



**Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Survey & Certification Group**

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**Ref: S&C: 13-13-NH**

**DATE:** March 1, 2013

**TO:** State Survey Agency Directors

**FROM:** Director  
Survey and Certification Group

**SUBJECT:** Information Only: New Dining Standards of Practice Resources are Available Now

**Memorandum Summary**

- **New Dining Practice Standards:** An interdisciplinary task force, sponsored by the Pioneer Network and the Rothschild Foundation, has released new dining practice recommendations for nursing home residents.
- **Expanding Diet Options for Older Individuals:** Research has indicated that many older individuals may not need to be limited to very restrictive diets, pureed foods, and thickened liquids even though they may have many chronic conditions. Conversely, restricting food choices can result in loss of appetite and eventual weight loss.
- **Surveyor Training Video:** The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is providing a new 24-minute video training product to all survey agencies with information on new dining standards of practice and therapeutic diets. This video, which is an introduction to the New Dining Practice Standards, was developed by several national professional organizations.

An interdisciplinary task force composed of national clinical organizations that set standards of practice has released a document expanding dining, diets, food consistency, thickened liquids, and tube feedings. This task force included 12 organizations, representing clinical professions involved in developing diet orders and providing food service (including physicians, nurses, occupational and physical therapists, pharmacists, dietitians among others). The task force formed in 2011 as a recommendation from the 2010 CMS/Pioneer Network symposium on food and dining. Also participating were CMS, the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control.

Research presented revealed little benefit to many older individuals with chronic conditions from restrictions in dietary sugar and sodium, as well as little benefit from tube feedings, pureed diets, and thickened liquids. The new standards recommend to clinicians and prescribers that a regular diet become the default with only a small number of individuals needing restrictions.

Since CMS surveyors review Quality of Care compliance based on standards of practice, we recommend that all long-term care surveyors and supervisors are made aware of these important changes to long-standing standards and practices. Therefore, we are presenting this surveyor training video to introduce the 10 categories of changes. Individualization of care and careful monitoring after a diet change are essential elements of any care plan.

We also ask that survey agencies share these standards with providers. This CMS video will be available to the public on the surveyor training site beginning February 22, 2013. Continuing Education Units and/or contact hours *will not* be available for the completion of this video training.

Please note, however, that these practice standards do not represent CMS requirements. Surveyors should not issue deficiency citations simply because a facility is not following these particular recommended practices. However, facilities that opt to adhere to these practice standards may rely on such adherence in response to questions regarding any changes from more restrictive diet protocols previously used.

A final copy of the New Dining Practice Standards is available at:  
<http://www.pioneernetwork.net/Data/Documents/NewDiningPracticeStandards.pdf>

The video is available at:  
<http://surveyortraining.cms.hhs.gov/pubs/VideoInformation.aspx?cid=1101>

Questions concerning this memorandum may be addressed to Michele Laughman at  
[dnh\\_triageteam@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:dnh_triageteam@cms.hhs.gov).

**Effective Date:** Immediately. This information should be communicated with all survey and certification staff, their managers and the State/Regional Office training coordinators within 30 days of this memorandum.

/s/  
Thomas E. Hamilton

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management