

Resident Food Surveys

WHAT

A Resident Food Survey, which can also be called a Resident Meal Satisfaction Survey, can be used to find out what residents think about the meals served within a facility (for example, taste, temperature, consistency, choice, serving staff, dining environment).

WHY

Meals are more likely to be enjoyed when they are culturally appropriate, contain familiar and favoured food choices, are held at resident preferred times and appropriate utensils are provided.¹ A comfortable dining environment and pleasant relaxed atmosphere can improve appetite and food enjoyment.¹

Resident meal preferences and satisfaction with food services can only be understood by talking to residents and their families. Resident likes and dislikes should be established, documented, and reviewed regularly.¹ Residents or their family should be involved in menu planning, mealtimes, meal sizes and the use of utensils.¹ A Resident Food Survey provides one way to gather some of this important information.

HOW

An example tool is included in the tool kit. This has been adapted from the work of Olivia Wright and colleagues. Another example can be found in the *Best Practice Food and Nutrition Manual for Aged Care Facilities*, see Appendix 3 pages 149-150. It is important that the survey focuses on the areas you want to find out about, that it is not too long, and that the language used is suitable for residents to understand.

The survey could be handed out and collected by any staff with the time. The results should be considered at a staff team meeting, and discussed with residents and their families, say at a resident group meeting.

WHEN

The best time to ask residents to complete a survey of this type might be at a meal time, for example lunch, when they are thinking about food services.

WHO

All residents should be asked about their preferences. Family or a carer might be able to answer these questions when residents cannot.

1. Bartl R, Bunney C. *Best Practice Food and Nutrition Manual for Aged Care Facilities*. Gosford: Australian Nursing Home and Extended Care Association; 2004.