

Nutrition and Hydration Strategy 2025-2030

King's College Hospital NHS
Foundation Trust

Authored by the Department of
Nutrition and Dietetics in collaboration
with departments across the Trust



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Foreword

Welcome to our second Nutrition and Hydration strategy at King's. We are very excited to be sharing with you our commitment to looking after the nutritional needs of our patients, visitors and staff.

This strategy builds on our 2017 strategy, incorporating all the advancements and successes achieved since then. This strategy outlines our vision to provide high-quality, nutritious food, beverages, and artificial nutrition support to our patients, staff, and visitors across all our hospital settings (or healthcare sites).

Food and hydration play a crucial role in a patient's treatment and recovery during hospital stay. Our priority is to deliver quality meals that meet the nutritional needs of patients at various stages of their illness and recovery. Excellent nutritional care is a complex, multidisciplinary effort, requiring collaboration between clinical and catering staff to address the hydration and nutritional needs of patients effectively.

We understand that a healthy diet is vital for overall well-being and disease prevention. This strategy reinforces our commitment to delivering high-quality nutritional care and enhancing our reputation as a leader in this field as per our Trust BOLD Strategy. We aim to position King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust as a key participant in the Independent Review of Hospital Foods, part of the Exemplar Group, to share best practices regarding food quality, sustainability, technology, processes, and procurement systems.

As a healthcare organisation, we recognise our responsibility to help staff and visitors maintain healthy lifestyles by offering and promoting healthier food options. Healthy staff contribute positively to clinical outcomes and enhance the patient experience. Additionally, as a significant purchaser of food and catering services, we have a broader social responsibility to embed sustainability into our service delivery, including our procurement processes.

This strategy evaluates our current compliance with these standards and identifies future improvement priorities, focusing on three key areas:

- Patient nutrition and hydration
- Healthier eating for staff and visitors
- Sustainable procurement

Tracey Carter
Chief Nurse and Executive Director of Midwifery



Introduction

Good nutrition and hydration are vital for health and well-being, especially during this period of increased pressure on the NHS. It is crucial to implement a strong strategy that supports both our patients and staff in maintaining optimal nutritional and hydration levels. Malnutrition and dehydration can have serious negative effects on health and well-being in community, residential, and hospital environments. Approximately one in three patients admitted to hospital is either malnourished or at risk of malnutrition (NICE, 2012).

We also emphasise the importance of fostering a positive culture around staff health and well-being, aligning with NHS England's priorities and operational planning guidelines. Our goal is to ensure that staff feel valued and supported, with access to guidance on nutrition and hydration. Without proper support, there is a risk of increased staff illness and decreased retention, that could negatively affect patient care. By providing education and training on nutrition and hydration care, we enhance our workforce's skills, enabling us to deliver high-quality service to our patients. This approach is in line with the NHS Long Term Plan will ensure staff receive the necessary support.

Additionally, we aim to minimise our environmental impact while collaborating with clinical, catering partners, and retail teams to achieve our nutrition and hydration goals without compromising sustainability principles.



Nutrition and Hydration Strategy – what this means for you as a clinician

Speciality	Roles and responsibilities
Medical team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider if patients are eating and drinking sufficiently• Refer to the dietitian if concerned• Avoid non-urgent interventions during meal services
Nursing team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all patients have completed a nutrition screening tool (MUST, STAMP, Renal iNUT) on admission and weekly throughout their admission• Ensure all patients have a nutritional plan according to their MUST, STAMP, Renal iNUT score• Refer to the dietitians if, for example, MUST is ≥ 2, STAMP ≥ 4, Renal iNUT 2• Support patients during meal services• Offer encouragement at mealtimes• Keep accurate food record charts on Epic
AHP team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Escalate to the MDT if you are concerned about a patient's nutritional status
Catering team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide suitable nutritious meals, regular snacks and drinks for patients throughout their admission• Ensure appropriate variety and choice for all patients and staff
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support and assist patients during meal services e.g. opening food packages, ensuring food is within reach and feeding if appropriate• Update the Nursing Team regarding the food consumed at meal services to ensure accurate food record charts

Developing our strategy

This strategy reflects our commitment to high standards for nutrition and hydration for both patients and staff within the organisation. It seeks to implement the principles outlined in the following guidelines and standards:

- National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink (2022)
- Independent Review of NHS Hospital Food (2020)
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) Regulation 14: Meeting Nutritional and Hydration Needs (2008)

Informed by feedback from patients and staff, this strategy also incorporates findings from the annual national Adult Inpatient Survey, which includes five specific questions on nutrition and hydration. The Trust's Patient Experience Team reviews and disseminates feedback and survey results to the relevant clinical and catering teams, enabling them to address individual concerns and identify opportunities for process improvement. The survey results are benchmarked against other local Trusts, allowing us to assess our performance relative to regional centre's and track changes over time.

The Independent Review of NHS Hospital Food (2020) and the National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink (2022) present eight key recommendations aimed at system-level improvements to enhance meal quality for patients, staff, and visitors in NHS trusts. These recommendations focus on food and drink standards, emphasising food safety, kitchen upgrades, digital meal ordering systems, professionalisation of the catering service, reducing food waste, and establishing a monitoring group to ensure compliance. The Trust's performance has been evaluated against these eight recommendations, and an action plan has been created to ensure that all our sites achieve compliance. The action points are detailed in this strategy, along with an overview of the process used to develop it.



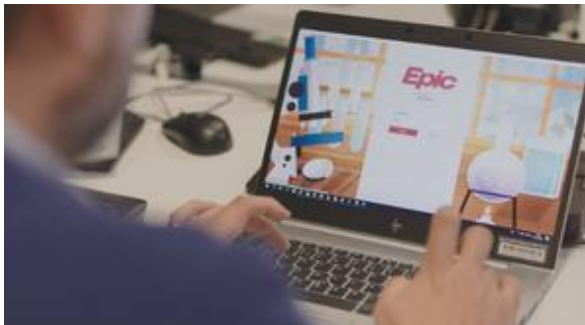
The new electronic health record

A new electronic health record system, Epic, has recently been introduced to help transform the way care is delivered and empower our patients to get more involved in decisions about their health.



The new electronic health record will help to transform the way we work, how we interact with our partner organisations and the care we provide for our patients. It will replace many of the systems we currently use with a single, Trust-wide, integrated, comprehensive system which was launched October 2023.

The programme will include King's and Guy's and St Thomas'. The implementation of Epic will enhance the clinical, nutritional and hydration aspects of patients care and ensure they are well communicated.



Highlights and successes since the last strategy

Project underway to increase the availability of healthy options in our Venetian Building vending machines

New finger food menu launched in April 2024. To increase independence at mealtimes for patients who may be confused or struggle with co-ordination to use cutlery

Specialised menus developed for patients with additional dietary needs, such as in haematology and cystic fibrosis at King's College Hospital plus low fibre menu at Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH)

Dietitians now deliver training in nutritional care as part of the Preceptorship for new Healthcare Assistants

Dietitians now deliver regular training sessions for medical staff in the Department of Clinical Gerontology

Eating and Drinking with Acknowledged Risk checklist piloted across Healthy Ageing Unit at King's College Hospital to support patient centred management of swallowing difficulties

Review underway of our Patient Food Service Quality Rounds at King's College Hospital to ensure we are auditing our meal service appropriately and seeking patient engagement to generate positive change

Successful initiation of 'closed-loop- recycling system for all meal trays at PRUH and Orpington Hospital, aligning with the NHS net zero target.

Training of volunteers to assist with mealtimes

Extended menu rolled out on the paediatric wards for patients that require it and are under dietetic care.

Increase in plant based, planet friendly options on patient menu

Working with catering providers to improve regular snack provision for patients

Leadership and governance

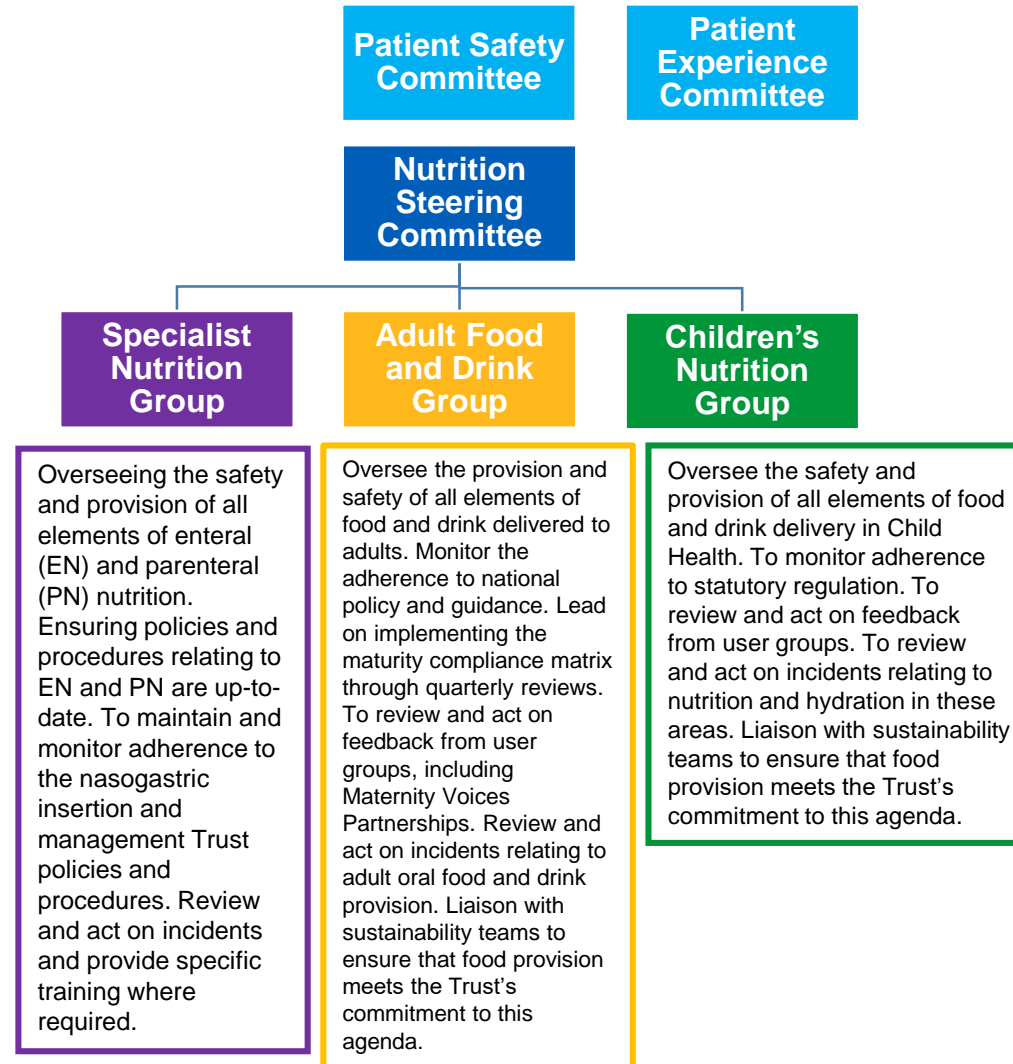
The Trust's Nutrition Steering Committee is a multi-professional group that oversees the delivery of nutrition and hydration care to patients, staff and visitors. It provides the over-arching leadership on all aspects of nutrition, including catering and food procurement, oral nutritional support, enteral and parenteral nutrition, outpatients, community sites, staff and visitors. It is co-chaired by the Lead Nurse for Patient Experience and the Head of Nutrition and Dietetics.

It has three sub groups, as shown below, that develop guidelines, policies and procedures relating to nutrition and hydration in each area. The Food Safety Committee, Staff Healthy Eating Service and Retail Catering also attend and contribute to the Nutrition Steering Committee. A Trust patient governor attends the Nutrition Steering Committee and additionally patients are involved in project and service improvement work as required.

Membership consists of senior leadership from nursing, catering (retail and patient), nutrition and dietetics, speech and language therapy, pharmacy and medical representation. In addition there is representation from the patient experience team, quality improvement and patient safety team, chaplaincy, patient food services and food safety officer where required.



Governance structure



Measuring, reporting and monitoring quality of care

Each sub-group submit quarterly reports to the Nutrition Steering Committee including associated risk log and work plan. It is the responsibility of the Nutrition Steering Committee to report bi-annually to the Trust Quality and Performance Board. This governance framework ensures compliance with associated Trust policies and provides assurance of nutrition and hydration care being delivered.

Reporting and investigating untoward incidents is a national requirement and is essential if we are to learn from errors and share best practice. Each sub-group will review incident reports relating to the area of speciality. Trend analysis and relevant action plans are submitted to the Nutrition Steering Committee in the quarterly sub-group reports as well as in the biannual main nutrition steering report.

The Patient Experience Team collect monthly patient feedback surveys and report on any nutrition-related issues back to the relevant sub-groups. Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) are undertaken annually and features a section on food and nutritional assessment. These results are published nationally, providing a benchmark of performance in relation to other Trusts with comparable services and identifies areas for improvement. The National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink (2022) state: Trusts must assess their compliance with the 10 Key Characteristics of Good Nutrition and Hydration care and The Nutrition and Hydration Digest annually, which then forms part of the Board report.

The key priorities in this strategy are highlighted in the implementation plan (page 27) and will be reviewed and monitored by the Nutrition Steering Committee over the next 5 years.

Patient Safety is central to preventing and reducing risks, errors and harm that occur to patients

Priorities 2025-2030

Ensure that that Trust is compliant with Standards for hospital food and drink and is working towards level 4 compliance with the Maturity Matrix.

Next steps:

- Patient representatives are involved in identifying areas for improvement and contribute to this improvement work.
- We listen effectively to staff and patients, i.e. National Inpatient Survey, staff surveys, etc.
- We are committed to learning from incidents and near misses and actively participate in the implementation of the PSIRF framework.
- Complaints and PALS feedback is reviewed in the appropriate group, actioned actively and ownership for improvement assigned (InPhase).

Our priorities

1. Meet and maintain hospital food and catering standards supporting our patients, staff, the local community and the environment.
2. Develop environmentally sustainable menus that meet the diverse needs of our patients and staff providing essential nutrients to maintain health and prevent nutrition-related health problems.
3. To provide safe, high-quality care related to enteral and parenteral feeding.
4. Make food and fluids accessible and affordable with healthy options available to staff and visitors and provide advice and education on good nutrition and hydration.
5. To make sure staff and volunteers receive regular, high-quality training in nutritional and hydration care and patient support.

We will focus our nutrition and hydration work in areas where we believe we can make the biggest difference, and where we can measure and evidence progress. Our ambitious priorities and how we will achieve them are outlined in each of the following sections and they require dedication, collaboration and innovation in order to implement and deliver them.

**Food
production,
sustainability
and technology**

**Nutrition and
hydration for
our patients**

**Nutrition and
hydration for
our staff and
visitors**

**Education and
training**

Inpatient catering

Food
production,
sustainability
and technology

- Food and hydration is an essential part of a patient's treatment and recovery during a hospital admission and therefore we focus on providing quality food that gives the patients the nutrition they need for their stage of illness.
- Food and drinks are available for patients 24 hours per day at all sites. The Denmark Hill site has a Steamplcity system and a diet bay to freshly prepare meals for patients with special dietary needs. The Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) site uses Apetito and has the option of additional food items ordered by the dietitians.

Priorities 2025-2030

- Provide patients with high-quality, sustainably sourced food that meets their nutritional needs and requirements and the catering standards, as outlined in the National Standards for Health Care Food and Drink (2022)

Next steps:

- Assess current 24-hour provision for patients and review patient groups whose needs are not currently being met.
- Review snack provision and processes across inpatient wards and ensure this approach does not increase food waste volumes or CO2e emissions.

Menu updates

- Menu reviews occur seasonally (6 monthly) to make sure the needs of our inpatients are being met to aid treatment and recovery as well as to include appetising choices and make mealtimes enjoyable. We aim for our menus to meet the needs and preferences of the diverse community that we care for. We are guided by the British Dietetic Association's 'One Blue Dot' campaign on sustainability and follow Nutritional and Hydration Digest guidance (both are mandatory Department of Health Hospital Food Standards) to make certain our menus meet nutritional and environmental standards.
- The menus are created with the input of experienced and knowledgeable catering management, chefs, food safety officer, clinical and food service dietitians, other clinicians, patient representation and feedback from patient experience. Patient input into menu updates is essential, therefore we make sure patient champions attend the menu development meetings, tasting sessions and carry out surveys as part of the menu development process. This is to understand areas where we are performing well and areas that need improving from a patient's perspective.
- We have multiple menus covering the different therapeutic diets required in hospital. This will vary between sites, and support us to meet the various cultural and dietary needs of our patients.
- We have made sure our menus are appropriately coded so that patients can easily identify suitable meals for their dietary requirements; please see example from standard menu.
- At the Denmark Hill site the menus have been translated into 13 different languages; pictorial and braille to make our menus much more accessible.
- Menu options are available to patients at the bedside, digitally on the website, and via the patient entertainment portal.

**Food
production,
sustainability
and technology**

Menu codes	Description
♥	Healthier choices
V	Vegetarian choices
E / ↑*	Higher energy and protein options
VG	Vegan
	Easy to chew
FF**	Finger food
GF	Gluten free

↑* used at PRUH & Orpington
 ** separate menu available at PRUH & Orpington

Priorities 2025-2030

- Continue to review our menus to improve nutrition and hydration care, increased choice and flexibility and meet the needs of the culturally diverse population that our hospitals serve.
- Reduced processed red meat on our menu

Next steps:

- Promote the use of the translated menus
- Review feedback from the menu launches across hospital sites.
- Review and update our therapeutic menu options and explore clinical speciality areas where nutritional needs are not being met.
- When updating menus, ensure menu options meet our sustainability requirements, including menu labelling.
- Snack ordering and patient accessibility of snacks at ward level.

Food safety

- It is imperative to make sure food handling and preparation at the Trust meets legal standards for food safety. This encompasses the need to prevent food-borne illness as well as to prevent allergic reactions. We aim to make sure food is safe during all steps of food processing which includes raw material intake, handling, preparation, cooking, and storage. This responsibility has been outsourced via our catering contract Compass at our Denmark Hill site and ISS at the PRUH and Orpington.
- All pre-packaged food sold in food outlets across all sites are labelled with the required allergen and ingredients list, with allergen details highlighted, and in retail outlets signs are displayed to assure customers that nutritional and allergen information is available upon request.
- At present there is variation on/between wards in how foods allergy information is communicated. The new electronic health system enables staff to document food allergies and intolerances in the patient record. The nutrition communication boards are available to be used at ward level to identify and communicate information about patients with food allergies intolerances or other therapeutic dietary and fluid needs.

Priorities 2025-2030

- Maintain legislatively compliant and high-standards across the Trust in all aspects of food safety and hygiene.
- Work to make sure food safety standards are aligned across all hospital sites with the implementation of the new electronic health record.

Next steps:

- Regular training on food safety to maintain the awareness of all food handlers to make sure standards are maintained.
- Aim to add all ingredients onto the inpatient meal ordering tablets which will enable staff to easily check.
- SALSA Certification and 5-star food hygiene rating in all food handling and production areas.
- Continue to audit and monitor allergen management and internal food safety performance.

Food
production,
sustainability
and technology



Sustainability and technology

Food
production,
sustainability
and technology

- The King's Green Plan 2021-2026 commits to reducing the environmental impact of our hospital and retail food by optimising procurement, reducing food waste and increasing environmentally friendly choices.
- The Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services includes mandatory standards that catering providers are required to apply and make sure UK legislative standards for food production are met.
- Physical copies of the adult inpatient menus are made of a wipe cleanable material and can be reused.
- Tablet technology is in use across our sites on the adult & paediatric inpatient wards for patient menu orders.
- The new electronic health record will enable clearer documentation of patients' nutritional requirements with an electronic Nutrition Communication Board for the inpatient wards. The boards have real-time accurate information on patients' nutritional needs including nil by mouth status and the level of assistance required, ultimately improving patient safety at meal and beverage rounds.
- At PRUH and Orpington, Apetito provide a 'closed-loop' recycling system for all meal trays at PRUH, aligning with the NHS net zero target.
- The Too Good To Go app is utilised in the Costa Coffee in the Hambledon Wing at Denmark Hill to sell food that would otherwise be wasted at a discounted price. The M&S store at Denmark Hill also sells food that is going out of date at a discounted price.



Priorities 2025-2030

- Upholding the Trust's Green Plan commitments to eliminate a number of single-use plastic items by 2026. Work to collaborate and align sustainability and technological processes across all sites.
- Supporting patients, staff & visitors to make healthy sustainable plant rich choices.
- Improve communication of patients' nutrition and hydration needs with the new electronic system.
- Reduce volume of preventable food waste e.g. food spoilage.

Next steps:

- Continue to monitor waste streams and develop ways in which we can reduce and utilise food waste across our hospital sites.
- Use more reusable products and reduce single-use disposable packaging.
- Develop the new electronic Nutrition Communication Boards and increase electronic meal ordering.
- Review options for food donation to support our community and environmental impact.

Nutritional screening

Nutrition and
hydration for
our patients

- Early identification of patients who are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition is vitally important as this allows treatment to commence. NICE Clinical Guidance 32 states that all patients admitted to hospital should be screened for risk of malnutrition within 24 hours of admission and weekly thereafter, and that outpatients should be screened at their first appointment.
- Pre-operative nutritional assessment is undertaken in some pre-operative assessment clinics with protocols and pathways in place for particular procedures for which the patient would be high risk for malnutrition or deterioration post operatively.
- Across the Trust the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) is used for adults admitted to hospital and throughout the community. The MUST score is recorded electronically and completion rates are audited with results reported to the relevant Nutrition Steering Groups.
- Renal iNUT screening tool is used for all renal patients.
- Children are nutritionally screened for malnutrition using the Screening Tool for the Assessment of Malnutrition in Paediatrics (STAMP).



Priorities 2025-2030

- Support inpatient areas to increase screening rates to 95% compliance for patients
- Review the opportunity for nutritional screening in the outpatient setting
- Develop guidance around best practice for nutritional screening

Next steps:

- Develop a Nutritional Screening Policy
- Develop face-to-face and virtual training opportunities for all staff in acute settings on the effective use of nutrition screening tools
- Regular reporting of nutritional screening rates and development of appropriate action plans
- Review the outpatient malnutrition screening processes and establish how we can improve this

Nutrition and hydration on the ward

Nutrition and
hydration for
our patients

- Offering patients good nutrition and hydration in hospital has the potential to reduce recovery times, improve patient outcomes, reduce costs and CO2e emissions to the NHS. In addition to the food and beverage rounds delivered by the catering team, all wards have access to a water fountain and a drinks machine and a pantry to allow nursing staff to provide patients with light meals and snacks 24 hours a day.
- Assisted mealtimes are in place and designed to make sure patients are not unnecessarily interrupted during meal service.
- The use of Nutrition Communication Boards improves communication about patients' food and fluid requirements to all members of the ward team. It also identifies the level of assistance a patient requires with food and fluid intake, which is done with the use of the Red Tray system. Food and fluid record charts are essential for monitoring patients however, completion rates and accuracy can be poor giving rise to opportunities for malnutrition and dehydration to be missed or poorly managed. Maintaining standards across all wards is key for patient safety and experience, with multidisciplinary teamwork at ward level essential to drive improvement and develop ownership.



Priorities 2025-2030

- Build local ownership for ward-level provision of food and drink to drive improvement.
- Increase the oversight and governance for the performance of each ward area in food and drink provision, patient safety and experience.
- Improve hydration identification, recording and management of risk in acutely unwell or nil by mouth patients.

Next steps:

- Implement nutrition link teams on each ward (consisting of dietitians, caterers, nurses and speech and language therapists) to drive local improvement and collaborative working.
- Develop a ward-based oral nutrition and hydration Standard Operating Procedure to enhance and formalise processes.
- Establish more appropriate methods to improve dehydration identification with the implementation of the new electronic health record
- Develop the nil by mouth guidelines

Diversity and inclusion

Nutrition and
hydration for
our patients

King's Volunteers

King's volunteers are committed in force to supporting mealtimes across King's, this includes bedside table preparation and water top ups, delivering hot meals in a timely manner, supporting with feeding where appropriate, recording food consumption by patients and clearing away from the bedside finished plates and cutlery. We hope with further engagement and support from this working group, they will be able to do more and reach more people every day.

Priorities 2025-2030

- Increase the number of patients we are able to support at meal times & where possible support patients to use our dinning rooms on wards when able
- Increase the number of food diary's completed for our vulnerable patients
- Increasing awareness of the available support from chaplaincy services where issues around faith, belief & food choices arise across the trust.

Cultural and Religious beliefs

- Food culture is the collective habits, rituals, beliefs, values, lifestyle, and practices around producing, procuring, and in taking food. It shapes the way people live and feel. It affects people's identity and culture.
- At King's we want to ensure we support all patients using our services can meet their nutritional needs while being aware that faith, belief and culture influences people's food choices
- Through collaborating with the Trust's chaplaincy service, we can appropriately support and meet nutritional needs of patients & relatives.

Next steps:

Working with our volunteers to develop audits to monitor and ensure patients are getting the support they need at meal times

Managing swallowing difficulties

Nutrition and
hydration for
our patients

- Patients presenting with swallowing difficulties are screened by Dysphagia Trained Nurses (DTN). DTN's are registered nurses who have completed the King's training package on LEAP and a practical assessment with a Speech & Language Therapist (SLT) on the wards. To pass both training modules the DTN needs to achieve a score of 80%, after this they are signed off as competent to carry out DTN screening.
- If a patient fails the screening assessment, an onward referral is made to the SLT team who will then complete a comprehensive assessment and record outcomes in the electronic patient record (Epic). Recommendations regarding fluid and diet modifications are documented on a bedside swallow sign, handed over to the nurse and documented on Epic.
- The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI -[IDDSI - IDDSI Framework](#)) descriptors have been implemented and embedded within practice across all our sites to communicate patient's food and fluid consistency recommendations ensuring the food they order and consume is safe.
- Patients requiring modified texture diets order from a separate menu. There are a range of modified consistency snack options also available. The SLT team will work with the patient and support them with a programme of swallow rehabilitation to optimise their swallow function throughout their hospital admission. They will facilitate an onward referral to the SLT community teams on discharge as needed.

The IDDSI Framework

Providing a common terminology for describing food textures and drink thicknesses to improve safety for individuals with swallowing difficulties.



Priorities 2025-2030

- Harness the benefits of Epic to improve the management of patients with swallowing difficulties
- Focus on early assessment, prevent unnecessary inappropriate interventions, and admissions where possible and improve patient flow to and from community services for patients with swallowing difficulties

Next steps:

- Audit compliance of adherence to fluid and diet recommendations made by the SLT team
- Engage with development of the Epic system to improve the management of patients with swallowing difficulties

Clinically Assisted Nutrition and Hydration

Nutrition and
hydration for
our patients

- Many patients within the Trust will require the provision of artificial nutrition support during and after their hospital stay. This may include enteral or parenteral nutrition support. Enteral Nutrition (EN) refers to the delivery of a nutritionally complete liquid food via a tube into the stomach or small bowel. Parenteral Nutrition (PN) refers to the infusion of an intravenous nutrition formula into the bloodstream. We pride ourselves on providing a safe and effective service to patients requiring EN or PN that is evidence based and adheres to national recommendations from NHS England and other professional bodies including the British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN).
- The Nutrition Teams oversee the safety and provision of PN within the Trust. All sites have Nutrition Nurses, Dietitians & Doctors who are able to support the management of EN, PN, updating policies and provide training to other staff.

Priorities 2025-2030

- To provide safe and appropriate artificial nutrition support to our patients
- To review and update our EN and PN policies
- Improve access to specialist nutrition resources across all hospital sites
- Collaboration between the sites to align specialist nutritional resources and policies

Next steps:

- Harmonise clinical guidelines relating enteral and parenteral nutrition to make sure standardised care across all sites

Paediatric services

Nutrition and
hydration for
our patients

- Infants and children are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition due to having a lower caloric reserve and higher nutritional requirements per unit of body weight to account for growth. The early identification of malnourished children or those who are potentially at risk for malnutrition is key to preventing debilitating consequences.
- The delivery of excellent nutritional care in the paediatric inpatient setting at King's is a highly complex process which relies on a multi-disciplinary approach to ensure clinical and catering staff work together to meet the hydration and nutritional needs of patients from birth into adolescence. Mothers are supported to continue breast feeding and meet their nutritional requirements with food supplied from the hospital menu.
- A parent / guardian who stays to support a young patient can choose meals & drinks from the adult menu.
- Children will have their weight and height/length measured, and their percentile recorded on the appropriate UK-World Health Organisation (WHO) growth chart. Inpatients are also screened for malnutrition using the Screening Tool for the Assessment of Malnutrition in Paediatrics (STAMP) within 24 hours of admission and repeated as appropriate.
- Food for the inpatient wards is provided by the King's catering department - which is outsourced to Compass at our King's College Hospital and ISS at the PRUH and South Sites - and patients, parents or guardians are able to choose suitable food based on the selection available from the menus.
- Many patients will require the provision of artificial nutrition support or specialist nutritional products. King's College Hospital has a dedicated specialist feed unit, run by trained technicians, that reconstitutes all of the specialist powdered feeds and delivers/manages supplies of pre-made specialist feeds and supplements.

Priorities 2025-2030

- Support inpatient areas to increase the STAMP Screening Tool screening rates towards 95% of patients on relevant wards across all sites
- Continue working collaboratively to review our menus and services to improve nutrition and hydration care with a particular focus on food provision for the under 1s and food for breast feeding mothers

Next steps:

- Develop an electronic Nutrition Communication Board in the new electronic record system

Integrated care sites and services

Nutrition and hydration for our patients

- We recognise that good nutrition is vital to support our patients in the community to restore them to good health following an illness and to prevent hospital admissions. Nutrition and hydration issues need to be considered by every healthcare professional working in our community so that any problems can be identified and treated early. Failure to do so has a significant impact on the individual patient and local health economy as malnutrition will lead to increased hospitalisations, GP visits and an increased length of stay.

Priorities 2025-2030

- Improve communication on nutritional needs from the acute to community inpatient setting
- Identify opportunities to improve food services to our immediate care sites that meets the needs of our patients

Next steps:

- Utilise Epic to improve communication between acute and community sites on nutritional care of patients

Retail catering

**Nutrition and
hydration for
our staff and
visitors**

- Access to good quality nutritional food and refreshments in our retail units at affordable prices has always been a key priority. The retail offering across our hospital sites provides for a wide range of needs, from grab and go for convenience and affordability to sit-in provision to make sure that our patients, staff and visitors are catered for. The 'Healthier and More Sustainable Catering: Nutrition Principles' (Public Health England, 2017) document guides on how to best plan menus to meet healthy eating recommendations.
- Planning, reviewing and updating the food available in the restaurants and cafes is done by the retail and catering managers, supported by the Medirest food service dietitian (DH only). The restaurants include increased vegetarian and vegan options as well as the availability of fresh fruit and salads.
- A yearly calendar of themed promotional menus are planned and implemented to showcase different historical, cultural and religious events such as 'Veganuary', Black History Month and Nutrition & Hydration week.
- At PRUH and Orpington, menu planning is completed by the retail and ISS catering managers. Both restaurants provide a variety of options including vegetarian and vegan options, with fresh salads and fresh fruit.
- We have made sure that hot and cold food as well as refreshments are available 24 hours a day at our acute sites. Access to numerous vending machines across all acute sites is maintained 24/7, 365 days a year providing hot and cold drinks, sandwiches and snacks for patients, staff and visitors to access. Water fountains are located across all hospital sites to provide easy access to fresh water and promote hydration.

Priorities 2025-2030

- To provide an affordable range of healthy and sustainable meals to cater for a variety of diverse dietary, lifestyle and cultural requirements.
- To work towards retail catering options across all hospital sites to be of the same quality and accessibility.

Next steps:

- Work with the current catering suppliers to improve retail food availability with an aim to offer the same variety and quality offerings across all sites where possible
- Explore further ways in which the provision of 24/7 food offers can be improved for staff and visitors.
- Improve availability of plant-based, Kosher, Halal, and gluten free foods in retail outlets.
- Undertake nutritional analysis of our in-house retail menus and provide label and colour coding of menu choices.
- Review vending machine offerings.

Staff healthy eating

Nutrition and
hydration for
our staff and
visitors

- Currently there is limited support for staff around health eating and sustainable eating choices guidance.
- There are on occasions discussions around healthy eating as part of Health & Wellbeing events held by the trust. This is limited to benefit a small number of employees.
- Good food & nutritional knowledge for our workforce is key to promoting health & wellbeing for both staff & patients, resulting in better patient experience & staff wellbeing at work.

Priorities 2025-2030

- To provide staff with free, accessible information to support, promote and encourage healthy, sustainable food and lifestyle choices.



Next steps:

- Develop further staff education tools on nutrition and hydration including digital resources
- Continue to comply with the Staff Health and Wellbeing CQUIN standards



Education and training

- Training our staff is vital to make sure our patients receive the highest level of care to optimise their nutrition and hydration and is a key recommendation from the National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink (2022). Developing and providing e-learning modules has shown the potential to support sustainable and independent learning in a highly mobile workforce.
- Additionally, there are a number of bespoke training sessions delivered on a regular basis as part staff induction or as general updates or refresher sessions to food services staff, nurses, health care assistants and doctors.
- Mandatory Mealtime support training delivered to all volunteers to ensure that they are able to effectively support patients.

Education and training

Training topics

Food service, chefs and catering staff

Food safety; allergens; nutrition and hydration care; therapeutic diets and menu indication; choking and the management of patients with swallowing difficulties

Clinical staff

Nutritional screening; dysphagia awareness and swallowing screen training; management of nasogastric tubes

Priorities 2025-2030

- Raise awareness and knowledge amongst the catering and food service workforce to make sure they have the skills and competencies required to meet the nutritional and hydration needs of the population
- Make sure all clinical staff are provided with appropriate training on food provision, safety and how to support and manage patients' nutrition and hydration

Next steps:

- Establish 'Nutrition Link Nurse' programme
- Customer service training for all ward hostesses
- Review and update the bespoke online training modules available at Trust induction for all staff and ongoing training.

Implementation plan

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Responsibility
Provide patients with high-quality, sustainably sourced food that meets their nutritional needs requirements and the catering standards outlined in the National Standards for Health Care Food and Drink (2022)					
Continue to review our menus to improve nutrition and hydration care, increased choice and flexibility and meet the needs of the culturally diverse population that our hospitals serve.					
Reduced processed red meat on our menu					
Maintain legislatively compliant and high standards across the Trust in all aspects of food safety and hygiene					
Work to make sure food safety standards are aligned across all hospital sites with the implementation of the new electronic health record					
Supporting patients, staff & visitors to make healthy sustainable plant rich choices.					
Work towards ensuring that the special feeds unit (milk kitchen) in paediatrics meets guidance for food safety, specifically with regards to the use of hot water and that breast milk handling guidelines are followed throughout the Trust					
Upholding the Trust's Green Plan commitments to eliminate single-use plastic items by 2026. Work to collaborate and align sustainability and technological processes across all sites.					
Improve communication of patients' nutrition and hydration needs with the new electronic system.					

Implementation plan

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Responsibility
Support inpatient areas to increase screening rates to 95% compliance for patients					
Review the opportunity for nutritional screening in the outpatient setting					
Develop guidance around best practice for nutritional screening					
Build local ownership for ward-level provision of food and drink to drive improvement					
Increase the oversight and governance for the performance of each ward area in food and drink provision, patient safety and experience					
Improve hydration identification, recording and management of risk in acutely unwell or nil by mouth patients					
Harness the benefits of Epic to improve the management of patients with swallowing difficulties					
Focus on early assessment, prevent unnecessary or inappropriate interventions and admissions where possible and improve patient flow to and from community services for patients with swallowing difficulties					
To provide safe and appropriate artificial nutrition support to our patients					
To review and update our EN and PN policies					
Improve access to specialist nutrition resources across all hospital sites					

Implementation plan

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Responsibility
Collaboration between the sites align specialist nutritional resources all hospital sites					
Support inpatient areas to increase the STAMP Screening Tool screening rates towards 95% of patients on relevant wards across all sites					
Continue working collaboratively to review our menus and services to improve nutrition and hydration care with a particular focus on food provision for the under 1s and food for breast feeding mothers					
Improve communication on nutritional needs from the acute to community inpatient setting					
Identify opportunities to improve food service to our immediate care sites that meets the needs of our patients					
Increase the number of patients we are able to support at mealtimes & where possible support patients to use our dinning rooms on wards when able					
Increase the number of food diary completed for our vulnerable patients					
Increasing awareness of the available support from chaplaincy services where issues around faith belief & food choices arise across the trust					
Working with our volunteers to develop audits to monitor and ensure patients are getting the support they need at mealtimes.					

Implementation plan

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Responsibility
To provide an affordable range of healthy & sustainable meals to cater for a variety of diverse dietary, lifestyle and cultural requirements					
To work towards retail catering options across all hospital sites to be of the same quality and accessibility					
To provide staff with free, accessible information to support, promote and encourage healthy, sustainable food and lifestyle choices					
Raise awareness and knowledge amongst the catering and food service workforce to make sure they have the skills and competencies required to meet the nutritional and hydration needs of the population					
Make sure all clinical staff are provided with appropriate training on food provision, safety and how to support and manage patients' nutrition and hydration					

Glossary

BAPEN – The British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition

BDA – British Dietetic Association

CPU – Central Production Unit

CQUIN – Commissioning for Quality and Innovation framework

DN – Denmark Hill

EN – Enteral nutrition

FEES – Functional Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing

FSA – Food service assistants

IDDSI – International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative – International descriptors for fluid and diet consistencies

iNUT - Inpatient Nutrition Screening Tool

MUST – Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool

N&D – Nutrition and Dietetics department

NG – Nasogastric tube

PN – Parenteral nutrition

PRUH – Princess Royal University Hospital

SLT – Speech and Language Therapy department

STAMP – Screening Tool for the Assessment of Malnutrition in Paediatrics

WHO – World Health Organisation

Reference documents

- Department of Health and Social Care October 2020 - Hospital food review Independent Review of Hospital Food
- Department of Health and Social Care January 2017 - The Hospital Food Standards Panel's report on standards for food and drink in NHS hospitals
- NHS 2019 - The NHS Long Term Plan
- NHS England 2022 - National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink
- NHS England and NHS Improvement 2021 - 2022/23 priorities and operational planning guidance
- NICE Clinical guideline [CG32] - Nutrition support for adults: oral nutrition support, enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition, 2017
- NICE Quality standard [QS24] - Nutrition support in adults, 2012
- Public Health England February 2017 – Healthier and More Sustainable Catering: Nutrition Principles
- The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative, 2019 – Website www.iddsi.org