



Steamplicity Plated Temperature Monitoring Procedures and Guidance for Units Operating Steamplicity Meal Service

Plated Patient Temperature Monitoring System

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Internal Use



Contents:

1. Introduction
2. Which temperatures require monitoring
3. What type of monitoring device to use
4. Preferred temperature probes and calibration equipment
5. Calibration
6. General guidance on temperature monitoring
7. Storage and use of Steamplicity meals

1. Introduction:

Steamplicity is a unique cooking system offering NHS trusts a simple way to provide their patients with quality, freshly cooked meals in minutes. Based on an individual plated system, meals are steam cooked using microwaves. Steamplicity meals contain a broad range of raw ingredients therefore none of the valuable nutrients are lost and they retain their colour and texture. Patients are presented with a restaurant-style menu with a wide range of dishes to choose from at each sitting. Steamplicity also allows you to have a hot meal provision 24 hours a day and can be cooked at ward level. With a low capital outlay, Steamplicity has helped trusts make substantial savings in food waste, energy consumption and labour.

The meals are often served to venerable patients including young and elderly and patients who maybe immune-compromised (cancer patients) so it is vital that we identify and control the critical areas throughout the system including temperature control and cooking. These have been identified by the HACCP system with limits set for each stage of the process.

This document has been designed for all members of the catering team showing areas which have been identified as critical to food safety and how to monitor with the correct forms which can be found on the HSE web page.

2. Which temperatures require monitoring:

- On delivery of meals the temperature of the vehicle and the meals should be taken, both temperatures should be 0°C to 5°C. A print out from the delivery vehicle should also be obtained for your records
- Chilled storage before use 0°C to 5°C
- Assembly < + 8°C
- On despatch to ward level 1°C to 5°C
- On arrival at ward level 1°C to 5°C if above this but below +10°C they can be used for service
- Ward fridges if used 1°C to 5°C
- Cooking > +82°C for meals and soups, > +75°C for jacket potatoes and puddings

3. What type of monitoring device to use:

You will require an accurate temperature probe, which requires calibration by either a calibration unit i.e. (reference probe or test caps) or a dedicated probe which is only used for calibration and has a calibration certificate.

4. Preferred monitoring device:

Bunzl is the preferred supplier for Compass and will be able to supply a range of temperature units including reference probes.

5. Calibration:

Temperature units and probes should be tested on a monthly basis. Record the findings including the probe number on your temperature monitoring form. If using calibration caps remember they only test the unit and not the probe attached.

The following method should be used:

- Iced water – agitate the water and place the unit and reference unit into the water and record the temperature off both units. The readings should be within the set range of the calibration unit i.e. +/- 0.4°C. If outside the set range check again and if needed replace the unit.
- Boiling water - using either a kettle or pan of water agitate and place the units into the water as above the readings should be within the set range.
- If using an infra-red unit, ensure you have the stainless steel testing tube which allows the reference probe to be inserted to give an accurate reading for this +/- 2°C is acceptable.

6. General guidance on temperature monitoring:

Temperature probes should be easily identified this can be a unique number or the serial number of the unit. This will allow you to identify any that are not working correctly and they can then be removed from the system. Allow the temperature to stabilise before taking the reading.

The probe should be cleaned before and after each time you take the temperature of the food with a sanitising wipe. The wipe is then disposed of, these should be readily available at all times. Steamplicity probes should be dedicated to the process.

- Temperature of the vehicle on arrival to unit should be taken by either print out or placing the probe into the back of the van.
- Temperature of the food by infra-red or by placing the probe between two packs allow for the 2°C difference at this stage.
- Air temperature of storage units and on despatch and arrival to ward can be taken either from electronic readout, holding the temperature probe in the air or by a simulant in the area. This temperature may be higher or lower than the food, but should be 1°C to 5°C unless the area is on defrost cycle or the doors have been opened for a couple of minutes.
- The following limits for the above recordings have been identified in the HACCP:

- Below 5°C – Accept.
- 5°C – 8°C accept if you can bring temperature down within a short time
- 8°C – 10°C accept if you can use within 12 hours of arrival or from temperature rise
- Above 10°C reject. This also applies to temperature rise during storage through life.

7. Storage and use of Steamplicity meals:

Only accept Steamplicity meals if they are intact, in date the label is correct and the temperature is within the set range. Once accepted remove to chilled storage within 30 minutes to ensure temperature is maintained at an acceptable level. Where possible Steamplicity meals should be stored in a dedicated chiller away from products which could contaminate the meals. Chilled storage areas should be checked at least twice a day and recorded on the appropriate sheet to ensure compliance. Rotate stock using oldest first and remove any out of date meals from the area immediately.

Where possible keep the insulated boxes in the chiller with the doors open this will help with temperature of the meals when packed during assembly. Eutectic plates should be placed in the boxes once packed and then closed and moved to the ward as quickly as possible. If the meals are not stored in a fridge at ward level then the doors of the insulated boxes should be kept shut until the meals are required for cooking.

At ward service follow the easy step guides;

- Meals are placed on the china plates provided (blue plates are not designed for microwave cooking) and cooked in the dedicated microwaves for the correct time (number on meal corresponds to the number on the microwave).
- Once cooked and allowed to stabilise for 30 seconds the temperature of the protein item or thickest ingredient it taken is recorded on the relevant sheet found on the web page. |
- If the temperature of +82°C is not achieved the meal should be returned to the microwave and using the boost button (0) a further cook of 30 seconds is applied.
- Take and record the temperature again, remove packaging, cover the meal with a cloche, and serve immediately or within 15 minutes of final cook.
- If the temperature has not achieved +82°C dispose of the meal and replace with a substitute meal.
- The same process applies to soups, jacket potatoes and puddings.



- Record the temperatures on the monitoring form provided, ensure any boost temperatures are recorded.
- A new probe wipe should be used before and after each meal is tested.
- Ensure you have a supply of probe wipes and that they are in date and sealed after use to stop them from drying out.
- Faulty microwaves which have been identified during cooking should be marked and removed from the system as soon as possible.