



## Quality Issue: Baseline Mealtime Observation Audit

### WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

To identify the barriers which results in patients consuming less than 50% of their meal and the factors which detract from or optimize the dining experience through a baseline observational audit.

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Canadian Malnutrition Task Force Study (CMTF) found that 45 % of patients admitted to hospital are malnourished. Malnutrition is associated with increased length of stay and readmission in acute care, and increased morbidity and mortality.

Factors noted in the study which affect intake include patient difficulties with eating including poor positioning, difficulty reaching, meals, cutting foods and opening packages, insufficient time to eat meals, and lack of help to eat meals. An observational audit completed at mealtime will identify areas for improvement.

### WHAT IS THE TARGET?

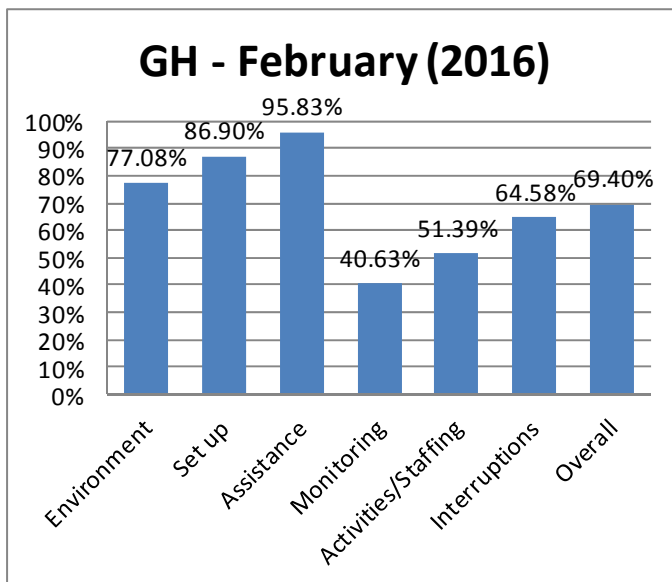
One unit at one meal will be observed.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

Include number of audits: 1

Note: higher percentage is a positive result

### Interpretation:



Over a 2 week period, 24 lunchtime meals were observed in a medicine ward at Grace Hospital.

Gaps in service in select areas noted in:

- Monitoring
- Activities and staffing
- Interruptions

No significant concerns noted in environment, set up and assistance

### Comments:

**Factors contributing to low scores:**

#### Monitoring:

No spare meals being kept on unit leading to staff not offering an alternative meal

#### Activities/Staffing & Interruptions:

The majority of the interruptions were urgent such as meds

**Factors contributing to high scores:**

#### Environment:

Noise level and smells were acceptable

#### Meal set-up & Assistance:

Trays were delivered on schedule with most patients positioned for eating, packages opened, and assistance given where needed

### Items noted:

- Number consuming > 50% was 47.8%
- For those consuming <50%, 77% ate nothing
- Presence of family/loved ones did not necessarily increase intake

### WHAT ACTIONS ARE WE TAKING?

Establish mealtime standard:

- Educate staff on audit results
- Address manageable problems such as chewing/swallowing & food dislikes
- Investigate having alternative choice available
- Trial use of ½ portions
- Explore the use of volunteers
- Develop family/visitor education pamphlet