

Help sheet 1:

Nutritional risk screening and monitoring for older people at home

Nutritional risk screening and monitoring for older people at home is comprehensively explained in:

Identifying and planning assistance for home-based adults who are nutritionally at risk: a resource manual (Department of Human Services, 2001)

This manual complements the *Well for life* Resource Kit. It was developed by members of the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA), Victorian Branch, with Home and Community Care (HACC) Program funding from the Department of Human Services. Help sheets from *Identifying and planning assistance for home-based adults who are nutritionally at risk: a resource manual* are referred to as Help sheet x (Nutrition resource manual).

The Nutrition resource manual can be obtained from the following website: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hacc/downloads/pdf/resourcemanual.pdf>

Who the Nutrition resource manual is for

The Nutrition resource manual is designed to demonstrate and advocate for the introduction of nutrition risk screening and monitoring to the assessment process of all vulnerable adult clients (frail older people, younger adults with disability and people living in alternative accommodation) who require community services to remain living independently (Nutrition resource manual).

It addresses nutritional issues for older people at home. In a few instances the very complex needs of high dependency clients have warranted separate sections in the Nutrition resource manual.

Purpose of the Nutrition resource manual

As well as explaining nutritional risk screening and monitoring, the Nutrition resource manual also gives many practical suggestions about solving problems of older people with nutritional risk and information on where further assistance may be sought for them.

Contents of the Nutrition resource manual

Nutrition Risk Screening Tool



- Guidelines to support primary health and community service staff to screen for nutritional risk as part of the initial needs identification process. This tool is included in the Service Coordination Tool Templates (see Health Behaviours Profile) developed by the Department of Human Services for use by member agencies of Primary Care Partnerships (see Sections 1 and 2).
- Strategies for using the nutritional risk screening tool in day centres, such as Planned Activity Groups, to observe people in these settings (see Section 2).

Help sheets

Individual help sheets are provided on each question included in the risk screening tool. Each help sheet provides:

- a rationale for the individual trigger question
- comments which should prompt further inquiry by the assessor
- observations and further questions to assist needs identification
- suggestions for simple interventions and recommendations for monitoring (see Section 3).

A series of help sheets following the same format as described above to address:

- general factors affecting nutritional opportunities for older people at home, for example, financial difficulties, social problems, personal hygiene and food hygiene problems (see Section 4)
- dietary principles and problems including, food habits and patterns, the importance of fluid intake, how to be well nourished on delivered meals (see Section 5).

A list of help sheets included in the Nutrition resource manual is provided below.

Assistance

- Ways in which dietitians can assist older people at home and services are outlined in Section 6.

Case studies



- Case studies are provided to illustrate practical application of the nutritional risk screening tool leading to the identification of factors relevant to nutritional risk, interventions and monitoring strategies (see Section 6).

Quality improvement

- Information on how the nutritional risk screening tool can be used in quality improvement processes to evaluate the type and extent of nutritional risk in the services' client population (see Section 6).
- An example of a satisfaction survey that could be used by primary health and community service organisations to receive client feedback on meals services (see Section 6).

Education supplement

A training manual to support organisations train staff on nutritional risk screening and monitoring. This is usually organised using the services of a dietitian.

- *Identifying and planning assistance for home-based adults who are nutritionally at risk: a training manual* (Department of Human Services, 2001).

Contact your local HACC or community health service dietitian for more information on how to organise these sessions.

Identifying and planning assistance for home-based adults who are nutritionally at risk: a resource manual – help sheets

(Department of Human Services, 2001)

Section 2	Screening and monitoring
2.1	Nutritional risk screening and monitoring as part of the assessment and intervention process
2.2	Nutritional risk screening and monitoring trigger questions
2.3	Nutritional risk screening and monitoring tool for home-based adults
2.4	How does nutritional risk screening and monitoring fit into assessment and planning assistance for intervention?
2.5	General assessment includes factors relevant to nutritional risk
2.6	Checklist for intervention
2.7	Monitoring is conducted as required
2.8	Nutritional risk screening in other settings
2.9	Nutritional risk screening and monitoring in other settings
Section 3	Nutrition and health issues
3.1	Obvious underweight-frailty?
3.2	Unintentional weight loss?
3.3	Reduced appetite or reduced food and fluid intake?
3.4	Mouth or teeth or swallowing problems?
3.5	Follows a special diet?
3.6	Unable to shop for food?
3.7	Unable to prepare food?
3.8	Unable to feed self?
3.9	Obvious overweight affecting life quality?
3.10	Unintentional weight gain?
Section 4	General needs assessment
4.1	Summary of general assessment factors affecting food and nutrition
4.2	Financial difficulties
4.3	Social problems
4.4	Personal hygiene and food hygiene problems
4.5	Mental health problems
4.6	Poly-drugs (more than three types of medication daily)
4.7	Nausea and vomiting
4.8	Diarrhoea
4.9	Constipation
4.10	Incontinence
4.11	Breathing problems in the older person
4.12	Outline of some medical problems affecting nutrition

Section 5 Dietary principles and problems

5.2 Food habits and patterns

5.3.1 Good nutrition for older people: The 1 3 3 4 5+ food plan

5.3.3 Who needs extra foods in addition to the daily food plan?

5.3.3.1 High energy foods and drinks

5.4 The importance of fluid intake

5.5 Alcohol as part of a vulnerable person's intake

5.6 Vitamin D

5.7 Use of vitamin and mineral supplements

5.8 How to be well nourished on meals on wheels (MOW)

5.9 Outline of some food and dietary problems

5.10 Brief counselling methods

Section 6 Assistance

6.1 Summary of roles and functions of dietitians in home-based care