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Liberalized Diets & The Dining Experience

Texas Quality Matters

The Challenge

- Ensure that individuals maintain weight and nutritional status
- Provide food that looks, smells, and tastes good



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Risk Factors for Weight Loss

- **M – Medications**
- **E – Emotional problems**
- **A – Anorexia**
- **L – Late-life paranoia**
- **S – Swallowing disorders**
- **O – Oral Problems**
- **N – Nosocomial infections**
- **W – Wandering**
- **H – Hyperthyroidism**
- **E – Enteric Problems**
- **E – Eating problems**
- **L – Low salt/cholesterol diets**
- **S – Social problems**



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What Restrictive Diets Do

- Limit familiar foods
- Eliminate or modify seasonings in food
- Contribute to:
 - Poor appetite
 - Decreased food intake
 - risk of illness and weight loss



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Diabetic Diets

A regular diet is appropriate for most geriatric individuals who have diabetes

- Consistent mealtimes
- Consistent calories, carbohydrates, and protein
- Standardized portion sizes
- Improves quality of life



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Cardia / Cholesterol Diets

- Medications for heart disease can suppress appetite
- The importance of cholesterol in reducing mortality rates after age 65 is questionable
- The risk of causing malnutrition is a greater risk after age 65



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Low Sodium Diets

People who are elderly do not tolerate low sodium diets well

- Contribute to:
 - Loss of appetite
 - Hyponatremia
 - Increased confusion



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Renal Diets

- Individuals with renal failure are especially susceptible to malnutrition
- Preventing malnutrition may require liberalizing diet restrictions



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Prevention of Weight Loss

Individual Interventions

- Facilitate increased food consumption
- Provide feeding assistance
- Manage underlying conditions
- Reassess effects of medications



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Prevention of Weight Loss

Dining

- Enhance the dining experience
 - Favorite food, comfort food, ethnic food
 - Accessibility: When hungry or longing for specific foods
 - Food first, then supplements



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Prevention of Weight Loss

Family support

Nutritional therapy

- Fortified foods, Snacks, Finger Foods
- Liquid nutritional supplements



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The Culture Change Movement

- The culture change movement aims to take the 'institution' out of the home.
- It involves transforming nursing homes from a traditional model to a person-centered and person-directed model.

* Source: NY State Office for the Aging,
www.nursinghome411.org



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Culture Change

Menus and Nutritional Adequacy:

- Use resident council meetings to discuss menus and meal service
- Who makes up the “community” culturally?
- Use regional menus and include ethnic favorites



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Culture Change

Food Preparation and Meal Service

- Respect individual preferences and habits regarding meal consumption
- Train staff on cooking methods that enhance appearance and palatability
- Observe meal service:
 - Environment
 - Assistance
 - Meal Frequency
 - Different styles of meal service



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Dining Alternatives

- Five meal plan vs. 3 meals plus snack
- Restaurant-style dining
- Buffet-style dining
- Family dining
- Select menu
- Extended hours



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Hydration

- Honor individuals' preferences and habits regarding fluid consumption
- Document person's fluid preferences in care plans
- Provide a variety of beverages with meals and snacks
- Provide beverage stations with easy access or hydration carts
- Soups, smoothies, lemonade, popsicles, watermelon
- Room pitchers within reach



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Culture Change & Regulations

- No significant barriers have been identified by Regulatory Services for implementing culture change.
- Nursing homes can actually reduce their deficiencies by:
 - Seeking positive person-centered outcomes.
 - Care planning according to a person's wishes.
- Food and dining requirements are core components of quality of life and quality of care



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What it means...

- Care provided is consistent with the comprehensive assessment
- Diet is determined by individual's informed choices and preferences
- Goals and prognosis refer to personal and clinical outcomes



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Impact to Providers

- Changes in mealtime and impact on nursing and caregiving schedules
- Changes in attitudes about textures and diet liberalization
- Costs
- Increased occupancy



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DADS Culture Change Initiative

For help regarding:

- Questions on Culture Change topics
- Stories on Culture Change successes in Texas nursing homes
- Questions for DADS experts contact:
DADS Center for Policy and Innovation
DADSculturechange@dads.state.tx.us



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Quality Monitoring Program

Providing Positive Partnerships w/ Providers

- Regional Staff:
 - Includes dietitians, nurses and pharmacists
 - Serve as a resource to develop and communicate evidence-based best practices and innovations for improvement of outcomes
 - Available for in-services on a variety of topics.



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Thank You
