

Oral Nutritional Supplements in Care Homes: Information for Care Home Staff

Care home staff should refer to the Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) in Care Homes Policy¹, which applies across Ipswich & East Suffolk and West Suffolk from 01 September 2016. The information below explains how the Policy will be implemented.

Care home residents who are not currently prescribed ONS

- Do not request ONS on prescription unless authorised to do so by a dietitian.
- Follow the general dietetic advice below.

Care home residents who are currently prescribed ONS

- Continue the ONS *for now*.
- A dietitian will review these residents between September and December 2016, with a view to stopping prescribed ONS where appropriate and switching to homemade supplements with extra snacks and food fortification*. The dietitian will communicate this to the GP and care home, to ensure the prescribing change is implemented and documented.

General dietetic advice

- Document nutritional status on admission and thereafter using the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST)² and follow the local policy guidelines.

MUST score 1 (medium risk of malnutrition): Offer homemade supplements and extra snacks. If no improvement after 2 weeks, add in food fortification*.

MUST score 2 or higher (high risk of malnutrition): Offer homemade supplements and extra snacks in addition to food fortification*.

- Monitor all intake on food and fluid charts.
- Refer to a community dietitian if weight loss continues after four weeks of offering homemade supplements, snacks and food fortification*. All residents including those on a food first plan should be screened regularly using MUST and the local policy followed. This plan includes how and when to refer to a dietitian.
- Residents with diabetes: Do not offer homemade fruit juice. Offer savoury and dairy snacks/fortified foods rather than sweet options.

*Food fortification – This means adding ingredients to normal food to increase energy content without increasing the volume of food eaten.

Recipes

Recipes for homemade supplements, snacks and food fortification are available on the Ipswich Hospital, West Suffolk Hospital and CCG websites:

<http://www.ipswichhospital.nhs.uk/dietetics/food-first/information-for-care-homes.htm>

<http://www.wsh.nhs.uk/ServicesAtoZ/ClinicalServices/N-P/NutritionandDietetics/NutritionandDietetics.aspx>

<http://www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk/> <http://www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk/>

Training and further information

Training is available free of charge for care home staff from: Ipswich Hospital Dietitians, tel. 01473 704000 or West Suffolk Community Dietitians, tel 01284 748850.

Further information: [The National Association of Care Catering](#) and [The Caroline Walker Trust](#)

Concerns or complaints

Contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 0800 389 6819 or pals@suffolk.nhs.uk

¹ Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) in Care Homes Policy. See www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk or <http://www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk/>

² <http://www.bapen.org.uk/screening-and-must/must/introducing-must>