

Dementia Care Matters Membership Scheme

Making the most of...

Meals make sense - An audit checklist

Aim

- To consider how far a Care Home is implementing quality care with regard to the mealtime experience for people with dementia.

Objectives

- To emphasise to all staff the importance of the mealtime experience in providing person centred dementia care
- For all staff to identify the positive features of a mealtime experience for people with dementia
- To identify ideas to improve the mealtime experience for people with dementia
- To provide an opportunity for the catering team to be involved in improving person centred dementia care

The material

- The document is in the form of a seven page audit checklist to look at the current mealtime experience in a care setting. There are 56 statements divided into four sections: Atmosphere, assessment, skills and quality.

How to use it

- As part of a quality audit of life in a care setting
- For discussion as part of a team meeting
- As a handout to support a learning session on improving diet and nutrition
- As a tool to support the design and development of dementia care settings
- Each statement asks the person completing the checklist to identify if this happening (Yes), not happening (No) or only partly happening (Partly) in the care setting. It is accepted that people will have different perceptions of what is or what is not happening. These will be points for discussion. For example why do some things happen one day and not the next?
- Some people may not agree with some of the statements. Our view is that whilst not all 56 items on the checklist will be appropriate for all people living with dementia, they are all examples of best practice



- Ensure that as many staff as possible who are involved in mealtimes (nurses, carers, catering staff) receive the opportunity to look at and discuss this checklist
- Implementing points from this checklist will require lots of teamwork and may pose a real challenge to current routines and ways of working
- There is likely to be resistance to change. Lunch is often the central 'activity' of the day and should therefore be enjoyable and meaningful to people with a dementia
- Try and get consensus on the key areas that are positive and those that need addressing straightaway. Perhaps identify six 'no's or 'partlys' that will be worked upon to become 'yes's' in the next month. Identify the individuals who will take the lead in making the changes

Links

- See 'Achieving – Real outcomes in person centred dementia care' by David Sheard and available from Dementia Care Matters www.dementiacarematters.com 01273 242335 for more information
- Inspiring 50 Point Checklist – On this website