



Food, nutrition and dining

Stand-up discussion notes

A resource for providers
and aged care workers



What:

This document provides some discussion suggestions for talking about the Commission's food, nutrition and dining introductory resources.

Purpose:

The purpose of these discussion suggestions is to:

- promote the benefits of improving the food, nutrition and dining experience of people receiving care and services
- encourage you and your team to think about and discuss governance, processes and practice by exploring strategies for improving the food, nutrition and dining experience of people in your service.

When:

The intention of these discussion points is for short (around 10 minute) group learning, such as short stand-up meetings.

Each topic and associated learning resource has 2 sets of reflective discussion questions for the:

- provider and management team
- workers involved in resident care.

You can choose the questions that are relevant to you and your team, or break them up over several sessions, as determined by the needs of your group/s.

Topic:

Food, nutrition and dining: Resident food and drink choices

Consider the following resource, then use the discussion questions to reflect on how your services supports residents' choice related to food, nutrition and dining.

Learning resource:

[Supporting choice about food and drink in aged care | Aged Care](#) fact sheet



Discussion questions

Questions for the provider and management team

- Do audits consider resident choices in relation to food and drink? What has been the outcome? How does this include residents living with dementia and others that have problems with verbal communication?
- How is resident choice considered as far as cultural and religious needs and preferences?
- How do we engage consistently with residents from non-English speaking backgrounds?
- Do our policies and procedures consider resident choices about both food and drink, and when texture modified diets are in place?
- What training is there for staff about resident informed choices around food and drink?
- What quality improvements could we use to make sure each resident's informed choices are included in care? Have these been evaluated?
- What strategies do we have in place to gather individual preferences when it comes to food, nutrition and dining? Consider a food and preferences form, such as the [My food and dining preferences form](#).
- What strategies do we have in place to capture older people feedback and preference as a group, such as consumer advisory bodies, food focus groups or resident meetings with a focus on food, nutrition and dining? To find out more about consumer advisory bodies and quality advisory bodies, visit the Commission's [Provider Governance](#) webpage.

Questions for workers involved in resident care

- How do we make sure a person's choices are included in meal planning, delivery, and the mealtime experience?
- Do resident care plans include individual choices around eating and drinking?
- How closely do our policies and processes follow the *Supporting informed choice about food and drink in aged care* factsheet linked above?
- Do we have the right supports in place to provide residents with all the information they need to make informed choices about eating and drinking (for example dietitian and speech pathology services)?
- How can we support resident choice when it comes to food, nutrition and dining?
- If a resident expresses their likes or dislikes to us informally, how can we make sure this information is recorded and communicated?
- How do we understand the choices and preferences of those residents who have difficulty communicating?
- What other ideas, innovations, inspirations do we have and who can we tell?

Guest speaker suggestion

As part of your reflective process, consider inviting a guest speaker to deliver a presentation or answer questions. For this topic you could consider local, commonly used:

- health professionals who can support older people making choices and decisions about the foods and fluids they choose to consume even if it is a risk to them (this is known as eating and drinking with acknowledged risk)
- chefs and cooks.

Related resources for further learning



Our policies and procedures

- [insert any relevant document links]

Relevant resources available on the Commission's Food, Nutrition and Dining webpages for [providers](#), [workers](#) and [older people](#).

- [Providing food and dining choice](#) - aged care staff poster
- [Supporting choice about food and drink in aged care](#) – for providers and workers
- [Dining and consumer choice](#) webinar

Topic:

Introduction to the dining experience

Consider the following resource, then use the discussion questions to reflect on the current dining experience where you work.

Learning resource:

Introduction to dining experience video

Access and view the video on the [providers](#) or [workers](#) web pages.



Discussion questions

Questions for the provider and management team

- When was the last time we looked at dining in our services and thought about how we could improve it?
- When was the last food survey we conducted with residents? What was the outcome?
- How do we gather feedback on food, nutrition and the dining experience from people living with dementia or cognitive impairment and people with communication challenges?
- Are our policies and procedures related to the dining process up-to-date and regularly reviewed? Does rostering support resident dining needs?
- What 'dining experience' training is available for our staff? (Dining experience includes: dining space, ambience, noise, decor, layout, tableware and setting, crockery and cutlery, support, interactions with staff and social and cultural meaning.)
- What quality improvements have we or are we using related to the dining experience? Have they been evaluated?

Questions for workers involved in resident care

- What do we do well when it comes to the dining experience of those in our care? (Dining experience includes: dining space, ambience, noise, decor, layout, tableware and setting, crockery and cutlery, support, interactions with staff and social and cultural meaning.)
- How could we improve the dining experience for each resident?
- How can we further support our residents to connect, interact and engage during mealtimes?

- What do we do if someone has not eaten their food?
- How do we make sure residents have the right utensils and equipment to support them to eat independently and are receiving the help they need?
- How do we make sure there is enough staff available to provide this help?
- How do we make sure residents are getting the correct meals? (This includes special diets, consistency, allergy and choice.)
- How do we know if a resident is drinking enough?
- How do we know if a person living with dementia doesn't like a meal or a food? What do we do about this to make sure they get something else next time?
- How do we make sure that clinical tasks are not part of the dining experience?
- How do we communicate and respond if a resident is not eating or drinking part or all of their meal?
- What other ideas, innovations, inspirations do we have and who can we tell?

Guest speaker suggestion

As part of your reflective process, consider inviting a guest speaker to deliver a presentation or answer questions. For this topic you could consider local, commonly used:

- chefs and cooks
- special guests from food committees and food focus groups.

Related resources for further learning



Our policies and procedures

- [insert any relevant document links]

Relevant resources available on the Commission's Food, Nutrition and Dining webpages for [providers](#), [workers](#) and [older people](#).

- [My food and dining preferences](#) form
- Getting the dining experience right - [providers](#) and [workers](#) fact sheet
- [Getting the dining experience right](#) – aged care workers poster
- [Dining and consumer choice](#) webinar
- [A case study in food, dining and nutrition](#) webinar

Free learning module in the Commission's [Aged Care Learning Information System](#) (Alis)

- Getting the dining experience right

Topic:

Supporting residents with swallowing difficulties

Consider the following resource, then use the discussion questions to reflect on how your services supports residents with swallowing difficulties.

Learning resource:

Supporting residents with swallowing difficulties video

Access and view the video on the [providers](#) or [workers](#) web pages.



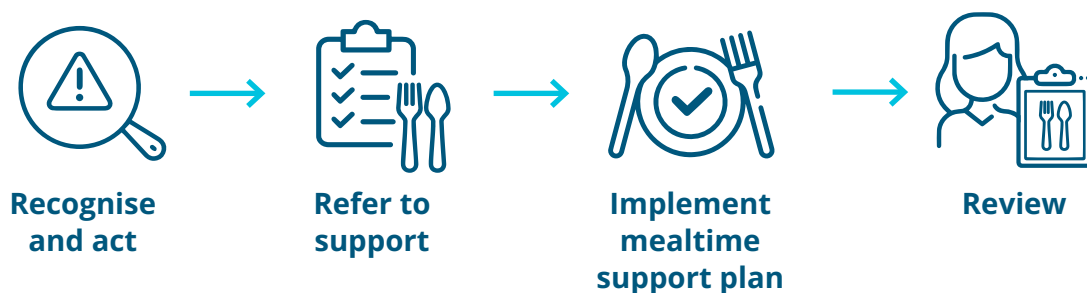
Discussion questions

Questions for the provider and management team

- When was the last audit completed on the detection and management of swallowing difficulties? What was the outcome?
- Do our policies and procedures include enough guidance for staff to identify, respond and support residents with swallowing impairment? Do these policies and procedures include management of a choking event? Do they include reference to accessing allied health (like speech pathologists)? Are these in date and regularly reviewed?
- What training do staff get related to identifying and managing swallowing difficulties?
- Does our service understand the concept of Eating and Drinking with Acknowledged Risk (EDAR)?
- Are residents clearly encouraged and supported to make decisions about texture modification to their food and drink to balance swallowing risks and nutrition, hydration and quality of life?
- Is there training in relation to managing a choking event (for example first aid response)?
- What quality improvements have we or are we using related to swallowing difficulties and eating and drinking? Have they been evaluated?
- Do our food services staff have training and knowledge about texture modification and the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) standards?
- What processes are in place for accessing and making referrals to speech pathologists for expert assessment, advice and education about swallowing?

Questions for workers involved in resident care

- How do you recognise if a resident might be having difficulty eating, drinking or swallowing?
- If a resident is choking, what are the immediate steps you would take to respond?
- If a resident is coughing while eating and drinking, what steps would you take to respond? Who do you refer them to and how?
- How do the speech pathologist and dietitian support residents with eating, drinking and swallowing impairments?
- What strategies are in place to make sure residents who have difficulty swallowing are supported to safely eat and drink?
- What happens when the resident doesn't want to follow the speech pathologist's advice? Do we understand EDAR?
- How closely do our processes follow the process described in the video?



- How do we monitor that residents are getting the hydration and nutrition that's in their care plan?
- How do we make sure that texture modified diets and fluids are the correct consistency for consumers?
- How can we support residents' choice when it comes to eating and drinking?
- What other ideas, innovations, inspirations do we have and who can we tell?

Guest speaker suggestion

As part of your reflective process, consider inviting a guest speaker to deliver a presentation or answer questions. For this topic you could consider local, commonly used:

- speech pathologist
- dietitian.

Related resources for further learning



Our policies and procedures

- [insert any relevant document links]

Relevant resources available on the Commission's Food, Nutrition and Dining webpages for [providers](#), [workers](#) and [older people](#).

- Supporting safe and enjoyable mealtimes for people with swallowing difficulties - [providers](#) and [workers](#) fact sheet
- Nutrition and texture modified food and drinks – [providers](#) and [workers](#) fact sheet
- [Informed choice and supported decision making for people who plan to Eat and Drink with Acknowledged Risk](#) – resident factsheet
- [Swallowing, texture-modified diets and nutrition](#) webinar

Free learning module in the Commission's [Aged Care Learning Information System](#) (Alis)

- Supporting residents with swallowing difficulties
- Using modified food and fluids

Topic:

Supporting oral health of residents in our care

Consider the following resource, then use the discussion questions to reflect on how your services supports residents' oral health.

Learning resource:

Introduction to oral health video

Access and view the video on the [providers](#) or [workers](#) web pages.



Discussion questions

Questions for the provider and management team

- When was the last audit done on oral health (like toothbrush or denture audits)? What was the outcome?
- Are our policies and procedures on oral health up-to-date and regularly reviewed? Do they include reference to referrals to oral health or dental practitioners?
- What training is there for staff on oral health? What are our expectations? Are we confident good oral health practices are happening consistently?
- What are the current evidence-based recommendations (guidelines) for oral health in older people and how effectively are we complying with and/or supporting older people to follow the guidelines?
- What quality improvements could we implement on oral health care of residents? Have these been evaluated? How do we promote the importance of oral health care to residents?

Questions for workers involved in resident care

- What plan do we have in place to support daily oral health care of each resident?
 - How do we encourage and support a resident to independently manage their oral and dental care?
 - How do we monitor and make sure residents are receiving oral health care as it is included in their care plan?
 - How do we make sure dentures are appropriately fitted and worn?
 - How do we make sure dentures are clean and don't get lost?

- Do we have the right supports in place?
 - How do you recognise if a resident has an oral health care issue (for example experiencing pain and discomfort)? If someone has a sore mouth, what do we do?
 - Do the care plans reflect the oral health care plan and needs of each resident?
- What do we do if the resident declines to receive oral health care?
- What other ideas, innovations, inspirations do we have and who can we tell?

Guest speaker suggestion

As part of your reflective process, consider inviting a guest speaker to deliver a presentation or answer questions. For this topic you could consider local, commonly used:

- dentist
- dental practitioner.

Related resources for further learning



Our policies and procedures

- [insert any relevant document links]

Relevant resources available on the Commission's Food, Nutrition and Dining webpages for [providers](#), [workers](#) and [older people](#).

- [Supporting daily oral health care in residential aged care staff](#) fact sheet
- [KNOW, LOOK, ACT – Oral Pain](#) - aged care staff poster
- [Oral and dental health and its impact on eating and nutrition](#) webinar

Free learning module in the Commission's [Aged Care Learning Information System](#) (Alis)

- Supporting resident's oral health

Topic:

Supporting people living with dementia to eat and drink well

Consider the following resource, then use the discussion questions to reflect on how your services supports people living with dementia to eat and drink well.

Learning resource:

Food, nutrition, dining and dementia video

Access and view the video on the [providers](#) or [workers](#) web pages.



Discussion questions

Questions for the provider and management team

- What educational opportunities are available to workers who want to increase their understanding of how dementia affects eating and drinking?
- How do we look at the experience of people living with dementia who can't take part in a survey?
- How do we gather feedback on food, nutrition and the dining experience from people living with dementia?
- When was the last time we considered the dining environment in our service and made improvements to it for people living with dementia? Are they still working? Have the changes been monitored and reviewed?
- What is the process of escalating concerns?
- Do we make sure there are as many workers as possible available at mealtimes to provide support for the dining needs of people living with dementia, including assistance to eat and drink if and when required?
- What processes are in place for accessing healthcare professionals for expert assessment, advice, and education about dementia-related concerns or changes?

Questions for workers involved in resident care

- What aspects of our dining experience have proven successful for people living with dementia? (Dining experience includes: dining space, ambience, sound, décor, layout, tableware and settings, crockery and cutlery, support and assistance, interactions with staff, and social and cultural significance.)
- How could we improve the dining experience for people living with dementia?

- How can we make sure that the person living with dementia is supported to make choices about what they eat and drink and how they dine? For example, using a food and preferences form, such as the My food and dining preferences form, using menus with pictures or involving the person, their family, friends and other representatives in menu planning.
- How can we recognise loss of appetite and changes in taste and smell in people living with dementia? For example, refusing food, overusing condiments, requests for food and drinks to be served at extreme temperatures.
- How do we recognise if a person living with dementia might be experiencing difficulty eating, drinking or swallowing? For example, avoiding certain foods because they are hard to chew or swallow, closing lips, turning head away or pushing person's hand away, or agitation or distress during mealtimes.
- What do we do if someone is not eating and drinking as much as they used to or is having difficulty swallowing?
- How can we support people living with dementia to look after their oral health?
- How can we recognise dental or oral health problems in people living with dementia?

Guest speaker suggestion

As part of your reflective process, consider inviting a guest speaker to deliver a presentation or answer questions. For this topic you could consider local, commonly used:

- behaviour support specialist
- dementia specialist consultant
- dietitian
- speech pathologist
- occupational therapist.

Related resources for further learning



Our policies and procedures

- [insert any relevant document links]

Relevant resources available on the Commission's Food, Nutrition and Dining webpages for [providers](#), [workers](#) and [older people](#).

- [My food and dining preferences](#) form
- [Supporting the dining experience for people living with dementia](#) – providers and workers fact sheet
- Supporting people with dementia to eat and drink well [webinar](#) and [presentation](#).



The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.



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