

## Staff Training and Competency

Nurse competency programs for EN therapy should include education, trainings, monitoring, and performance standards that cover the following elements:

- When and how tube placement should be checked
- Technique to verify tube placement prior to administering feedings and medication administration
- Techniques for providing personal care (e.g., skin, oral, and nasal)
- Techniques for assessing stoma site care prevent irritation and infection
- Frequency and volume for medication flushes, according to physician orders, policies, and procedures
- Evaluation on pump technique including proficiency with alarms, calibration, troubleshooting, misconnection management
- Assessments on signs and symptoms of tube feeding intolerances
- Addressing complications (e.g., aspiration, leaks, tube clogging, skin irritations at the stoma cite) and physician notifications

Train staff regarding the safe use of the feeding pump for designated staff, in accordance with the manufactures and facility guidelines including:

- Initial set-up (e.g., A/C power, battery, attaching pole)
- Instructions for use (e.g., placement/mounting, power on an off, keep or clear prior pump settings)
- Loading pump sets
- Prime pump (e.g., auto prime, hold-to-prime, feed-only pump sets, feed & flush pump sets, re-priming after bag empty)
- Proper hanging of feeding bag 18 inches from the top of the feeding pump as a fundamental practice to prevent inaccurate system feeding, and possible discomfort for the individual receiving the feeding
- Calibration of enteral feeding pumps to ensure that pump settings accurately provide the rate and volume consistent with the person's care plan

- Periodic maintenance of feeding pumps consistent with manufacturer’s instructions to ensure proper mechanical functioning
- How to read volume delivered and pump history to ensure correct amount of formula has been provided

## **Checklist: Steps to Administering Enteral Nutrition**

### **Steps prior to administration:**

- ✓ Introduce yourself
- ✓ Provide for privacy
- ✓ Perform hand hygiene and put on gloves and any other appropriate PPE if needed
- ✓ Verify that you have the right person
- ✓ Determine if the person has any allergies
- ✓ Provide education
- ✓ Verify the physician/provider’s prescription
- ✓ Check the expiration date on the formula
- ✓ Elevate the head of the bed to 30 – 45 degrees
- ✓ Confirm tube place using two methods

### **Steps to administering formula via a syringe:**

- ✓ Flush tube with 30 – 50 ml of water
- ✓ Disinfect the top of the formula can prior to opening
- ✓ Remove plunger from syringe
- ✓ Pinch the feeding tube prior to inserting the syringe into the port
- ✓ Pour formula into the syringe, allowing it to drain by gravity until prescribe amount is administered
- ✓ Flush tube with water per policy/orders
- ✓ Clamp tubing and cover the end cap

### **Steps to administering formula via a feeding bag:**

- ✓ Flush tube with 30 – 50 ml of water

- ✓ Disinfect the top of the formula can prior to opening
- ✓ Fill the bag with the prescribed amount of formula and fill flush bag with water if applicable
- ✓ Prime the feeding bag
- ✓ Connect feeding bag to the feeding tube port
- ✓ Administer feeding at the prescribe rate via a feeding pump (or by adjusting the regulating clamp on the bag – only if working pump is unavailable)

### **Steps to administering formula via a closed formula setup:**

- ✓ Flush tube with 30 – 50 ml of water
- ✓ Insert the tubing into the formula bottle
- ✓ Prime the tubing
- ✓ Connect tubing to the feeding tube port
- ✓ Administer feeding at the prescribe rate via a feeding pump (or by adjusting the regulating clamp on the bag – only if working pump is unavailable)

### **Steps following administration:**

- ✓ Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene
- ✓ Have the person remain with the head of the bed at 30 – 45 degrees for 30 minutes after bolus feeding
- ✓ Ensure the call light is in reach and encourage the person to call for assistance if any signs or symptoms of formula intolerance are experienced

### **Important Note:**

Creating a checklist allows for easy identification of the steps necessary to safely administer enteral nutrition and is a good way to check nurse competency after training.

The example above is not an all-inclusive checklist. Checklists should be tailored to meet the facility's needs.

### **Resources:**

- [QMP Website – Nutrition Support](#)
- [Skills Checklist: Administering Enteral Nutrition](#) (from atitesting.com)