

Positive Feedback from Southdowns Nursing Home re IDDSI and Chefs Day

Edith Benyi-Czeller, Chef, and Neil Holroyd, Assistant Chef at Southdowns Nursing Home in St Leonards on Sea have given us some very positive feedback on IDDSI regulations and Chefs Day training provided by Nutricia.

Prior to IDDSI and the Chefs Day training, Edith and Neil varied in their ways of working, with Edith concentrating on the visual appeal of the food and Neil concentrating on the correct modified texture and serving what they felt looked more like 'pools of food'. The residents were unable to identify what their meals were and staff had to explain what they were eating. Neil struggled with ensuring each item was totally lump free, which clearly added some risks. Neil also found his food more watery than creamy. They discussed using moulds but they were they were not keen on the thickening agents being added to the food as they wished to keep these as natural as possible.

Once Edith and Neil had attended the Chefs Day training, they were both able to work together to improve consistency and identify each other's strengths and areas that needed improving, and why. The first thing that was identified was the need for a new blender and Edith supported Neil in perfecting the consistency of the puree meals, so that they were creamy and smooth. Edith and Neil decided that they wanted to keep the meals as natural as possible and would experiment with piping the food, rather than using moulds. They found that by ensuring that the consistency was creamy, they were both able to pipe the meals to resemble the meal being served. They experimented with ways of serving the meals and have now developed their piping skills to such an extent that the residents can recognise what they are eating and enjoy the appearance and smell of the meals. This has improved residents dietary intake, supports the meal time experience and includes all residents, whatever modified IDDSI diet they are on. Families and visitors are reassured that care and attention are given to all meals so that they are presentable and nourishing, and that their loved ones are not eating 'baby food'.

Edith and Neil have received such immense positive feedback regarding their meals that this has created a positive culture and the continued personalisation of residents requiring this increased level of support. It's clear that residents are enjoying the food, not only from the increased intake, but also from their positive responses when eating.

The risks have reduced – there are no lumps in the food, as piping eradicates this fully. The purchase of the new blender ensures that the food is pureed fully. The meals are defined, recognisable (even to the point where one relative was very concerned initially that his wife was being given a hot dog to each, which she wasn't allowed to have - it was, in fact, a puree meal designed to resemble a hot dog!)

Edith and Neil, along with Jean, the Manager, are exceptionally proud of the improvements they have been able to make to the meal time experience and as Head Chef, Edith has found the formalised IDDSI guidelines supportive in enabling and supporting her team in this progression.

