7.14 Dietary Services

The facility must provide each resident with a nourishing, palatable, well-balanced diet that meets the daily nutritional and special dietary needs of each resident.

(a) Staffing.

The facility must employ a qualified dietitian either full-time, part-time, or on a consultant basis.

(1) If a qualified dietitian is not employed full-time, the facility must designate a person to serve as the director of food service who receives frequently scheduled consultation from a qualified dietitian.

(2) A qualified dietitian is one who is qualified based upon either registration by the Commission on Dietetic Registration of the American Dietetic Association, or on the basis of education, training or experience in identification of dietary needs, planning and implementation of dietary programs.

(3) Sufficient staff. The facility must employ sufficient support personnel competent to carry out the functions of the dietary service.

(b) Menus and nutritional adequacy.

Menus must:

(1) meet the nutritional needs of residents in accordance with the recommended dietary allowances of the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences;

(2) be prepared in advance; and

(3) be followed.

(c) Food. Each resident shall receive and the facility shall provide:

(1) food prepared by methods that conserve nutritive value, flavor and appearance;

(2) food that is palatable, attractive, and at the proper temperature;

(3) food prepared in a form designed to meet individual needs;

(4) substitutes offered of similar nutritive value to residents who refuse food served.

(d) Therapeutic diets. Therapeutic diets must be prescribed by the attending physician.
(e) Frequency of meals.

(1) Each resident shall receive and the facility shall provide at least three meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.

(2) There must be no more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following date, except as provided in (4) below.

(3) The facility must offer snacks at midday and bedtime daily.

(4) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if a resident group agrees to this meal span, and a nourishing snack is served.

(f) Assistive devices. The facility must provide special eating equipment and utensils for residents who need them.

(g) Sanitary conditions. The facility must:

(1) procure food from sources approved or considered satisfactory by Federal, State or local authorities;

(2) store, prepare, distribute and serve food under sanitary conditions; and

(3) dispose of garbage and refuse properly.