



Nutrition & Hydration

AGED CARE POLICY

Policy Version 2.1

Category: Administrative *(Required by Legislation)*

Adopted: December 2024



Nutrition & Hydration Aged Care Policy

Purpose

Winton Shire Council delivers safe and effective care, in accordance with the consumer's needs, goals and preferences to optimise health and well-being.

Access to appropriate nutrition and hydration is key to maintaining an individual's well-being and quality of life regardless of their age. However, many factors can affect this in older people, such as:

- changes to taste and smell can decrease appetite and interest in food,
- hormonal changes can affect weight and mood,
- musculoskeletal changes can impact on mobility and the ability to eat and drink,
- cognitive decline can impact on the ability to recognise food and the process of eating,
- underlying disorders can reduce food and fluid intake including swallowing deficits or poor absorption of nutrients,
- changes to routine such as losing a spouse, or their entering residential care can mean usual eating and drinking habits are disrupted, and
- warming temperatures leading to hot days and risk of heat related illness.

Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All Community Care Services team members,
- Their volunteers,
- Students on placement,
- Contractors and consultants, whether or not they are employees,
- Any other brokered service providers and
- Winton Shire Council Councillors

Definitions

Term	What it means / refers to
Aged Care Quality Standards	According to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission: Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect in aged care. The Aged Care Quality Standards define what good care looks like.
Community Care services	A broad term to describe a collection of services and health care that are packaged up to meet the unique needs of each individual in their own home, rather than in a hospital or care home.
Consumer	A person who receives approved services from a service provider.
Dehydration	Depletion of total body water caused by pathological loss of fluid, inadequate fluid intake or a combination of both.
General practitioner	A general practitioner or family physician is a doctor who is a consultant in general practice. GPs have distinct expertise and



Term	What it means / refers to
	experience in providing whole person medical care, whilst managing the complexity, uncertainty and risk associated with the continuous care they provide.
Nutrition	The intake of food to meet the needs of the body. Nutrients are substances found in foods and beverages that are essential for survival.
Meals on Wheels	A brokered service provider to deliver meals to consumers.

Policy Statement

Winton Shire Council does not directly deliver clinical care services and is therefore not responsible for assessing or managing consumer's nutrition and hydration needs.

However, as relevant, Community Care services staff will:

- Adopt work practices that maximise a healthy eating environment when assisting with meal preparation such as preparing and presenting quality meals and offering an enticing dining experience.
- Providing adequate encouragement and support, including assistance to prepare meals or purchase of ready-made meals, according to the consumer's individual care plan.
- Provide reminders to consumers, where relevant, to be mindful of their fluid intake, particularly during very hot days.
- Encourage consumers to liaise with their general practitioner or other health care professional if there are concerns relating to nutrition and hydration.
- Ensuring staff have the education and training required to understand the risks associated with poor nutrition and hydration.

Operational Need

To ensure Winton Shire Council provides safe and effective services and supports for daily living that optimise the consumer's independence, health, well-being and quality of life.

To deliver the consumer outcome of:

"I get the services and supports for daily living that are important for my health and well-being and that enable me to do the things I want to do."

in accordance with the Aged Care Quality Standards.

Roles and Responsibilities

Winton Shire Council

Winton Shire Council is responsible for providing leadership and fostering a culture of safe care that is best practice, tailored and effective. Winton Shire Council will identify appropriate systems and processes to monitor, review and continuously improve compliance with this policy.

Management

Management is responsible for ensuring this policy and related processes are implemented and that all staff, contractors, students, and volunteers provide safe, care including



managing consumers' nutrition and hydration needs. This includes ensuring there are sufficient resources, guidance and support available.

Staff, Contractors, Students and Volunteers

All staff, contractors, students, and volunteers who are responsible for providing nutrition and hydration to consumers in line with their care plan and in a manner that reflects the individual's choice and preferences. They must complete all required education and training and follow all policies, processes, and directions to ensure safe and quality nutrition and hydration is provided.

Communication

This document will be published on the Winton Shire Council website and will be made available to all employees involved in the delivery of Community Care services provided by Winton Shire Council.

Related Council Documentation

Aged care records including:

- Consumer files,
- Assessment tools
- Care plans
- Meal plans
- Specialist referrals
- Weight monitoring charts

Legislation, Recognised Authorities and Other Sources

- *Aged Care Act 1997*
- *Quality of Care Principles 2014*
- Aged Care Quality Standards
 - Standard 3 (3)(a) Care is best practice, tailored and optimises health and well-being
 - Standard 3 (3)(b) Management of high-impact or high-prevalence risks
 - Standard 8 (3)(d) Risk management

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or when legislation or standards change and remains in force until amended or repealed by resolution of Council.

Record of Amendments and Adoptions

Date	Version	Reason for amendment	Date adopted by Council
May 2021	1.0	Initial policy <i>WSC-CCS-POL-019</i>	20 May 2021
November 2024	2.0	SDP Update	19 December 2024
February 2025	2.1	Update to Operational need	19 December 2024

