To All Care Home Managers

Dear Care Home Manager,

**Prescribing of oral nutritional supplements (ONS) in care homes across Suffolk**

Please find attached a briefing and policy regarding changes in the prescribing of ONS in care homes across Suffolk.

Please circulate these to all your staff, including kitchen staff, so that they are aware of the new policy and how it will be implemented.

As per the policy and briefing, any concerns or complaints should be directed to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 389 6819 or email pals@suffolk.nhs.uk

Yours faithfully,

Susan Clarke
Dietetic Advisor,
Ipswich & East Suffolk CCG and West Suffolk CCG

Linda Lord
Chief Pharmacist
West Suffolk CCG
Oral Nutritional Supplements in Care Homes: Information for Care Home Staff

Care home staff should refer to the Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) in Care Homes Policy, which applies across Ipswich & East Suffolk and West Suffolk from 01 September 2016. The information below explains how the Policy will be implemented.

Care home residents who are not currently prescribed ONS
- Do not request ONS on prescription unless authorised to do so by a dietitian.
- Follow the general dietetic advice below.

Care home residents who are currently prescribed ONS
- Continue the ONS for now.
- A dietitian will review these residents between September and December 2016, with a view to stopping prescribed ONS where appropriate and switching to homemade supplements with extra snacks and food fortification*. The dietitian will communicate this to the GP and care home, to ensure the prescribing change is implemented and documented.

General dietetic advice
- Document nutritional status on admission and thereafter using the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) and follow the local policy guidelines.

  MUST score 1 (medium risk of malnutrition): Offer homemade supplements and extra snacks. If no improvement after 2 weeks, add in food fortification*.
  MUST score 2 or higher (high risk of malnutrition): Offer homemade supplements and extra snacks in addition to food fortification*.

- Monitor all intake on food and fluid charts.
- Refer to a community dietitian if weight loss continues after four weeks of offering homemade supplements, snacks and food fortification*. All residents including those on a food first plan should be screened regularly using MUST and the local policy followed. This plan includes how and when to refer to a dietitian.
- Residents with diabetes: Do not offer homemade fruit juice. Offer savoury and dairy snacks/fortified foods rather than sweet options.

*Food fortification – This means adding ingredients to normal food to increase energy content without increasing the volume of food eaten.

Recipes
Recipes for homemade supplements, snacks and food fortification are available on the Ipswich Hospital, West Suffolk Hospital and CCG websites:
http://www.wsh.nhs.uk/ServicesAtoZ/ClinicalServices/N-P/NutritionandDietetics/NutritionandDietetics.aspx
http://www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk/ http://www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk/

Training and further information
Training is available free of charge for care home staff from: Ipswich Hospital Dietitians, tel. 01473 704000 or West Suffolk Community Dietitians, tel 01284 748850.
Further information: The National Association of Care Catering, and The Caroline Walker Trust

Concerns or complaints
Contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 0800 389 6819 or pals@suffolk.nhs.uk

1 Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) in Care Homes Policy. See www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk or http://www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk/
2 http://www.bapen.org.uk/screening-and-must/must/introducing-must
Oral Nutritional Supplements* (ONS) in Care Homes Policy
This policy applies across Ipswich & East Suffolk and West Suffolk

From 01 September 2016, both the Ipswich & East and West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups do not support the prescribing of ONS for residents in care homes, unless one of the exclusion criteria listed below applies. Residents with a poor intake should be commenced on homemade milkshakes and food first instead of ONS.

This policy has been introduced because Regulation 14 of the Care Quality Commission Guidance for Providers is clear that care homes are responsible for assessing and making the necessary arrangements for the provision of suitable nutrition and hydration for all residents. Residents in care homes should have their nutritional status documented on admission and thereafter screened using the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST) and the local policy guidelines followed. Food and fluid charts should be completed where there is risk of malnutrition or where malnutrition has been diagnosed. First line nutrition support is by food fortification for residents at medium (MUST score 1) or high (MUST score 2 or higher) risk of malnutrition. All care homes have the facilities to prepare fortified meals and high energy snacks where disease-related malnutrition is either a risk or is present. For residents with swallowing difficulties, liquidised or soft diets can also be provided.

Supportive resources are available on the CCG and Ipswich Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital dietetics websites. All care homes are offered training in identifying malnutrition, using MUST and in the principles of food fortification by the community dietetic services.

In addition to fortifying foods and drinks, there is the option of purchasing “over the counter” supplements such as:

- Complan® (Nutricia) milkshake or soup powders from supermarkets/pharmacies
- Nurishment® and Nurishment Extra® (Dunn’s River) from supermarkets and cash & carry wholesalers
- AYMÈS® retail range (AYMES) milkshake powder from pharmacies
- Meritene Energis® (Nestle) milkshake or soup powders from pharmacies

Exclusion criteria
ONS can continue to be prescribed for residents who:
- Require ONS to be administered via an enteral tube
- Require a specialist formula, e.g. Elemental 028 Extra
- Have been assessed as requiring ONS by a dietitian, after food fortification and homemade supplements have failed to result in weight gain or due to underlying clinical condition.

The Sip Feed Prescribing Guidelines for GPs and community staff provides advice on which first and second line sip feeds are recommended for residents who satisfy the exclusion criteria, based on cost and clinical effectiveness. A regular review of the ONS should always be documented in the care plan.

Residents on food first plans should continue to be screened regularly using MUST and referred to community dietitians as per local policy guidelines.

Concerns or complaints should be directed to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) tel. 0800 389 6819 or email pals@suffolk.nhs.uk

*ONS includes fortified food, additional snacks, sip feeds, semi-solid desserts, high energy/protein powders and liquids.

1 http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/regulation-14-meeting-nutritional-and-hydration-needs
2 https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg32/chapter/1-Guidance
3 http://www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk
4 http://www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk
5 http://www.ipswichhospital.nhs.uk/dietetics/food-first/information-for-care-homes.htm
6 http://www.wsh.nhs.uk/ServicesAtoZ/ClinicalServices/N-P/NutritionandDietetics/NutritionandDietetics.aspx