**Diet and Food Textures**

**Competency**

Leader’s Guide

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With national awareness, reform and quality initiatives surrounding person centered care - organizations will want to have a system that promotes a competent, comprehensive, resident-dining program that includes ensuring residents are receiving the proper diet and diet texture. These actions include a review and revision of current policies, procedures, implementation processes, documentation system, quality monitoring, communication and education including staff, feeding assistants, residents and families related to the components to develop our staff competency.

It is important that all staff understand the expectations of the regulators and best practice approaches. Providers are obligated to comprehensively assess each individual resident and design an individualized plan to support the resident achieving his or her of well-being/function, thereby ensuring a process to education and identify evidence of competency will be essential.

Best practice approach to diet texture management includes the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) Framework[[1]](#footnote-1), which will require dietician and medical director involvement in planning, education, policy and procedure development, interdisciplinary team education, resident and resident representative education and competency evaluation.

It is important for staff to understand the importance of receiving the appropriate diet and diet texture as well as any ordered thickening for liquids for residents:

1. A nutritious, well-balanced meal plan based upon comprehensive assessment and orders
2. For safe swallowing
3. For dignity during meals
4. To maximize intake for residents with modifications to their diet

Areas for planning staff training and competency for diets and diet texture may include but are not limited to evidence of competency with the following:

* Ensuring physician (or licensed dietician per State Law) order outlining resident diet
* Ensuring physician (or licensed dietician per State Law) order outlining the texture consistency of specific texture or any mechanically altered diet
* Ensuring physician order for any modifications with thickening of any liquids
* Identifying proper diet served
* Ensuring ordered diet and texture is provided for all in-between meal snacks and activities where food is offered
* Ensuring modifications with thickening of any liquids/fluids is served for all fluids offered to resident per order
* If pre-thickened liquids are not available for all fluids, competency evaluation for all staff thickening liquids for resident consumption

Keeping the individual at their highest level of functioning has a dramatic impact on quality of life. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) continues to monitor providers’ compliance with comprehensive assessment, planning of care, implementing interventions and re-evaluation. This includes identification of resources and services necessary to care for all residents as identified in the facility assessment.

Organizational Leaders will need to ensure competency of all staff members involved appropriate diets and diet textures. Adequate resources for the program will need to be evaluated including:

* Staff
  + RN Nurse
  + Licensed Nurses
  + CNA’s
  + Interdisciplinary Staff with resident contact (Trained Feeding Assistant)
* Documentation Considerations
  + Paper vs. Electronic Health Record
  + Assessment/Evaluation Forms
  + Care Planning
  + Implementation and documentation of interventions
  + Documentation
* Education
  + RN Nurse
  + Licensed Nurses
  + CNA’s
  + Interdisciplinary Staff with resident contact (Trained Feeding Assistant)
* Evaluation and Monitoring
  + Identification of Responsibility
  + System to Evaluate
  + QAPI Considerations
* Supplies and Equipment
* Medication Management

**Resources**

* Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services State Operations Manual, Appendix PP – Guidance to Surveyors for Long Term Care Facilities (Rev. 173, 11-22-17): <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltcf.pdf>
* Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Form CMS-20053 (1/2018) Dining Observation, CMS-20075 (5/2017) Nutrition Critical Element Pathway and CMS 20092 (5/2017) Hydration Critical Element pathway: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/GuidanceforLawsAndRegulations/Nursing-Homes.html>
* International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative: <https://iddsi.org/>

1. International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative: <https://iddsi.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)