



The Nutritional Toolkit

The Background

Ash Green is part of the Specialist Learning Disability Service that falls under Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust, Hillside, where the work was carried out is the Assessment and Treatment Unit.

The team noted that their patient group had difficulty choosing their meals from the written menus or to even make choices from photographs of food. Because of difficulty in making choices, meals were often chosen on the patient's behalf by staff.

In conjunction with 'Valuing People' (2001), the team put their patients at the centre of service provision and encouraged them to take control and have a say about they would like.

'Valuing People' sets out the principles of increased communication, choices, inclusion and person centred approaches.

The Solution

In response to the issue, a user-friendly, pictorial, nutritional toolkit was produced by the Hillside team. In collaboration with NHS Innovations East Midlands, the kit has been further developed into a very simple yet colourful and interactive tool to assist children and adults with learning disabilities with their everyday choice of food.

This kit helped the patient group make choices about diet, express likes/dislikes and assist with education regarding specialist diets and healthy eating. It is set out with pictures, photographs and symbols which have been gradually built up with individual pictorial food items to match the picture to the corresponding menus.

The Benefits

The main benefit has been the improvement in patient involvement and the one to one interaction between professionals and the patient. It also enabled the team to bridge the communication gap and respect people's right to make their own choices.

The kit could also be adapted to assist choice in many other areas of patient care.

The success of the project together with continuous positive feedback has helped boost team morale, increased motivation and encouraged further ideas for the 'person centred' approach within the Unit.

The Opportunity

We are seeking distributors for this exciting innovation.

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