Strategies to improve nutritional care for people with dementia

The Compass Dignified Dining Toolkit

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Under nutrition in people with dementia is a specific problem, due to several challenges in maintaining a good diet.

This has important implications for nutrition; interventions need to be specific to this group of individuals.

Interventions, including training and education programmes changes to the mealtime environment.
In 2014 Compass Group sponsored the report “Nutrition and Dementia; a review of available research” in conjunction with Alzheimer’s Disease International.

The analysis in the report allowed Compass to develop a bespoke toolkit which focuses on three main areas:

- Food
- Service
- Environment
The Toolkit

What Is Dignified Dining?

In 2014, Compass Group and Australian Dementia Services International (ADSI) published Dignify Dining: A Toolkit to Enhance the Nutrition and Care of People Living with Dementia. This resource provided a critical review of all available evidence regarding the importance of nutrition to the overall health and well-being of people living with dementia. It also gathered examples of best practice to improve the provision of nutritional care to people living with dementia, focusing on the meal delivery and nutrition home setting.

The Toolkit

The Toolkit gathers together practical advice and guidelines in one easily accessible place. Each section examines common food-related issues and provides practical ideas to help nutrition and diet professionals deliver the best possible food experiences for people living with dementia.

The Toolkit sections are:

**FOOD**
- **Environment**
  - The environment section of the toolkit focuses on the eating experiences and to support the people in their care.

**ENVIRONMENT**
- **Service**
  - The service section of the toolkit focuses on the service experience of the residents.

**SERVICE**
- **Food**
  - The food section of the toolkit focuses on the food experiences and to support the people in their care.

Specialist Training

As a partnership with the Australian Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, we have developed a comprehensive course module for our Australia-wide, advanced qualifications in the field. Our clinical nutritionist residential specialists are trained and experienced in delivering the toolkit to healthcare providers. This specialist training is designed to support the people in their care.

For more information, please find it in Section 4 of the Toolkit.
7. Food Focus Areas

Dignified Dining

Food

Diet and nutrition
Nutritional targets for people with dementia
Sample menus
Finger food
Food fortification
Texture of food and liquids modification
Menu development principals

7. Food Focus Areas
Communication to enhance the experience

Protected mealtimes

Service times

Presentation and service

A service journey

5. Service Focus Areas
3. Environment Focus Areas

- Mealtime equipment
- Signage
- Dining Areas
Our 10 Nutritional Care Guidelines

1. Nutritional Capability
2. Supporting Malnutrition
3. Training
4. Environment
5. Choice and Variety
6. Menus
7. Availability
8. Respect
9. Quality & Customer Care
10. Review and Observation
Other Tools

- Food Passport
- Recording Food Intake
- Screening Tools for Malnutrition
- Dementia Mealtime Assessment Tool
- Training Programme

Food Passport

- Ate all or most
- Ate about half
- Ate very little
What makes a difference during mealtimes?

- The correct ‘kit’
- The environment
- Communal eating
- Sufficient time to eat
- Protected Mealtimes
- Free from interruptions
- Social support of eating
- Environment conducive to eating
- Limit distracting activities
Practical Applications and Examples of the Toolkit in Use

- Development of finger foods
- Bespoke Steamplicity blue plate
- Use of improved pictorial menus
- Food record charts
- Dementia training
- Preparation, assistance and peaceful mealtimes (PMT)
- Signage denoting dining areas
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-disciplinary health and nutrition steering group set up</td>
<td>Blue plate, Food Passport</td>
<td>Improved communication and Protected Mealtimes in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dementia Friends training to all front line teams</td>
<td>Improved signage including dining areas</td>
<td>PLACE score above national average for dementia services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mealtime observational audits conducted on a weekly basis</td>
<td>Pictorial menu</td>
<td>Food service assistants report improved job satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Finger food choices on menu</td>
<td>Individualised care for patients with dementia</td>
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To conclude

- Nutritional care for people with dementia
- 10 nutritional care guidelines; menu planning, service, environment
- Training
- Pilots
- Individualised nutritional care
- Presentations in hospitals to nutritional care steering teams
- Quarterly business reviews
- Implementation and roll out across hospitals and care homes
- Assistance and support for mobilisation
- Sharing of ideas and best practice through internal communications