

Promoting good nutritional care in care homes: practice note

August 2024



Improving nutrition and hydration to make every mouthful count is so important for people living in care homes

It:

- can help people to have more energy and enjoy their food
- helps people to fight off infection
- can help to prevent and treat some conditions
- is important for good skin health
- promotes wound healing
- impacts on all aspects of the body and wellbeing.

[Eating and drinking well in care: good practice guidance for older people](#)

[The Significance of Nutrition and Hydration](#)



What we expect registered services to put in place.



The service provides a good nutritional variety of food that ensures plenty of choice so that people enjoy eating.



Staff with the right knowledge and skills to promote good nutrition.

[Nutrition in Care Settings – Food Fortification](#)

[Nutrition in Care Homes](#)

[Nutrition and Hydration](#)



Communication with people who experience care, their families and partner agencies.



Skilled staff who can recognise when someone is not eating or losing weight and are confident and work together across departments to support people and put a support plan in place.

[NHS Grampian Food Fortification – A guide on how to add extra nourishment](#)

[NHS Tayside – Fortified juice using egg white powder](#)

What we expect registered services to put in place

Service use a recognised malnutrition screening tool such as the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST); and where a person initially scores 1 or above, MUST step 5 is followed.

This risk assessment is then used to inform a nutrition care plan that reflects the person's needs, wishes and preferences and what nutrition support will be provided.

[Nutrition in Care Settings – Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool \(MUST\)](#)



Clear records of discussions about the risks and plan of care for promoting good nutrition and hydration with the person (or where appropriate, their representative with power of attorney or guardianship) including if they have chosen or needed their family or representative to be part of the discussion.

A white line-art icon of a winding road with a dashed center line, set against a teal circular background.

The provider ensures that staff have clear and available information on referral pathways for specialist advice, as this may differ depending on the NHS board area.

Services use a recognised oral care screening tool, which is then used to inform an oral care plan, which includes registration details with a dentist.

Supporting people who need a texture modified diet

Know the [IDDSI Framework](#) level for each person you support.

- Provide a variety of snacks rather than rely on yoghurts.
- Use soaking solutions to improve presentation as you eat with your eyes.
- Soaking solution ideas for people who need a texture modified diet.

[NHS Grampian – About your level 4 diet](#)

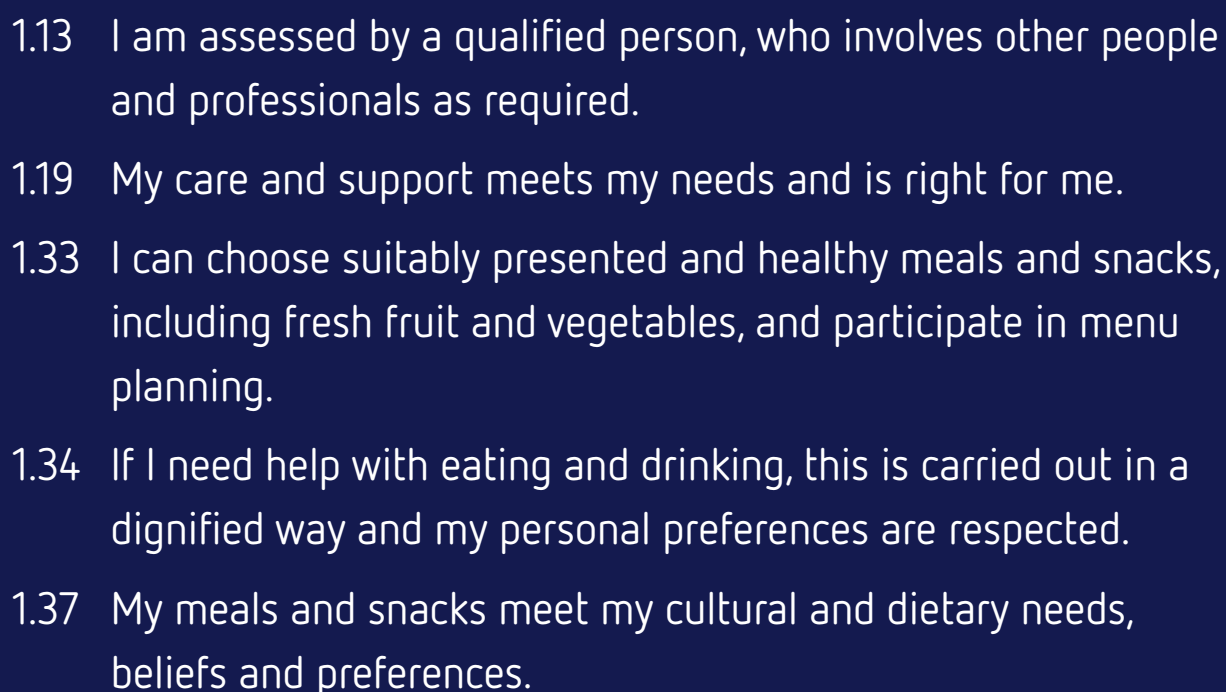
[Nestle Biscuit Recipe](#)

[Thick and Easy Clear Cookbook](#)




How good nutritional support meets quality standards

The Health and Social Care Standards

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- 1.13 I am assessed by a qualified person, who involves other people and professionals as required.
 - 1.19 My care and support meets my needs and is right for me.
 - 1.33 I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning.
 - 1.34 If I need help with eating and drinking, this is carried out in a dignified way and my personal preferences are respected.
 - 1.37 My meals and snacks meet my cultural and dietary needs, beliefs and preferences.

Quality framework for adults and older people in care homes

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- 1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support.
 - 3.2 Staff have the right knowledge, competence, and development to care and support people.
 - 5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflect people's outcomes and wishes.

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