

Mealtimes Matter – Gold Standard

- Avoid all non-essential activity on wards
- No interruptions at mealtimes – except for urgent care
- Nursing teams will focus on patients' nutrition and hydration at mealtimes
- Staff not involved in mealtime care should leave the ward
- Relatives/carers can be encouraged to help where appropriate

Standard Operating Procedure for Mealtimes

BEFORE

- 1 Ring bell 15–20 mins before mealtimes
- 2 All clinical staff finish off tasks
- 3 Know which patients need assistance with feeding and allocate nurse
- 4 Ensure patients have opportunity to visit the toilet
- 5 Sit patients up/in chair/take to dining room
- 6 Clear patients' tables and wipe clean
- 7 Offer hand wipes to patients and help them to use (if necessary)

DURING

- 1 Use a red tray to identify patients who need help and/or who need their intakes monitoring
- 2 If patients require help, only serve meals when a nurse is ready to assist
- 3 Ensure patients have:
 - Serviette
 - Appropriate drink
 - Correct cutlery
 - Condiments
 - Eating aids if required
- 4 Open packets, cut up food and provide assistance (as necessary)
- 5 Check patients are happy with their choice of meal and have everything they need

AFTER

- 1 Complete food charts (where applicable)
- 2 Ask patients: "How was your meal?" (and act on response)

