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Y Dirprwy Weinidog Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JMSS/00236/22

Christina Rees MP
Member of Parliament for Neath
House of Commons
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5 April 2022

Dear Christina,

Thank you for your letter of 2 March to the Minister for Health and Social Services about the recommendations from the All-Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry Report, 'Respect for religious and philosophical beliefs while eating in care'. I am responding as the Minister with responsibility for social care.

I was interested to read the report which highlights the importance of person-centred care and ensuring people's beliefs and wishes are respected. It is concerning that people's dietary needs had not been observed in a number of cases.

With regards to recommendation one, we are reviewing the 'Statutory Guidance for service providers and responsible individuals on meeting service standard regulations for care home services, domiciliary support services, secure accommodation services and residential family centre services' and will give consideration to referencing cultural and philosophical beliefs alongside references to religious beliefs.

Regarding the regulation of training for care workers on the cultural, religious and dietary needs of people receiving care, training on nutrition and hydration is included in both the All Wales Induction Framework (AWIF) and the Level 2 and 3 Health and Social Care qualifications for care workers. These are the initial training modules for care workers beginning employment in care homes and domiciliary care.

The training content includes physiological and nutritional factors that can affect nutrition and hydration but also considerations such as culture, religion and ethics, morals and political beliefs. Information on vegan and vegetarian diets is also a feature of the training.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The Welsh Government has developed comprehensive guidance to support care home staff in Wales to understand and meet the nutrition and hydration needs of all their residents, including provision for cultural, philosophical and religious needs.

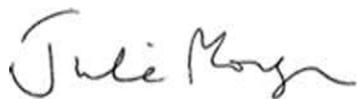
The best practice guidance, Food and Nutrition in care homes for older people, available at: [food-and-nutrition-care-homes-older-people-guidance-complete.pdf \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/food-and-nutrition-care-homes-older-people-guidance-complete.pdf) provides information on food choices observed by different cultures and religions and suggests how to devise appropriate meal plans for individuals as part of a wider initiative to support individuals to enjoy their food, and eat and drink the types and amounts of foods necessary to maintain their health and well-being.

The guidance has been distributed to all care homes in Wales, and is supported by a variety of training opportunities. Care home settings have access to the all Wales 'Nutrition Skills for Life' community training programme, as well as other training provided by local health board dietitians.

The guidance has been used to inform the nutrition and hydration components of the new Level 2 and 3 health and social care qualifications, so that newly qualified practitioners will be aware and have knowledge of food provision and nutrition needs of older people in their care. The guidance has also been used to inform the trainers of health and social care practitioners e.g. continuing professional development sessions for staff and student training.

I hope this response is helpful and addresses the concerns expressed by the All-Party Parliamentary Group about religious and philosophical beliefs while eating in care.

Yours sincerely,



Julie Morgan AS/MS

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