

NUTRITION MANAGEMENT

PURPOSE:

People with a disability are often dependent on others for access to nourishing, enjoyable and culturally appropriate food. Therefore members of staff supporting people with a disability need to ensure this access.

SCOPE:

This policy will provide direction and guidance to members of staff in their duty of care and best practice in the management of nutrition for people with a disability.

POLICY:

People with a disability have a spectrum of nutritional support needs that include:

- Assistance in making wise food choices.
- Assistance in food purchasing, preparation and other aspects of daily living related to food.
- Managing medical problems where diet is an important part of treatment (e.g. obesity, diabetes).
- Special attention to physical or visual difficulties with eating, drinking and swallowing, special seating/positioning, special utensils, and supervision while eating.
- Assistance while they eat or drink.
- Specifically prepared food to meet their individual needs.
- Tube feeding as an alternative or supplementary method of receiving food and liquid.

1. Principles

For people with a disability to achieve and maintain nutritional health, all members of staff need to implement the following principles:

- Breakaway Toowoomba has a responsibility to ensure good nutritional health and this responsibility extends to all levels of the service – direct support staff, supervisors and the Executive Officer. This responsibility includes meeting various legal and statutory requirements that exist in state or federal legislation.
- The provision of appropriate and nutritious food is an essential feature of the Highfields and Glenvale centre based respite support.
- Religion and culture should be recognized in food preparation and meal selection and written into the clients individual support plan.
- Clients must be involved as far as possible in decisions concerning their nutritional health.
- Families and advocates have a vital role to play in the nutrition and health of clients. Their involvement should be promoted, respected and encouraged.

PROCEDURE

The following procedure outlines how this policy will be implemented

Reviewed: 26th August 2009

Ratified by the Management Committee: 22nd October 2009

Review Date: August 2010

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Approved: 

1. Nutritionally Adequate Food

Food purchased for the Guesthouses will be planned so that client's obtain a nutritionally adequate and healthy diet. The purchases will be made each week with the following factors in mind:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Culture and religion.
- Level of activity.
- Health issues.
- Therapeutic requirements

2. Cultural and Religious Diversity

Breakaway Toowoomba will include each client's requirements and cultural and religious customs when developing client individual support plans. This will also be demonstrated within menu planning, meal preparation and mealtime practices.

3. Risk Identification

- Breakaway Toowoomba will identify and address individual risks related to nutrition and swallowing through the use of the *Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist* (refer to appendix).
- Support and encourage the involvement of the person with a disability, family members and other advocates in decision making.
- Support people who have special needs (e.g. physical or sensory problems).
- Ensure that people who are tube fed have their nutritional care plans reviewed at least six monthly (where possible with the involvement of a dietitian in the review).
- Ensure that people who have difficulty swallowing have their nutritional care plans reviewed at least six monthly (where possible with the involvement of a speech pathologist in the review).
- Have a dietitian's assessment made when a person's 'healthy weight range' cannot be determined.
- Monitor indications of unhealthy weight through periodical weighing, as often as individual need requires.
- Seek assistance from health professionals when people are on medication, which may interfere with the absorption of food or nutrients.
- Facilitate the involvement of a dietitian or an appropriate health care professional as needed.

4. Individual Choice

Wherever possible, the client will be able to express their likes and dislikes about particular foods/drinks (e.g. crisp and crunchy, smooth, cold or hot) and have these recognized within the daily food selections, menu planning and food purchases. Whilst all people from time to time will choose foods which may not be optimal for them, generally members of staff have a responsibility to safeguard the health of the people they support through education and information about the consequences of their choices

Approved (Executive Officer) David Bar Date 22.10.09

Approved (Chairperson) Paula Devine Date 22.10.09