



## Nutrition and Hydration Policy

**Purpose:** To ensure Residents/Service users receive adequate nourishment and hydration.  
To provide framework for staff assisting with the provision of nutrition and hydration.  
To ensure compliance with current food services guidelines.  
To ensure compliance with the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency Ltd.

**Definitions:** Nutrition can be defined as food or nourishment needed to maintain health, growth and viability. It also refers to the process of providing or receiving food or other life-supporting substances. Hydration refers to the process of providing an adequate amount of liquid to bodily tissues.

**Principles:** Good nutritional care requires an individual approach. The nutritional needs and objectives are different for the elderly person compared with the younger population. Residents will receive food and fluids of good quality and a choice of foods that has been prepared safely will be accessible 24 hours a day.

**Applies to:** All clinical and hotel services staff at Stella Maris.

### **Delegation of Authority and Responsibilities:**

**Manager** – to implement this policy and ensure that all staff are informed of what is expected of them, are provided with or have access to this and related policies / procedures to monitor, discuss and document the implementation of the policy. To address ongoing issues with implementation of policy as they arise.

**Staff** – to be familiar with policy and related policies / procedures, if clarification is required on any aspect of the policy staff should seek advice from either their manager or other nominated staff.

### **Overview:**

Residents/Service users will enjoy meals of adequate variety, quality, and quantity. Menus provide adequate nutrients, fibre and energy. The menu cycle changes and includes alternative choices at each meal. Meals will be served 3 times per day and will meet the dietary and nutritional requirements of the individual, as directed by a Dietician where applicable. Additionally, 3 smaller snack times with inclusion of beverages are provided. Snacks and drinks are accessible at other times. The availability of Alcohol is offered in some facilities under direction and consultation with the residents general practitioner. Special dietary requirements are met; personal dietary preferences, medical needs, food allergies, religious and cultural dietary differences of each individual are identified and addressed. The correct dietary texture, consistency, preferences and portions are provided. Tools referenced will comply with the scale for modified fluids and texture modified foods endorsed by the Dietitian Association of Australia.

The dining environment is prepared to enhance the Resident/Service users dining experience, to promote their independence, to foster dignity and to support emotional and cultural needs. Meal aroma from the kitchen, peaceful music and socialization all contribute to a positive dining experience. Supervision of meals occurs in the dining area and staff support the varying degrees in each person's level of independence. Aids and/or

offers of assistance are provided as required. Individuals are left clean and comfortable after dining. Changes in dietary intake are noted and reported to the Registered Nurse at each meal.

The Registered Nurse conducts regular assessments and determines the individuals care needs. Each person's nutrition and hydration needs are assessed on admission and reviewed regularly according to their health status. Individuals are weighed on admission [or as soon as possible thereafter] then monthly unless otherwise indicated through assessment of their health status. Weight variances are monitored by the Registered Nurse; appropriate clinical management and weight management strategies are documented via care plans. Residents at risk of poor nutrition and hydration are assessed and their needs are met through the provision of nutritional supplements as deemed necessary. Nutrition and hydration assessment and dietary profiles are reviewed and updated with changes communicated to all relevant team members. Consultation with the Resident/Service user, their representative/s, treating medical officer and multidisciplinary health professionals is coordinated.

The Registered Nurse formulates specific care directives and communicates the intended care strategies via nutritional and hydration care plans, dietary profiles and site specific dietary lists. Staff deliver care consistent with the directives documented via these records. Hydration is monitored closely during warm weather conditions. Additional amounts of small fluids are offered at each care intervention to ensure hydration needs are met.

Specialised nursing care needs are managed by the Registered Nurse. Assessment of individuals at risk of malnutrition is closely monitored by the clinical leader.

Special feeding for Residents/Service users with dysphagia is managed under the care directive of the Registered Nurse. Enteral feeding is considered for malnourished individuals or those at risk of malnutrition; suitable when the individual has a functional gastrointestinal tract but is unable to maintain an adequate or safe oral intake. Many different enteral formulas are available and where possible the Resident/Service users' preferences are supplied.

Evaluation of food services' is undertaken through a combination of kitchen and clinical audits and feedback regarding the level of satisfaction with menu is sort through Resident/Service user surveys.

To ensure appropriate management of nutrition and hydration needs staff practices are monitored through the audit process. Issues cited via audit are identified and linked to the action plan; additionally the identified issues may then be escalated to the site specific quality improvement action plan.

Food is essential to human and social needs; it will be prepared and provided safely in accordance with Australian food safety standards. The menu or alternatives are accessible throughout the day and a positive dining experience is vital to ensure the Resident/Service users' satisfaction.

Community Services will utilise food safety practices and adopt consistent principles in line with considering the Service users preferences.

**Responsibility - All staff assisting with the provision of nutrition and hydration:**

- To read and comply with the described practice documented in the policy
- To read and comply with the described practice documented in the nutrition and hydration care plan and dietary profile of each individual

- To update knowledge regarding the Resident/Service users' nutritional needs
- To perform duties in line with the requirements of the governing agencies and as directed by the Registered Nurse
- Support the Resident/Service users experience
- Identify factors that may contribute to problems, and report to appropriate person/s – link to site specific quality continuous improvement action plan
- Report any issues/concerns to supervisor/manager as they are identified

#### **Responsibility - Registered Nurse:**

- To update knowledge through professional development and deliver specialised nursing care needs to assist with complex nutrition and hydration needs
- To delegate tasks using delegation framework
- To supervise and monitor staff according to summary of delegation
- Ensure staff practices comply with the policy
- Assess, monitor and review Residents/Service users nutrition and hydration needs
- Formulate, evaluate, review and update nutrition and hydration care plans
- Consult with Resident and representative and multi-disciplinary professionals regarding nutrition and hydration needs and preferences
- Implement best practice principles/strategies, review outcome and evaluate effectiveness of actions
- Provide education for staff and Residents/Service users regarding nutritional practices

#### **Responsibility - Facility Manager:**

- To monitor the processes in food services'
- To allow opportunity for staff to attend professional development
- Monitor staff performance/practice and ensure compliance with St Vincent's Care Services policy
- Ensure resources are accessible to staff who assist with the provision of nutrition and hydration needs
- Ensure only appropriately trained and competent staff assist with food services and dietary intake
- Develop contingency plans, in consultation with the SVCS Quality Manager, with a risk management focus if policy is unable to be met

#### **Responsibility – Stella Maris:**

- Supply current and accurate resources to meet nutrition and hydration needs
- Ensure adequate resources, tools, equipment and methods to enable safe food services and the provision of adequate nutrition and hydration
- Provide adequate training and resources allowing staff to remain updated with current best practice principles
- Base training and competency assessment of staff on the performance criteria specified in nationally accredited units of competency
- Undertake regular internal auditing of food service processes and systems and the management of nutrition and hydration needs
- Timely response to rectify gaps/deficiencies and implement the required follow-up actions
- Identify areas for improvement through ongoing evaluation of optimal Resident/Service user outcomes