

Modified Texture Meal Preparation Process

The information below outlines the policy for the supply and preparation of modified texture (MT) meals within White Oaks units.

1. Background

Individuals with swallowing difficulties (dysphagia) may require meals or snacks that have had their texture modified. Team members within units are required to supply modified texture meals and snacks safely that comply with the IDDSI Framework ([Home - IDDSI](#)) a nationally recognised method for describing modified texture food and drinks.

Compass have a contract with a supplier of frozen modified texture meals that are used in hospitals, where patients stay for a shorter period of time. Within a residential setting (care home, senior living or assisted living) it is often standard practice to prepare these meals from scratch where dishes can reflect the choices on the main menu more closely. As individuals reside in these settings long term, their individual dietary needs and preferences need to be considered within any decision making about the most appropriate approach to providing MT meals.

2. Decision making processes regarding the approach to providing MT meals

At the start of any new contract or when a unit requires MT meals for the first time, a decision will need to be made about what method should be used to provide MT meals, whether this is bought in frozen meals, scratch cook or a combination of both as a 'hybrid' offer.

The following criteria should be considered when deciding what mode of modified texture meals can be offered to a client.

- The client expectations and carers knowledge level about dysphagia and MT meals
- How many residents/tenants/individuals require MT meals.
- Which IDDSI levels are recommended by the speech & language therapists (SALT) for those individuals.
- The number and skill level of the chefs preparing those meals.
- Time required to prepare MT meals. must be built into the rota, to deliver these on time and safely.
- Equipment available and ability to purchase if required.

The process for making a decision about the way meals can be provided, including who should be involved in this, is shown in appendix 1 (Modified Texture Decision Tree). All meals and snacks offered should be discussed as part of this process.

3. Providing frozen MT meals

Whether the approach to meal provision includes the use of scratch cook items or not, **all units** with individuals requiring MT meals should hold a stock of frozen, regularly used levels of MT meals on site. This allows for meals to be readily available during times of short staffing, agency or new members of staff who are yet to receive training about scratch cooking MT meals. See guidelines in section 6 below for ordering and preparing frozen MT meals.

4. Catering team skills and structure

4.1 Units with senior level chefs/chef managers

For units with suitably qualified chef managers who have undertaken the White Oaks specific training about how to provide MT meals, a hybrid approach can be considered whereby a number of MT meals can be prepared from scratch.

4.2 Units without trained or senior chef roles

For units without trained or senior level chefs requiring MT meals, frozen meals must be used for main meal service, and no scratch cooking of MT main meals should take place. For desserts and snacks, some readymade items might be used including smooth yoghurt and custard pots with the agreement of the client. Suitable foods for breakfast service should be agreed with the client and may vary depending on the type of service provided and where this is put together e.g. where carers might make hot oat cereals in unit kitchens.

5. Urgent requests for MT meals

In an emergency scenario where MT meals are needed at short notice only frozen meals should be offered to residents. Emergency guidelines which outline how to access and prepare frozen MT meals should be used in these circumstances and are outlined in appendix 2.

6. Providing Frozen modified texture meals

All units who provide bought in frozen MT meals should follow the guidelines below:

6.1 APL

All meals should be purchased through Foodbuy and using the Compass nominated supplier for MT meals, choosing from the APL of agreed products. Units should make use of a combination of the single cases and mixed cases of each of the IDDSI texture descriptors required and hold a stock appropriate to the number of dishes required to provide residents with the greatest choice of meals and snacks.

6.2 Menus

Where possible, a menu of MT meals should be developed at the required IDDSI levels, or a process agreed whereby residents will be offered a choice of meals at each meal service. This can include offering an a la carte menu or a rotating choice of at least two options which change at each mealtime. Meal orders should be taken at each mealtime in a similar way to residents eating a normal diet.

6.3 Cooking and meal service

Cooking/regeneration guidelines, (appendix 3) must be followed to ensure the meals are safely prepared according to the FSMS guidelines but also do not suffer from texture changes because of over cooking. Once cooked a visual check must be carried out to ensure the meal complies with the IDDSI checklist for that level before being served. Meals must be served quickly with the minimum amount of time between preparation and consumption of meals to avoid the meals from spoiling or changing texture as a result of being 'hot held' or stood before being eaten.

6.4 Staff training

All catering team members must receive the White Oaks Modified Texture Diet frozen meal training and understand the guidelines to support them to provide frozen meals safely. As a minimum and in an emergency, e.g. a new agency chef is the only catering team member on shift, they must receive

guidance on the provision of and cooking guidelines for the MT meals and liaise with a member of the care team to understand the requirements for MT meals during their shift.

7. Scratch cooking Modified Texture meals and snacks.

When an agreement has been reached to provide some scratch cook MT items as part of a 'hybrid' service the following guidelines should be followed:

7.1 Establishing what items will be offered.

Agreement should be reached between the White Oaks Culinary Team/Dietitian and the client about what food/meal items can be prepared from scratch, which IDDSI levels this includes and which mealtimes during the day that this will be served. This should be documented as a list of dishes, IDDSI levels and mealtimes and communicated to all team members on site.

Catering teams should never agree to provide 100% of meals and snacks as scratch cook items as frozen meals should be utilised to add variety and be available during times of short staffing or when a lighter meal service is being offered.

7.2 Menus

Menus containing a combination of the agreed frozen and scratch cook MT meals should be developed to offer residents a good choice of meals at every mealtime. Meal orders should be taken at each mealtime in a similar way to all other residents.

7.3 Staff training

All catering team members must receive the White Oaks Modified Texture Diet training course to support them to prepare scratch cook MT meals safely and a record of their training kept in personal files on site.

The preparation of MT meals from scratch must only be conducted by individuals who have received the White Oaks Modified Texture Diet training course and colleagues who have been trained have demonstrated practical competence to safely prepare MT meals.

Care teams should be trained by their own training team or through the local community healthcare team.

7.4 Equipment required

MT meals can only be prepared from scratch if the essential equipment is available to prepare these. All equipment (with the exception of the Robot coupe/Metcalf Care Machine) should be dedicated for the preparation of MT meals only. A minimum list of equipment before MT meals can be safely prepared safely includes:

- Robot coupe Blixer or Metcalfe Care Machine (appropriate size for the unit).
- Sieves (including fine drum sieves).
- Sieve scrapers.
- Potato ricer.
- Digital scales.
- Cutlery including forks and teaspoons for texture testing.
- Ring cutters.
- Disposable piping bags.
- Reusable cotton piping bags (to use as an outer layer for the disposable bags).

- White cotton gloves.
- Vented plate coverings.
- Compass approved food thickener.

7.5 Resources and information

Catering teams must have access to a folder of approved information to refer to support them when preparing food items including preparation guidelines, IDDSI resources and IDDSI audit checklists.

7.6 Meal presentation

All scratch cooked food items must be prepared and served hot at the appropriate mealtime. Cooking in advance and reheating MT food items is not allowed and all items must be prepared in a manner which meets the Compass Food Safety Management System.

When food is prepared to the appropriate IDDSI level, it should be tested to ensure it complies with the texture and the texture adjusted if required. A final check must be conducted just before the food is plated.

Food items should be presented as per the preparation guidelines to ensure they look appealing to the individuals and be served in an appropriate portion size for each individual. Piping bags, metal rings and quenelles can all be used as a method of presenting MT food items. Food moulds are not recommended as a means of shaping food and should be discussed with the client where this is requested. No additional items are to be added to the plate e.g. sauces, gravy unless specified in the recipe or preparation guidelines and the catering lead on site should discuss this with the Care manager when requests for additional sauces are made by the care team.

Food items should be presented on a plate as close to the meal service time as possible so a minimum amount of time elapses between service and a resident eating, to prevent negative changes in temperature and texture.

Each meal must be labelled, using the approved White Oaks labels, to inform the care teams, or person delivering the meal, of the recipient's name and the meal IDDSI level.

7.7 Meal Service

A process of handing an MT meal over to the care team must be agreed locally depending on the service level agreement within each unit.

Catering colleagues should make care teams aware of the need to support a resident to eat the meal as soon as possible after plating and discourage meals being hot held when served.

No meal should be served until the care team are ready to assist the resident to prevent a potential risk of choking or aspiration if a resident starts to eat unsupervised

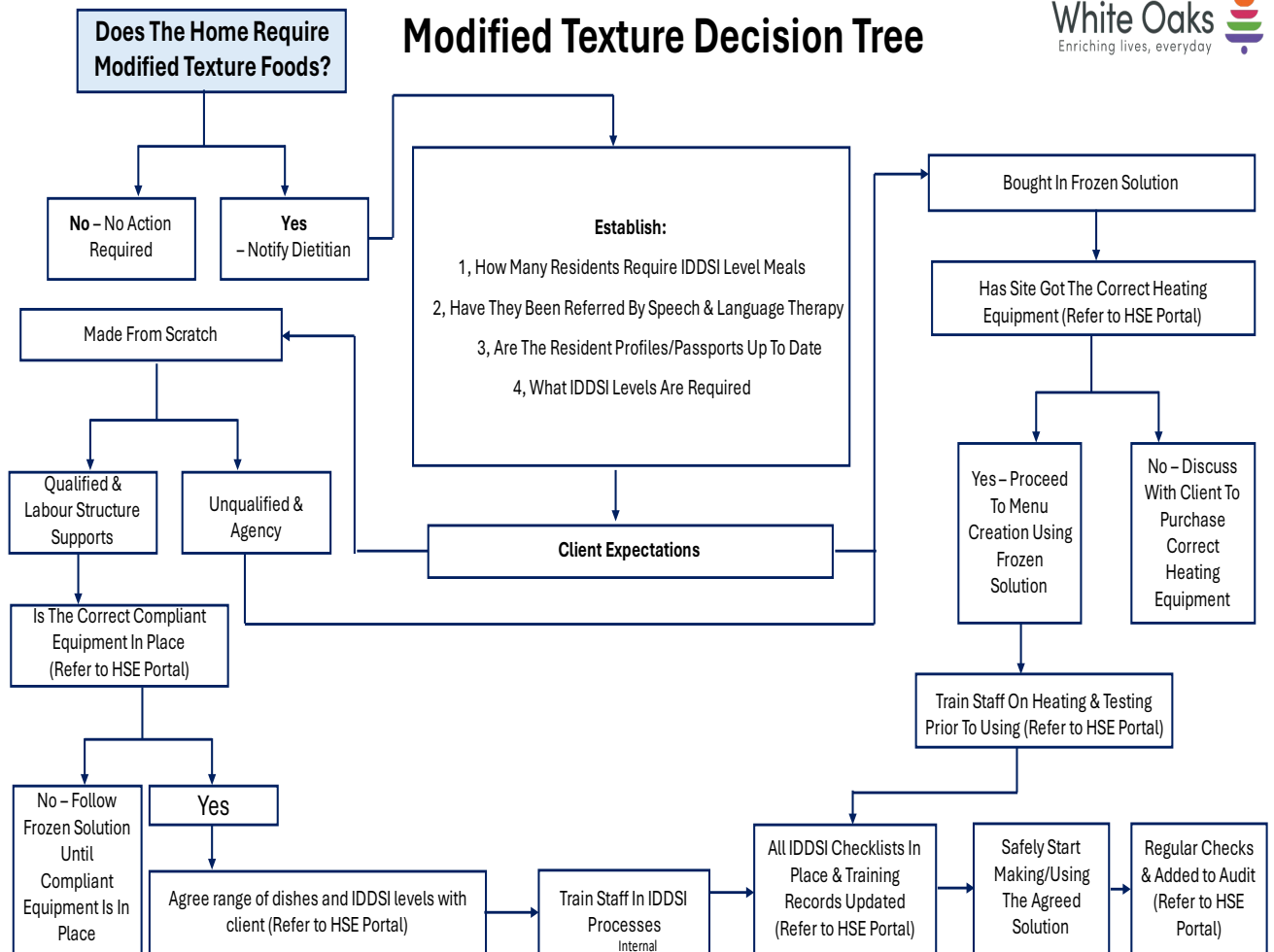
It is the responsibility of the care team to check a meal texture before a resident eats it to ensure the texture has not changed in the journey from the kitchen to the resident.

No meal should be reheated and the client should be advised to provide suitable heating pads/plates to maintain temperature during service at palatable temperature.

8.0 Meal service audits

Meal services should be regularly reviewed and observed, whatever MT meal service is offered to ensure a good choice of MT meals are offered to residents and meals are being presented and served in line with the Compass Group processes and guidelines.

Appendix 1: Modified Texture Diet Decision Tree



Appendix 2: Guidelines for providing modified texture meals at short notice

If a resident requires a modified texture (MT) meal at short notice they should only be provided with a readymade frozen MT meal sourced from the Compass approved supplier. The guidelines below should be followed to access and prepare the frozen meals.

Request is made by the home manager and speech & language therapist for a resident to be provided with modified texture meals.



Establish and document the IDDSI level of meal required and how many mealtimes each day this should be served. Speak to the home manager to find out the meal preferences of the resident, any other special dietary requirements they may have and how long this is likely to be required for.



Speak to your regional manager to make them aware of this request. They will inform you about how to get an initial stock of frozen meals, if they aren't already available on site.



For a regular supply check the APL and Foodbuy to understand which products are available to order at the IDDSI level required.



Place an order through Foodbuy considering meal variety, freezer space and delivery charges incurred.



Ensure your emergency stock of meals will last until the delivery arrives.



Offer a choice of available meals to the resident before each meal service.



Print off the guidelines for cooking frozen MT meals and the IDDSI audit checklists for testing the meal texture.



Follow the guidelines for each meal cooked and check the texture of the meal before serving at every mealtime.



Ensure that the care team check all meals when collecting a meal and before a resident eats a meal to ensure the texture has not changed in the time between cooking and eating.

Appendix 3 Cooking guidelines for Frozen modified texture meals

Texture Modified Meals Heating Guidelines		
Level 3	Time	Instructions
Main Meals	03:30	1. After cooking, leave in microwave for 30 seconds. 2. Remove, shake pot, check temperature (75°C or above), then remove lid. Pour contents into soup bowl and stir before serving. 3. If 75°C not achieved, select a button zero for a 30 second boost and check temperature. When temperature is reached, (75°C or above), repeat step 2 and serve.
Level 4	Time	Instructions
Main Meals	Follow Guidelines on Packet	1. Place in microwave with protein near centre and veg/potato near door. 2. After cooking, leave to stand for 30 seconds, probe protein element (75°C or above), remove lid and serve. 3. If 75°C not achieved, select a button zero for a 30 second boost and check temperature. When temperature is reached, repeat step 2 and serve.
Snack Items/Breakfast	Follow Guidelines on Packet	1. Place in microwave with protein near centre 2. After cooking, leave to stand for 30 seconds, probe protein element (75°C or above), remove lid and serve. 3. If 75°C not achieved, select a button for a 30 second boost and check temperature. When temperature is reached, repeat step 2 and serve.
Desserts	Follow Guidelines on Packet	1. Place in microwave centre 2. After cooking, leave to stand for 30 seconds, probe protein element (75°C or above), remove lid and serve. 3. If 75°C not achieved, select a button for a 30 second boost and check temperature. When temperature is reached, repeat step 2 and serve.
Level 5	Time	Instructions
Main Meals	Follow Guidelines on Packet	1. Place in microwave with protein near centre and veg/potato near door. 2. After cooking, leave to stand for 30 seconds, probe protein element (75°C or above), remove lid and serve. 3. If 75°C not achieved, select a button zero for a 30 second boost and check temperature. When temperature is reached, repeat step 2 and serve.
Level 6	Time	Instructions
Main Meals	Follow Guidelines on Packet	1. Place in microwave with protein near centre and veg/potato near door. 2. After cooking, leave to stand for 30 seconds, probe protein element (75°C or above), remove lid and serve. 3. If 75°C not achieved, select a button for a 30 second boost and check temperature again. When temperature is reached repeat step 2 and serve.

Plates must be used in the microwaves on which meals should sit.

When opening film after cooking, please be careful of the steam when peeling back

All meals must reach 75°C or above

Never send a meal out if any of the meal has burnt pieces or a skin forming, also check for loose liquid. If any of these are visible, or if the required IDDSI consistency level has not been achieved, DO NOT SERVE

After cooking, meals should stand for approximately 30 seconds before probing.

Check the meal is at an acceptable temperature before a resident start to eat it i.e. not too hot