Transcript

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Food, Nutrition, Dining and Dementia

For People Living with Dementia, their Families, Friends and Other Representatives

**Presented by:**

Speaker

[*Opening visual of slide with text saying ‘Food, nutrition, dining and dementia’, ‘For people living with dementia, their families, friends and other representatives’, ‘Food, nutrition and dining’*]

[The visuals during this video are of a PowerPoint presentation being played on screen in relation to what is being said at the time during the video]

§(Music Playing)§

**Speaker:**

You play an important role in making sure food preferences, dietary requirements, cultural and religious needs are met for the person you care for. Food, nutrition and dining experiences are important to the person’s overall health and wellbeing. These needs play a part in managing risks like unplanned weight loss, malnutrition and dehydration.

How can dementia affect eating and drinking? People living with dementia may go through changes that affect their ability to eat and drink well. These can include loss of appetite, changes in taste and smell, difficulty eating, drinking and swallowing, not recognising they are hungry meaning they forget to eat, overeating because they forget that they’ve already eaten or not recognising when they are full.

These changes might also mean the person is in pain, discomfort or has unmet needs. If you notice changes or have concerns it’s important to discuss them with the right person. The care team can help arrange for you to speak to a healthcare professional and support the person you care for. Working together is key to providing effective support. You can work with the provider, workers and healthcare professionals to create a care plan including mealtime support strategies for the specific needs and preferences of the person you care for.

You can also support their food, nutrition and dining by visiting during mealtimes to give support and encouragement if appropriate or suitable, sitting and engaging in conversation and offering help if they need or ask for it. Being there in person can make mealtimes more enjoyable and can help increase their appetite.

Watch for changes in behaviour when visiting and share these with the care team. Regularly talk with the care team to stay informed about the person’s wellbeing and any changes in their condition. Ask questions if you’re not sure about something. Effective communication helps everyone involved in their care know about important changes and updates.

Support the person’s food preferences and needs by being actively involved in their care. You and the person you care for can discuss food and dining environment choices with the provider, discuss meal planning, provide feedback on what works well and what could be improved. It’s important to understand that people’s preferences may change as their condition changes.

If you have feedback or concerns you should raise them with the provider. If you’re not comfortable talking to the provider or you’re not happy with their response you can contact the Commission. You can also call the Food, Nutrition and Dining Hotline on 1800 844 044 with any enquiries, questions, concerns and complaints about food, nutrition and dining.

We have a range of resources on food, nutrition and dining for older people, their families, friends and other representatives. These resources will help you understand the importance of an enjoyable dining experience. They explain the rights of the person you care for, what to expect and how you can best support them. You can find them on the Commission’s website at www.agedcarequality.gov.au. Let’s all make food, nutrition and dining a priority.

§(Music Playing)§

[*Closing visual of slide with text saying ‘Let’s work together’*]

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