



10 Key characteristics for good nutritional care ¹



1. Everyone using healthcare and care services is screened² to identify those who are malnourished or at risk of becoming malnourished.
2. Everyone using care services has a personal care support plan and where possible has had personal input, to identify their nutritional care and fluid needs and how they are to be met.
3. The care provider must include specific guidance on food and beverage services and nutritional care in its service delivery and accountability arrangements.
4. People using care services are involved in the planning and monitoring arrangements for food service and beverage/drinks provision.
5. An environment conducive to people enjoying their meals and being able to safely consume their food and drinks is maintained (NB this can be known as 'Protected Mealtimes').
6. All staff/volunteers have the appropriate skills and competencies needed to ensure that the nutritional and fluid needs of people using care services are met. All staff/volunteers receive regular training on nutritional care and management.
7. Facilities and services are designed to be flexible and centred on the needs of the people using them.
8. The care-providing organisation has a policy for food service and nutritional care, which is centred on the needs of people using the service. Performance in delivering that care effectively is managed in line with local governance and regulatory frameworks.
9. Food service and nutritional care is provided safely³.
10. Everyone working in the organisation values the contribution of people using the service and all others in the successful delivery of nutritional care.

¹ Abbreviated from the Council of Europe Resolution ResAP (2003)3 on food and nutritional care in hospitals. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 November 2003 at the 860th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies

² Screening is a simple and quick assessment that can be applied with the minimum of training to identify people at risk of malnutrition.

³ Providing food safely in this context means complying with all regulations designed to protect people from food poisoning. It also means ensuring that people get adequate amounts of food and fluid, which will be beneficial and not harmful (e.g. ensuring that people who have coeliac disease do not get food containing gluten, which will harm them).



Council of Europe Resolution

Recommendations – Government of the member states should:

- Implement national recommendations in food and nutritional care in health and social care
- Promote implementation both in public and private sectors
- Ensure widest possible dissemination of recommendations

The Five Broad areas cover:

- 1) Nutritional assessment and treatment in hospitals
- 2) Nutritional care providers
- 3) Food Services practices
- 4) Hospital Food
- 5) Health economics

There are over 100 recommendations within the resolution and they were originally summarised by the Council of Europe Alliance (UK) into the 10 Key Characteristics and these have been adapted as part of the Nutrition Plan in England to be meaningful in social care settings as well as hospitals.