

May 2016

**Speech & Language Therapy Department
Adult Community Service**

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Dear Colleagues

**RE: Recommendations for Patients with swallowing problems (dysphagia):
Improving Patient safety**

We are writing to update you about the terms we use to describe food consistencies we recommend for patients requiring a modified diet as part of their dysphagia management.

In line with the National Patient Safety Agency recommendations, we are now using the National Descriptor Terms. Therefore, patients currently having what used to be described as a soft moist diet should be provided with a diet in line with category E. Patients having a pureed diet should be provided with a diet in line with category C.

Current recommendation	Equivalent terminology
Soft, moist diet	Category E
Pureed diet	Category C

Further guidance is attached to this letter, and more detailed information about these diets can be found online at this website: <http://www.hospitalcaterers.org/publications/>. **Please can you share this information with your catering staff to ensure they are following our recommendations.**

Modified diets are sometimes recommended to help manage problems that some people experience with swallowing, usually as a result of damage to the parts of the brain and nervous system that control swallow function. However not all people benefit from having modified diets and it can have a detrimental impact on quality of life.

We therefore continue to recommend assessment by a Speech and Language Therapist where a swallowing impairment is suspected. If you think that any of your patients may have a swallowing problem e.g. coughing when eating and drinking, recurrent chest infections, please refer directly to the Speech and Language Therapy Team on 01473 275285 (Ipswich & East Suffolk) or 01284 748847 (Stowmarket & West Suffolk).

If you have any questions or would like more information about the services provided by the Adult Speech and Language Therapy Team, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Community Adult Speech and Language Therapy Team

