

Nutrition and Hydration Strategy 2017-2020



Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

At Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust we take seriously our commitment to the nutrition and hydration needs of our patients, staff and visitors.

Every hospital, site or unit has a responsibility to provide the highest level of care possible.

This includes the quality and nutritional value of the food provided through inpatient services, retail outlets, vending and procurement processes, to ensure that we provide excellent nutritional care in a safe manner.



Nutrition and hydration is a key component to the wider recovery and complements the care given within each service. It is widely documented that food and drink are major factors in maintaining good health, preventing illness and improving recovery. We have developed a three year strategy that will ensure that we excel at nutritional health care as a vital part of the mental and physical health of any individual.

The Department of Health and Age UK have identified five required hospital food standards which are to be met by all health care providers and which are included in the NHS Standard Contract. Our Strategy addresses those standards and gives direction and guidance to all Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust staff.

The five hospital food standards are:

- 1 | The Ten Key Characteristics of Good Nutritional Care from the Nutrition Alliance.**
- 2 | Nutrition and Hydration Digest from The British Dietetic Association.**
- 3 | Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) from the British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition – BAPEN.**
- 4 | For staff and visitors catering: Healthier and more Sustainable Catering - Nutrition Principles from Public Health England.**
- 5 | Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.**

The scope of this strategy will encompass the whole trust and align with transformational plans within the organisation, providing a holistic approach to nutritional care. The strategy identifies the service and standards currently in place and how the trust intend to further develop and improve over the next three years, within these three key areas:



our aim: perfect care

The trust acknowledge the positive work that has taken place already and are keen to develop and build upon the foundations of good care which is already integral to our trust values. Continuous improvement is a trust wide initiative and a core value and is intrinsic to everything we do. Catering services are a vital element within the clinical work that takes place throughout our divisions and within each service Mersey Care provides.

The trust will encourage healthy food choices for our whole hospital community with access to education, information, training and healthy food choices in all our food outlets and resources within our smaller sites to ensure staff have the facilities to store and cook their own healthy food.

The trust strategy has been developed with the help and support of a trust-wide Hospital Food Standards Group that includes catering managers, modern matrons, nurse leads, facilities management, dietitians, service users and carer leads and has been discussed within patient groups, carer groups and clinical governance committee meetings.



This strategy identifies the services and standards currently in place and how the trust intend to further develop and improve over for the next three years. The trust will monitor progress through the trust Hospital Food Standards Group which has representation from clinical leads, dieticians, facilities managers, modern matrons, procurement and patient carer representatives, which reports to the Physical Health Steering Group.



patient nutrition and hydration

Food and drink play a key role in helping patients retain choice and control in an environment that can sometimes seem alienating. Mealtimes are something to look forward to and enjoy and we are committed to ensuring this by providing well thought out menus, appetising food that is nutritionally balanced and food served in a timely fashion without interruption or disturbances.

The environment that patients eat in is as important as the food itself to the overall patient meal experience. The environment includes the dining room, building facilities and furniture, together with initiatives such as protected mealtimes.

Protected mealtimes are a commitment to a positive dining experience for all patients. Ward activity is quelled, all visits and movements are stopped and patients can eat their chosen meal in a calm, clean, safe, relaxed environment with help given to vulnerable patients.

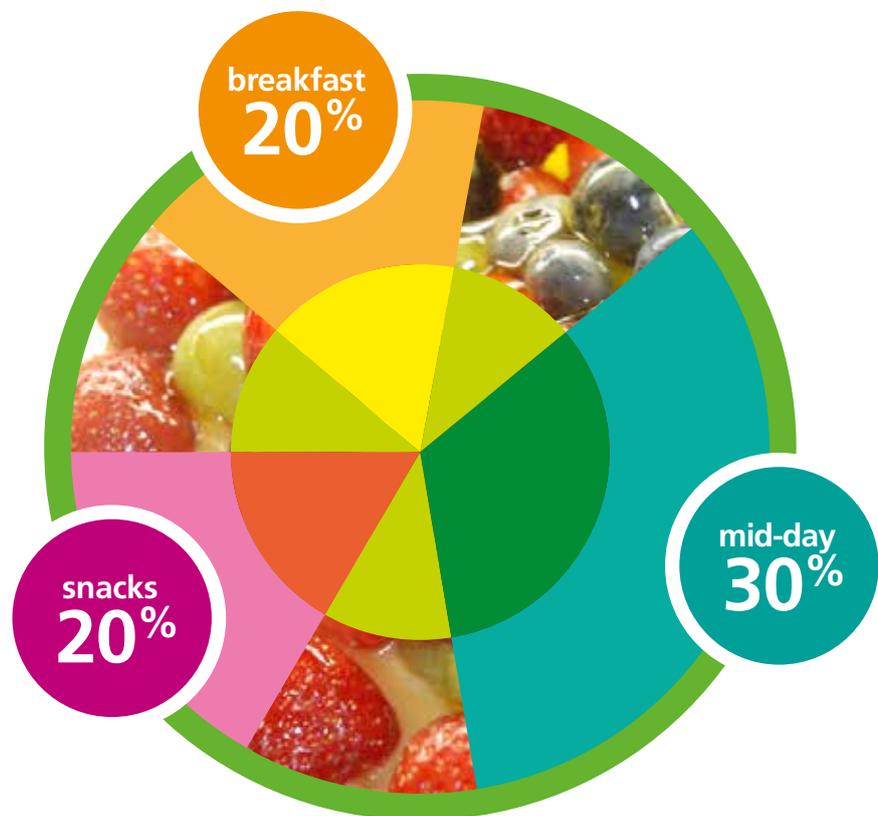
Mersey Care recognises that malnutrition and dehydration pose a particular risk to vulnerable groups and should be detected early.

The trust has made a commitment to ensure all patients are screened using the adapted MUST screening tool within 72 hours of admission to one of our wards. All patients are given an appropriate nutritional care plan and a referral made to the Dietitians if indicated. This will enable us to provide the necessary dietary requirements and support for vulnerable patients in a timely manner.



Mersey Care works hard to ensure that any catering provision should meet the social and cultural expectations of any prospective patients and should be packaged and presented so that all patients can access and enjoy it. Our catering team links in with the equality and diversity groups and also reacts quickly and positively to cultural and religious requirements. The catering department have specific menu choices for cultural and spiritual needs as well as specific dietary requirements. Examples of this may include finger food options for patients in seclusion who are too unwell to use cutlery, or soft and pureed diet options for patients who are unable to chew or swallow properly.

Dietitians are well placed as experts in food and nutrition to provide specialist staff training, also to be involved in every area of the food service from menu planning and analysis to strategy and sustainability agenda and support a variety of the trust's strategic aims including reducing death from cardiovascular disease and improving the overall physical health of our patients, staff and visitors.



The 'Day Parts' technique was developed to reflect the intake of food and the contribution over the day instead of prescriptive amounts of calories and protein at each individual meal.

This approach allows more freedom of choice and states 20 per cent of daily requirements comes from a breakfast type meal, 30 per cent from a mid-day meal and evening meal and 20 per cent from snacks. We are reviewing all of our patient menus to ensure compliance and will adapt our services to align all catering service provision to the same model.

We will encourage healthy food choices across our entire hospital community with access to education, information, training, healthy food choices in all our food outlets and resources within our smaller sites to ensure staff have the facilities to store and cook their own healthy food.



Here at Mersey Care we are working towards an environment that supports healthy eating and living.

We have a real opportunity to make changes to the wellbeing of our service users, staff and visitors.

Within the hospital environment there is a wider consideration required to include those catering facilities such as cafés, vending machines and hospitality services to ensure that we have assessed the services which are primarily aimed at our staff and visitors, against the same high standards as we do for the inpatient provision.

Mersey Care has a health and wellbeing group which help us to proactively assess the schemes that are in operation throughout the trust to support the health of our staff and visitors.

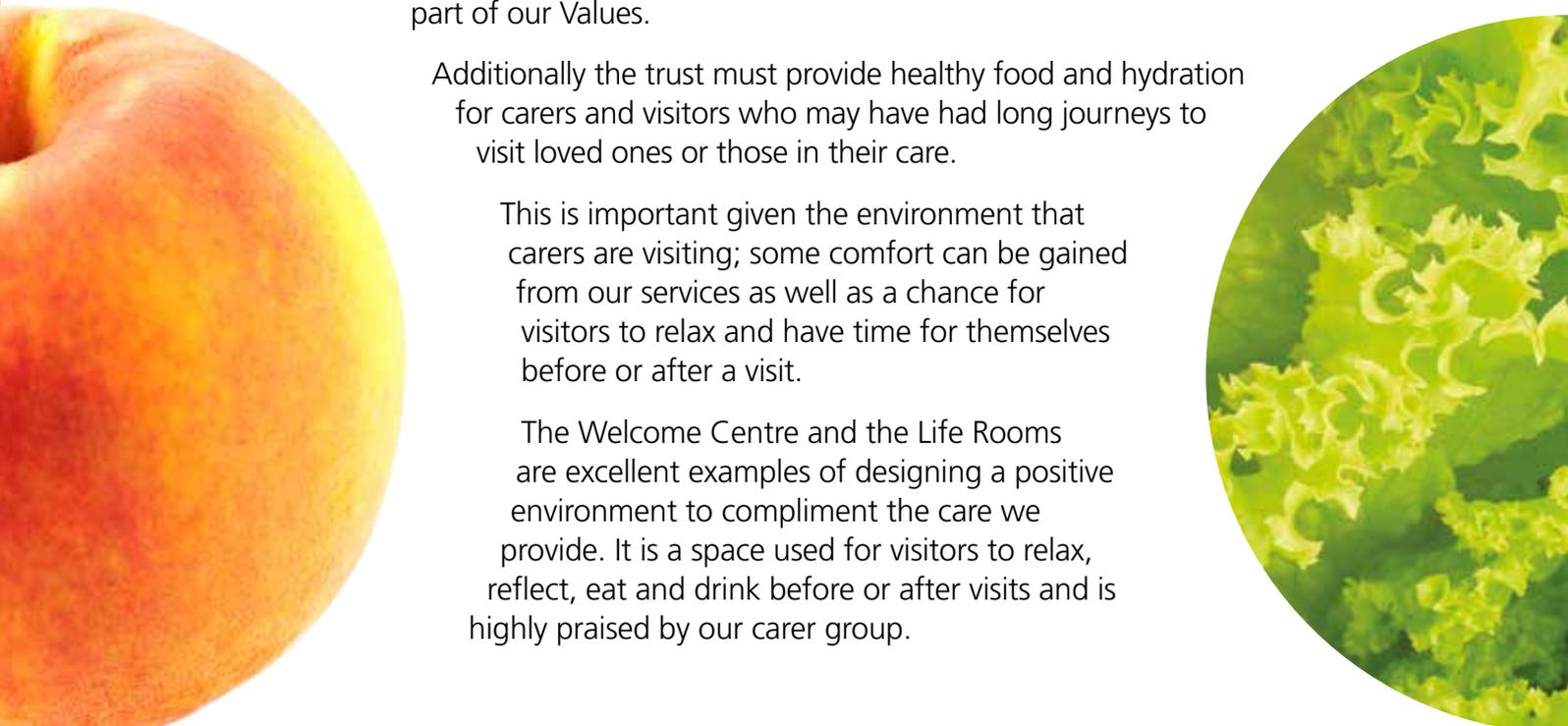
The trust hold health and wellbeing days in different sites regularly. Much research has been undertaken regarding eating healthily and looking after yourself at work.

Staff health and wellbeing has a direct impact on lifespan, avoiding illness and being happy. It is crucial that we support that as a trust as an integral part of our Values.

Additionally the trust must provide healthy food and hydration for carers and visitors who may have had long journeys to visit loved ones or those in their care.

This is important given the environment that carers are visiting; some comfort can be gained from our services as well as a chance for visitors to relax and have time for themselves before or after a visit.

The Welcome Centre and the Life Rooms are excellent examples of designing a positive environment to compliment the care we provide. It is a space used for visitors to relax, reflect, eat and drink before or after visits and is highly praised by our carer group.



healthier
eating
across
hospitals

sustainable food and catering services

As major purchasers of food and catering services, the trust have the opportunity to put sustainability at the core of our buying process, from procurement to waste management. It is just as important to ensure quality, safety and sustainability in the supply chain as it is to the patient meal experience at ward level, or in one of our outlets.

The trust is in a promising position and has an optimistic estates strategy which includes purpose built new facilities. This creates an opportunity to ensure that the trust create sites that have a low environmental impact making use of the most up to date ways of conserving energy and innovative solutions within catering including enhanced food delivery, management and disposal.

Waste management is at a high standard already throughout the trust and is something we are continually striving to improve. New technologies such as 'waste to water' for waste disposal and ensuring disposable items are as eco-friendly as possible are ways in how we can continue to improve over the coming years.

Equally, as a large trust we should ensure that we have a positive impact on our surrounding communities with support for small and medium sized enterprises. By using locally sourced produce we are reducing the carbon footprint of the trust. The trust will review our suppliers in line with the Government Buying Standards and our sustainability strategy.

At Mersey Care we have been working with our suppliers and food outlets to ensure that health is put over profit and therefore we support the decision to review price promotions on sugary drinks and foods high in fat, sugar and salt. The majority of these products fall within the five product categories: pre-sugared breakfast cereals, soft drinks, confectionery, savoury snacks and fast food outlets.

The trust also support the removal of advertisements on NHS premises of sugary drinks and foods which are high in fat, sugar and salt, committing to removing any of these products from checkout areas. The trust is committed to aligning with these standards ensuring healthy options are available at any point. This will be achieved by a step change in the health of the food offered on our premises mirrored in the culture of our organisation.



Mersey Care is committed to reducing the obesogenic environment and through the physical health strategy group, actively monitor and report on our pledges regarding nutrition and hydration over the next three years.

We will:



Review the calorie labelling of products that we supply within our facilities and outlets, and to increase the quality and accessibility of the information

Aim to reduce the calorific intake of our service users, staff and visitors, through reviews of our inpatient menus, vending machines, café offers, portion sizes, information and education

Aim to create an environment which encourages and enables service users, staff and visitors to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables

Aim to reduce the saturated fat and salt intake of our service users, staff and visitors through a review of our inpatient menus, vending machines, café offers, portion sizes, information and education

trust pledges

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