promote their health and wellbeing. In addition it would be expected to see that the service recognised and promoted eating and drinking as a core enjoyment and social function in service users lives.

What best practice should inform the policy?

The policy and procedures should recognise and meet the National Care Standards. Best practice guidance on food, fluid and nutritional care should inform the policy and procedures. Signposting to best practice guidance for care homes covering; screening for the risk of under nutrition, meeting fluids needs, catering and more can be found on The Care Inspectorate website.

What are the staff responsibilities?

The policy should state staffs responsibility for food, and nutritional care, including who is responsible for menu planning.

Who should see the policy and procedures?

It would be expected that the service was aiming to increase awareness of policy and procedure among staff, service users and families.

What assessment will be made of service users dietary needs?

- What Dietary Assessment (likes /dislikes, therapeutic diets, assistance to eat and drink etc) will be made of the service user's needs on admission and ongoing?
- How will service users be screened for the risk of under nutritional on admission and ongoing? It would be expected to see a reference to best practice such as the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST)

What care planning will be made for food, fluid and nutrition?

- Will all service users have an eating and drinking care plan?
- Will service users with an additional special /therapeutic diet need, have an additional care plan or will it be merged into their eating and drinking care plan?
- What form will the care plan take, such as - need, outcome, actions required?
- How will care plans for food related issues such as diabetes and constipation be relate to the eating and drinking care plan?
- What monitoring, such as weight, food and fluid intake, of the service users care plan will take place?
- What procedures are used to evaluate the care plan?
- What is the food and fluid policy for end of life care?

Monitoring service users food and fluid intakes

- What is the policy for the use of food and fluid monitoring charts?

What food and drinks will be provided to meet the needs of service users?

- Who is responsible for planning menu? Do they have the appropriate understanding about service users eating, drinking and nutritional needs and catering?
- What best practice will be used to plan menu and the provision of special diets as those for unplanned weight loss or food textured diets such as pureed. We would expect a service to use for example, Food in Hospitals National Catering and Nutrition Specification for Food and Fluid Provision in Hospitals in Scotland 2008. Although written for hospitals most can apply to care homes.
- As the first stage of menu planning we would expect to see a needs assessment of the service users.
- How will service users be consulted about the menu at the development stage?
- Does the policy demonstrate that the other dietary needs of the service users are
- What snacks will be available during the day, evening and night?
- What drinks will be provided? What are the procedures to promote service users fluid intake?
- What provision will be made for service users who do not like the food on the menu?
- How will the menu be evaluated to establish if it is meeting service users needs

What is your policy for the management of service users special diet needs such as:

- Unplanned weight loss?
- Eating drinking and swallowing problems
- Unplanned weight gain
- Diabetes
- Tube feeding

Provision of food and fluids to service users

- What will be the dining room environment?
- What procedures will operate for food and fluid service?
- What facilities are there for service users to prepare their own food?
- What help will be offered to service users who need assistance to eat and /or drink?
- What information will be given to service users/relatives on food, fluid and nutritional care, menu, and access to snacks and drinks?
- How will service users and their relatives' views of food provision be obtained on ongoing bases?

What is the procedure for referral to health professionals such as a Dietician?

How will the service users be involved?

What information will be given to the health professional about the service user?

What information can the health professional access to make their assessment of the service user, for example care plan, and weight charts?

Where are the health professional assessment and advice to be documented?

What is the plan for staff training on food, fluid and nutrition?

- What is your eating, drinking and training plan at induction and ongoing development for the various types of staff such as care assistant , nurses and person responsible for planning the menu and catering staff

What auditing/monitoring of food, fluid and nutritional care is made?

- Will there be systems in place to show how well the service is managing the risk of under nutrition.