

Catering Policy

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Printed copies are for reference only. Please refer to the electronic copy for the latest
Version

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1. Introduction

The Catering Department at Holy Cross Hospital is dedicated to delivering high-quality, efficient, and safe catering services to meet the diverse needs of patients, caregivers, visitors, and contractors. This policy outlines the scope of services provided, identifies key operational risks, and details the measures implemented to manage these risks effectively. Our commitment is to ensure that all meals and provisions are prepared and served in compliance with current Food Safety and Health and Safety legislation, while prioritising patient and customer satisfaction through attention to nutrition and dietary needs.

This policy shall be reviewed at regular intervals not exceeding three years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational needs.

2. Purpose

This policy defines the scope and standards of the catering services provided by the Catering Department at Holy Cross Hospital. It aims to ensure the delivery of high-quality, safe, and reliable meal services that meet the nutritional and dietary needs of patients, caregivers, visitors, and contractors. Additionally, it outlines the procedures and measures in place to manage operational risks, comply with relevant legislation, and promote patient and customer satisfaction through attention to nutrition and dietary requirements.

3. Objectives of this Policy or Procedure

Our objective is to provide efficient, reliable, and safe catering that meets the nutritional and dietary needs of patients, caregivers, visitors, and contractors. We comply with all relevant Food Safety and Health and Safety legislation, ensuring that all meals and provisions are prepared and served to the highest standards. By collaborating with the Clinical Team, we strive for nutritional excellence, meeting patients' needs while respecting individual choices and preferences. We identify and manage operational risks effectively to ensure the safety and well-being of all service users. Patient and customer satisfaction is a priority, and we aim to provide meals that are enjoyable, nutritious, and tailored to individual dietary requirements. Additionally, we regularly review and audit our catering practices to ensure continuous improvement and adherence to best practices in food safety and service delivery.

4. Policy Statement

Holy Cross Hospital is committed to delivering efficient, reliable, and safe catering services that cater to the nutritional and dietary needs of patients, caregivers, visitors, and contractors. Our Catering Department ensures that all meals and provisions are prepared and served in accordance with current Food Safety and Health and Safety legislation. We prioritise patient and customer satisfaction by offering a diverse range of nutritious and enjoyable meals, respecting individual dietary requirements and preferences. Through continuous improvement and rigorous risk management, we uphold the highest standards of food safety and service quality.

5. Scope

This policy covers the provision of catering services to patients, caregivers, visitors, and contractors, including meal preparation, delivery, and special functions. It ensures compliance with Food Safety and Health and Safety legislation and emphasises collaboration with the Clinical Team to meet patients' nutritional needs while respecting dietary choices. The policy addresses operational risks related to food safety, hygiene, and dietary requirements, maintaining high standards through regular audits and continuous improvement. It includes training requirements for catering staff, processes for managing catering equipment, methods for gathering and responding to feedback, and guidelines for daily operations, such as meal service times, dining arrangements, and special dietary provisions.

6. Responsibilities

Head Chef:

- Ensure all menu items have an up-to-date recipe with associated costings and allergen information.
- Ensure Food safety practices relating to Safer Food Better Business Food Safety Management system are always implemented.
- Coach chefs and General Catering Assistants to maintain high levels of food hygiene compliance, safety standards, and ensure they are fully briefed in the preparation of modified diets.
- Identify the need for new catering equipment and obtain approval for purchases.
- Compile and maintain an inventory of catering equipment, including maintenance records.
- Prepare monthly operating statements.
- Ensure catering team training is arranged, delivered, and recorded, with refresher training planned.

Chefs

- Provide high-quality, safe, and nutritious meals to patients, caregivers and visitors.
- Ensure compliance with Food Safety and Health and Safety legislation.
- Collaborate with the Clinical Team to meet patients' nutritional needs and respect dietary choices.
- Manage operational risks related to food safety, hygiene, and dietary requirements.
- Conduct regular audits and reviews to maintain high standards of food safety and service quality.
- Purchase, maintain, and dispose of catering equipment as per hospital policies.
- Gather and respond to feedback from patients and other service users to improve service quality.

Director of Operations:

- Approve orders for new catering equipment.
- Oversee the implementation of food safety practices and compliance with Safer Food Better Business Protocols.
- Ensure continuous improvement and adherence to best practices in food safety and service delivery.
- Designated Director reporting to both Leadership Team and Advisory Committee on catering compliance.

Members of the Clinical Team:

- Collaborate with the Catering Department to ensure patients' nutritional needs are met.
- Provide advice on special diets or modifications based on patients' health requirements.
- Work with the Speech and Language Therapist to ensure appropriate texture modification for patients with swallowing disorders.
- Collaborate with Dietician to ensure patients' nutritional needs are met.
- Be familiar with patients' care plans with regards to their swallowing and nutritional needs
- Support patients in choosing their daily menu.
- Check food consistency before serving to patients, complete the checklist and ensure any concerns relating to the texture of food provided are communicated to the catering team without delay.
- Provide feedback on meal quality and any issues to the Catering Department.

Speech and Language Therapist:

- Create a swallowing plan on admission and ensure this is updated at least monthly.
- Provide weekly updates on patients' required diet consistency and IDDSI levels.
- Provide individual mealtime information sheet and ensure patients' needs are communicated to catering team and clinical team.
- Ensure guidelines for feeding patients at risk of choking are documented and followed.

Dietician

- Collaborating with the Catering Department:
 - Ensure patients' nutritional needs are met.
 - Provide advice on special diets or modifications based on patients' health requirements.
- Supporting Nutritional Excellence:
 - Create a nutritional plan on admission and ensure this is updated at least monthly.
 - Work with Tissue Viability Nurse, Diabetic Nurse and Doctors to ensure oral intake meets requirements.
 - Regularly review and update menus to ensure they meet the nutritional needs of patients.
 - Use tools like The Nutrition and Hydration Digest to benchmark nutritional standards.

Housekeeping Team:

- Return crockery and cutlery to the catering department for washing.
- Ensure the ward kitchen is maintained in a clean and tidy condition, making regular documented checks of the refrigerator.

7. Definitions

- **Food Safety:** Practices and procedures that ensure food is safe to eat, preventing foodborne illnesses through proper handling, cooking, and storage.
- **Health and Safety Legislation:** Laws and regulations designed to protect the health and safety of individuals in the workplace, including food safety standards.

- **Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB):** A food safety management system designed for small businesses in the UK, providing practical guidelines to ensure food safety and compliance with food hygiene regulations.
- **IDDSI (International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative):** A global initiative to standardise the terminology and definitions for texture-modified foods and thickened liquids for individuals with dysphagia (swallowing disorders).
- **Nutritional Needs:** The dietary requirements necessary to maintain health, including the intake of calories, proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals.
- **Patient Choice:** The ability of patients to select their meals based on personal preferences, dietary restrictions, and nutritional needs.
- **Risk Management:** The process of identifying, assessing, and controlling risks to ensure the safety and well-being of patients, caregiver, and visitors.
- **Texture Modification:** The alteration of food texture to make it safer and easier to swallow for individuals with dysphagia, following IDDSI guidelines. See more information- <https://www.iddsi.org/standards/framework>
- **PPM (Personalised Mealtime Information Placemat):** A placemat that provides clinical caregiver with important information about a patient's required diet texture and any special equipment needed during mealtimes. (See appendix 4)

8. Policy or Procedure Implementation

8.1 Dining Arrangements

To ensure patients' mealtimes are managed effectively, it is essential to create a pleasant and supportive environment that promotes both physical and emotional well-being. This involves several key elements:

- **Effective Management:** Coordinating mealtimes to ensure they run smoothly and efficiently, minimising delays and disruptions. This includes timely delivery of meals, appropriate portion sizes, and catering to individual dietary needs.
- **Pleasant Environment:** Creating a welcoming atmosphere that encourages patients to enjoy their meals. This can be achieved through comfortable seating arrangements, attractive table settings, and a clean, tidy dining area.
- **Supportive Atmosphere:** Providing emotional and social support during mealtimes. This includes recognising the importance of social interactions, offering assistance to those who need help with eating, and ensuring that caregivers are attentive and responsive to patients' needs.
- **Minimising Interruptions:** Ensuring that mealtimes are free from avoidable and unnecessary interruptions. This means limiting ward-based activities, both clinical (e.g., drug rounds) and non-clinical (e.g., cleaning tasks), to those that are relevant to mealtimes or essential at that time.
- **Focus on Food Service:** Prioritising activities related to the service of food, ensuring that patients receive their meals in a timely manner and with the necessary support. This includes emphasising the importance of mealtimes to all caregivers, patients, and visitors as part of the overall care and treatment plan.

8.2 Mealtime Environment

- Ensure mealtimes are free from avoidable and unnecessary interruptions.
- Create a quiet and relaxed atmosphere, allowing patients' time to enjoy their meals without unwanted disturbances.
- Recognise and support the social aspects of eating.
- Provide a welcoming, clean, and tidy environment conducive to eating.
- Limit ward-based activities, both clinical (e.g., drug rounds) and non-clinical (e.g., cleaning tasks), to those relevant to mealtimes or essential at that time.
- Focus ward activities on food service, providing patients with support during mealtimes.
- Emphasise to caregivers, patients, and visitors the importance of mealtimes as part of patient care and treatment.

8.3 Meal Service

- Three meals are provided daily, served in the patient's bedroom or ward lounge.
- Ensure food is presented attractively and appealingly in terms of texture, temperature, and flavour.
- Arrange for additional snack items to be sent to the wards to meet patients' individual needs, suitable for texture modification for patients with swallowing disorders.

8.4 Food Consistency Check

- The nurse-in-charge checks the food prior to serving to ensure it is of the correct consistency.

8.5 Personalised Mealtime Information Placemat (PPM)

- Patients with swallowing disorders are provided with a PPM, reminding clinical caregivers of important information about the required diet texture and any special equipment needed. (Appendix 4)

8.6 Meals for Caregivers and Visitors

- Meals, snacks, and drinks are available for purchase by caregivers and visitors in the Dining Room, with the catering team on duty from 8am to 5pm daily.
 - **After-Hours Service:** Caregivers working outside of these hours can order a chilled meal that can be eaten cold or be reheated in a microwave. To place an order, staff can contact the catering team by telephone between 8am and 4pm. The Catering team will send a payment link to the staff member's mobile phone or email.
- A microwave and cutlery are provided in the patient's activities Served for caregiver use only, not managed by the catering department.
 - Surface wipes are provided for users to clean the microwave after each use.
 - The microwave is checked regularly by the housekeeping team, with an annual safety check performed by the Maintenance Department.

8.7 Special Functions

- The Catering Department provides food for special functions arranged by the hospital or external groups using Hospital premises.

8.8 Food Safety, Hygiene, and Cleaning

- All cooked meals are produced in the main kitchen following service policies and procedures using standard tested recipes.
- The Catering Team is not permitted to reheat food brought in by friends and relatives, in compliance with Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB) protocols.
- All catering team members are trained in Food Hygiene upon appointment and receive regular updates. All food handlers attend accredited Food Safety courses appropriate to their duties.
- A strict regime is followed for inspecting food and temperature monitoring in accordance with SFBB protocols, with an audit trail of all logs, delivery checks, and cleaning schedules kept for a minimum of 13 months in the "All in One Record" booklet, which is stored in the kitchen administration area (Appendix 3).
- The Catering Department is responsible for cleaning the main kitchen, dishwashing area, stores, dining room, St Hugh's kitchenette, St Margaret's kitchenette, the servery, including Ice Machine disinfection and for operating the central dish wash service.

8.9 Audits

- The Catering Department conducts regular audits to ensure standards are maintained and procedures are followed, with results included in the Quarterly Health and Safety report.

8.10 Equipment Purchase, Use, Maintenance, and Disposal

- **Identification and Approval:** The Head Chef identifies the need for new catering equipment and obtains approval for purchases through the Director of Operations.
- **Risk Assessment and Training:** Equipment undergoes a thorough risk assessment before first use, followed by arranged training.
- **Maintenance Planning and Inventory:** Equipment maintenance is planned at purchase and recorded, with an inventory compiled and reviewed annually.
- **Disposal:** Catering equipment is disposed of according to the Waste Disposal Policy at the end of its useful life.
- **Ongoing Compliance:** Regular risk assessments, maintenance, and proper disposal of catering equipment are ensured in line with the Waste Disposal Policy.

8.11 Purchasing, Delivery, and Storage

- The Department ensures all arrangements for purchase, delivery, and storage comply with Hospital Policies.

8.12 Financial Management and Reporting

- A monthly operating statement is prepared by the Head Chef and reported to the Director of Operations.

8.13 Consultation

- Patient views are gathered through personal contact during daily visits by a Chef and periodic satisfaction surveys.
- The Catering Department provides special diets or modifications based on advice from healthcare professionals.
- The Speech and Language Therapist provides weekly updates on patients' required diet consistency and IDDSI level of texture modification.

8.14 Criteria for Hospitality

Hospitality in the form of beverages with or without food is considered in the following circumstances:

- Meetings with external attendees expected to last over an hour and a half, where the Dining Room is not appropriate.
- Caregiver leaving functions or Long service celebrations where it has been approved by the Leadership Team.
- Special functions involving patients, relatives, and caregivers, including Christmas events.
- All hospitality requests must be given to the Head Chef in advance with appropriate approval from the Director of Operations or a Leadership Team member.

8.15 Sustainability and food waste reduction:

- **Menu Planning and Portion Control:**
 - **Optimise Menus:** Design menus based on patient preferences and dietary needs to minimise uneaten food.
 - **Portion Sizes:** Adjust portion sizes to match patient consumption patterns, reducing leftovers.
- **Food Waste Audits:**
 - **Regular Audits:** Conduct regular waste audits to identify and address the main sources of food waste.
 - **Feedback Systems:** Implement feedback systems to understand why certain foods are wasted and adjust menus accordingly.
- **Procurement:**
 - **Single Supplier with Multi-Temperature Deliveries:** A single supplier who can provide multi-temperature deliveries to reduce transportation frequency and associated emissions is used.
 - **Bulk Purchasing:** Supplies are purchased in bulk to reduce packaging waste and manage inventory more efficiently.
- **Recycling and Composting:**

- **Recycling Programmes:** Comprehensive recycling programmes for plastics, paper, and other materials in place.
- **Composting:** Implement composting for organic waste to reduce landfill use and create useful compost for gardens.
- **Staff Training and Engagement:**
 - **Training Programmes:** To educate kitchen staff on waste reduction techniques and the importance of sustainability.

9. Regulatory Requirements/ References

- **Food Safety Legislation:** Compliance with the Food Safety Act 1990 and associated regulations, which set out the requirements for food hygiene, safety, and standards in the UK.
- **Health and Safety Legislation:** Adherence to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which ensures the safety and well-being of employees and others affected by the hospital's operations.
- **Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB):** Implementation of the SFBB system, which provides practical guidelines for managing food safety, including controls for cross-contamination, cleaning, chilling, and cooking.
- **Food Hygiene Training:** Ensuring all food handlers complete accredited food safety courses, such as Level 2 Food Safety for general caregivers, Level 3 for the Head Chef, and Level 4 for the Director of Operations.
- **Nutritional Standards:** Compliance with guidelines such as The Nutrition and Hydration Digest, which provides standards for nutritional care and hydration in healthcare settings.
- **Allergen Management:** Adherence to the Food Information Regulations 2014, which require clear labelling and management of allergens in food to prevent allergic reactions.
- **Risk Management:** Implementation of risk management practices to identify, assess, and control risks related to food safety, including regular audits and reviews.
- **National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink:** Compliance with the standards set out by NHS England, which provide guidance on the quality, nutritional value, and sustainability of food and drink served in healthcare settings

10. Evaluation Measures

- **Customer Satisfaction:** Regularly survey patients, caregivers, and visitors to gauge their satisfaction with the catering services.
- **Food Safety Compliance:** Monitor adherence to food safety standards and regulations, including SFBB guidelines.
- **Nutritional Quality:** Assess the nutritional content of meals to ensure they meet dietary standards and patient needs.
- **Regular Audits and inspections**
 - Conduct internal audits to review compliance with food safety, hygiene, and health regulations, including the cleanliness and maintenance of kitchen and dining areas.
 - An Environmental Health Practitioner from the local authority conducts regular inspections of the Catering Department to ensure compliance with food safety standards and regulations. These inspections involve a thorough review of food handling practices, hygiene protocols, storage conditions, and overall cleanliness of the catering facilities.

The practitioner assesses whether the department adheres to the guidelines set forth by food safety legislation, including proper food preparation, cooking, cooling, and storage procedures. Following the inspection, the Catering Department is awarded a Food Hygiene rating based on their performance. This rating reflects the department's commitment to maintaining high standards of food safety and hygiene. The rating is publicly displayed and serves as an indicator of the quality and safety of the food services provided.

Feedback Mechanisms:

- A QR code system is in place for collecting and responding to feedback from patients, caregiver, and visitors.
- Use feedback to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments.

Nutritional Assessments:

- Collaborate with dietitian to regularly (at least six monthly) review and update menus to ensure they meet the nutritional needs of patients.
- Use tools like The Nutrition and Hydration Digest to benchmark nutritional standards.

Compliance Monitoring:

- Ensure continuous compliance with SFBB guidelines and other relevant food safety regulations.
- Maintain records of temperature logs, delivery checks, and cleaning schedules for audit purposes.

Patient Health Outcomes:

- Monitor the impact of the catering services on patient health, including weight management and nutritional status.
- Work with healthcare professionals such as dietician and Speech and Language Therapist to adjust meal plans based on patient health outcomes.

11. Related Documents

- **Health and Safety Policy:** Details the measures in place to protect the health and safety of employees, patients, and visitors within the hospital environment.
- **Nutrition and Hydration Policies** (clinical manual)
- **Allergen Management Policy:** Specifies procedures for managing and labelling allergens in food to prevent allergic reactions and ensure patient safety.
- **Waste Disposal Policy:** Describes the processes for the safe and compliant disposal of catering waste, including food waste and packaging.
- **Risk Management Policy:** Details the approach to identifying, assessing, and controlling risks within the catering operations to ensure safety and compliance.
- **Patient Survey:** Provides methods for collecting and responding to feedback from patients and other service users to improve the quality of catering services.
- **Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB) Guidelines:** Practical guidelines for managing food safety, including controls for cross-contamination, cleaning, chilling, and cooking
- **Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB) - pack** is a practical and easy-to-use guide designed to help businesses comply with food hygiene regulations and ensure the food they serve is safe. The SFBB pack includes comprehensive information and tools to manage food safety effectively.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Tool

To be considered and where judged appropriate, completed and attached to any policy document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Title	Catering Policy
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		Yes/No	Comments
	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favorably than another on the basis of:		
	Race	No	
	Gender reassignment	No	
	Marriage & civil partnership	No	
	Pregnancy & maternity	No	
	Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travelers)	No	
	Nationality	No	
	Sex	No	
	Culture	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation	No	
	Age	No	
	Disability- both mental and physical impairments	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	No	
4.	If so can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
5.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	

6.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	
7.	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N/A	

Appendix 2 Safer Food Better Business Guidelines and documentation.

The **Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB)** pack is a practical and easy-to-use guide designed to help businesses comply with food hygiene regulations and ensure the food they serve is safe. The SFBB pack includes comprehensive information and tools to manage food safety effectively. Here are the key components:

1. **Cross-Contamination:** Guidelines to prevent the spread of harmful bacteria from one food item to another, including proper handling and storage practices.
2. **Cleaning:** Instructions on how to clean and disinfect surfaces, equipment, and utensils to maintain a hygienic environment.
3. **Chilling:** Advice on how to store food at the correct temperatures to prevent bacterial growth and ensure food safety.
4. **Cooking:** Information on cooking food to the right temperatures to kill harmful bacteria and ensure it is safe to eat.
5. **Management:** Procedures for managing food safety, including caregiver training, record-keeping, and regular reviews to ensure compliance with food hygiene regulations.

Using the Diary: A section dedicated to maintaining daily records of food safety practices, which can be used to demonstrate compliance during inspections

The SFBB pack is tailored for different types of businesses, including caterers, retailers, childminders, and residential care homes. It helps businesses:

- Comply with food hygiene regulations.
- Show what they do to make and store food safely.
- Train caregiver and support them in using good hygiene practices.
- Protect their business's reputation.
- Improve their food hygiene rating score

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb>

Appendix 3 – All in One Record Sheets

FOOD	COOKING				Tick to record below			Hot Hold time +1.5hours	Temp	Sign (Initials)	Comments/Action
	Time started cooking	Time Finished Cooking	Core Temp	Sign (initials)	Served immediately	Chilled * see separate blast Chiller record below	Hot Hold				

You may use a continuation sheet at end of this booklet but please ensure date is recorded

Delivery Records (all items delivered by Bidfoods)				
*Attach Delivery Ticket				
Food Item (high risk item)	Check and record use by Date	Temperature °C	Comments/Action	Sign

Fridge/Cold Room/Display														Comments/Action		Sign			
Walk in Fridge °C		Walk in Freezer °C		Tall Fridge °C		Display Chiller °C		Tall Freezer °C		Kitchen Fridge °C							AM	PM	Probe
AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM				
Probe check		Probe check		Probe check		Probe check		Probe check		Probe check		Probe check		Probe check					
°C		°C		°C		°C		°C		°C		°C		°C					

Blast Chiller Records									
Food item	Time in	Temp in	Time out	Temp out	Food item	Time in	Temp in	Time out	Temp out
		°C		°C			°C		°C
		°C		°C			°C		°C
		°C		°C			°C		°C
		°C		°C			°C		°C


Appendix 4 Personal Place Mat (PPM)

Personal Place Mat (PPM)

Optional
Add
photograph

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

PPM is a summary of important information about mealtimes
Helping to make mealtimes safe, successful and pleasurable.
Easily accessible, cleaned and portable - available when needed.
Can help people who cannot easily speak for themselves



International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative
www.iddsi.org

FOODS

TRANSITIONAL FOODS

- 7 REGULAR
- 6 EASY TO CHEW
- 5 MINCED & MOIST
- 4 PUREED
- 3 LIQUIDISED

DRINKS

- 0 THIN
- 1 SLIGHTLY THICK
- 2 MILDLY THICK
- 3 MODERATELY THICK
- 4 EXTREMELY THICK

- ▲ EXTREMELY THICK
- ▲ MODERATELY THICK
- ▲ MILDLY THICK
- ▲ SLIGHTLY THICK
- ▲ THIN

Food level

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Drink level

0 1 2 3 4

If there are any concerns or changes to swallowing withdraw PPM immediately and refer to SLT. Some of the clinical signs that can indicate a swallowing difficulty include coughing/choking on food or drink, wet gargly voice, recurrent chest infections, weight loss. It is the responsibility of direct support staff to review the PPM. Carla Bryson & Jane Whitaker, MRCSLT.

Personal Place Mat	
Name:	Date:
	Swallow:
	Food:
	Drink:
	Routine, where and when:
	Position:
	Equipment and protection:
	Communication:
	Supervision:
	Risks and help I need:

If there are any concerns or changes to swallowing withdraw PPM immediately and refer to SLT. Some of the clinical signs that can indicate a swallowing difficulty include coughing/choking on food or drink, wet gargly voice, recurrent chest infections, weight loss. It is the responsibility of direct support staff to review the PPM. Carla Bryson & Jane Whitaker, MRCSLT.