

Flexible Dining Services: Sample Policy

You're almost there! You're almost done and ready to start up your buffet dining program.

The last step is to carefully review all your plans and make sure your policies are in agreement with your new program. You will want to add a policy that describes the buffet and how it will be served to the residents. A sample policy is below for your review. With your revised policies, staff in-services, notification to physicians and families, and all the plans complete for menu and equipment set up, you're ready to go and implement your new buffet program!

PURPOSE: To provide resident choice in mealtime selections and portion sizes. The goal of the program is to allow more choice to increase the level of satisfaction and intake of meals. Residents will participate in this program as a part of the "Person Centered Planning" concept of care at the facility.

PROGRAM:

1. All residents admitted will have a detailed dietary preferences completed by the dietary designee and resident or family member within 48 hours.
2. Meals will be prepared with consideration of food preferences in the main kitchen. A choice of two entrees, starch, and vegetables will be offered in a buffet style meal service along with a salad bar or salad of the day and a dessert bar or dessert of the day.
3. Meals will be prepared in the kitchen and placed bulk into steam table pans. The steam table pans will be loaded into an insulated and vacuum-sealed carrier or hot cart for transportation to dining areas not adjacent to the kitchen. Hot and cold foods will be transported separated. On the unit, a dietary employee will transfer meals into the steam table for service. Foods will be separated by hot and cold. Residents will come to the serving line to select their meal choices. Assistance will be available to carry trays or dip foods from salad bar or dessert bar, if needed.
4. Residents on therapeutic diets other than "no concentrated sweets" or "no added salt" will have their meal selections supervised by the dietary employee with guidance given to the resident on food choices. The resident retains the right to refuse and alternative selections will be offered. Tray cards will be used to communicate care plan interventions to the resident and staff for use in making meal time selections. Resident's choices will be honored. If the resident does not make a choice, the tray card and diet spreadsheet will be used to serve the meal.
5. Residents will be instructed on the minimum servings for good health at the time of admission. Table flyers will remind residents of servings to consume to meet the minimum guidelines. Any resident who is assessed to not possess the cognitive skills to make informed serving choices will receive guidance from the staff.
6. Residents will have weight monitoring to insure adequate foods are being consumed and food intake logs will record % intake. If any concerns are noted they will be referred to the dietitian for follow-up.
7. Snack area will be provided with juices, coffee, milk, and wrapped snacks in a designated area of the dining room. This area will be appointed with tablecloth and skirt, and items will be displayed in baskets or in an appealing manner. Temperature of the food items will need to be monitored as appropriate or placed in a refrigerator.