# Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults Toolkit

## Table of Contents

1. Overview of Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults Toolkit
2. Acronym List
3. Referral Process
   a. Referrals to Registered Dietitian Policy
   b. Referral Form
4. Screening and Assessment
   a. DETERMINE Checklist
   b. Malnutrition Universal Screening (MUST) Flowchart
   c. EAT 10 Swallowing and Assessment Tool
   d. Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA) – Short Form
   e. Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA) – Full Form
   f. Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA) – For Adults 65 years of Age and Older
   g. Simplified Nutritional Appetite Questionnaire (SNAQ)
5. Height, Weight and BMI
   a. Estimating Heights Policy and Procedure
   b. Estimating Height in Bedridden Patients Policy and Procedure
   c. Obtaining Accurate Weight Policy and Procedure
   d. Obtaining Measurements for Unweighable Policy and Procedure
   e. Adjusting Weights for Amputees Policy and Procedure
   f. Body Mass Index Policy and Procedure
   g. Body Mass Index Tables
   h. Significant Weight Loss Policy and Procedure
   i. Significant Weight Change Chart
   j. Significant Weight Changes Sample Form
   k. Notification of Unintended Weight Loss
   l. Weekly Weight Form
   m. Weight Chart Sample Individual Form
   n. Clinically Unavoidable Weight Loss Sample Form
6. Nutrition Care Process/Medical Nutrition Therapy
   a. Medical Nutrition Therapy Recommendations Policy and Procedure
   b. Medical Nutrition Therapy Flowchart of Encounters for Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults
   c. Medical Nutrition Therapy Encounter Process for Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults
   d. Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults Evidence-Based Nutrition Practice Guideline – Executive Summary of Recommendations
   e. Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults Recommendations with Associated Standardized Language Terms
   f. Guide to Prevent and Manage Unintended Weight Loss
   g. Nutrition-Focused Physical Exam Policy and Procedure
   h. Medical Nutrition Therapy for Older Adults Comprehensive Nutrition Assessment
   i. Medical Nutrition Therapy for Older Adults Quarterly/Nutrition Progress Note
   j. Medical Nutrition Therapy for Older Adults Comprehensive Nutrition Assessment – Interactive Form
   k. Medical Nutrition Therapy for Older Adults Quarterly/Nutrition Progress Note – Interactive Form
   l. Comprehensive Care Plan Policy and Procedure
   m. Care Plan Form
   n. Nutrient Intake Study and Form
   o. Dietary Intake Guide
   p. Appropriate Use of Appetite Stimulants in the Elderly
q. Considerations for Medical Nutrition Therapy Interventions
r. Recommendation Form
s. Nutrition Risk Meeting
t. Dining Experience Policy and Procedure
u. Case Study for Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults

7. Enteral Nutrition and End of Life Decisions
   a. Guidelines for Enteral Feeding Eligibility Policy and Procedure
   b. Enteral Feeding and Nutrition Care Assessment Policy and Procedure
   c. Guidelines for Enteral Feeding Policy and Procedure
   d. Documentation for Enteral Feeding Policy and Procedure
   e. Enteral Nutrition Progress Report
   f. Enteral Nutrition Flowsheet Policy and Procedure
   g. Enteral Nutrition Flowsheet
   h. Transition to Oral Feedings Policy and Procedure
   i. End of Life Decisions Policy and Procedure

8. Education Materials and Professional Resources
   a. Summary of Education Materials and Resources
   b. Enhancing Nutritional Value
   c. Six Small Meals Diet
   d. Get Your Plate in Shape
   e. My Plate for Older Adults

9. Outcomes Management
   a. Outcomes Management: Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation
   b. Outcomes Management Forms in Excel
**Step 1**
**BMI score**

- BMI kg/m² | Score
- >20 (>30 Obese) = 0
- 18.5 - 20 = 1
- <18.5 = 2

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**Step 2**
**Weight loss score**

- Unplanned weight loss in past 3-6 months
  - % | Score
  - <5 = 0
  - 5-10 = 1
  - >10 = 2

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**Step 3**
**Acute disease effect score**

- If patient is acutely ill and there has been or is likely to be no nutritional intake for >5 days

**Score 2**

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**Step 4**
**Overall risk of malnutrition**

Add Scores together to calculate overall risk of malnutrition

- Score 0 Low Risk
- Score 1 Medium Risk
- Score 2 or more High Risk

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**Step 5**
**Management guidelines**

**Low Risk**

- **Routine clinical care**
  - Repeat screening
    - Hospital – weekly
    - Care Homes – monthly
    - Community – annually for special groups e.g. those >75 yrs

**Medium Risk**

- **Observe**
  - Document dietary intake for 3 days
  - If adequate – little concern and repeat screening
    - Hospital – weekly
    - Care Home – at least monthly
    - Community – at least every 2-3 months
  - If inadequate – clinical concern
    - Follow local policy, set goals, improve and increase overall nutritional intake, monitor and review care plan regularly

**High Risk**

- **Treat**
  - Refer to dietitian, Nutritional Support Team or implement local policy
  - Set goals, improve and increase overall nutritional intake
  - Monitor and review care plan
    - Hospital – weekly
    - Care Home – monthly
    - Community – monthly

* Unless detrimental or no benefit is expected from nutritional support e.g. imminent death.

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All risk categories:

- Treat underlying condition and provide help and advice on food choices, eating and drinking when necessary.
- Record malnutrition risk category.
- Record need for special diets and follow local policy.

**Obesity:**

- Record presence of obesity. For those with underlying conditions, these are generally controlled before the treatment of obesity.

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Re-assess subjects identified at risk as they move through care settings

See The ‘MUST’ Explanatory Booklet for further details and The ‘MUST’ Report for supporting evidence.
Medical Nutrition Therapy Flowchart of Encounters for Unintended Weight Loss in Older Adults

This document is designed to assist registered dietitians and registered dietitian nutritionists (RDN) in completing the Medical Nutrition Therapy for Older Adults Comprehensive Nutrition Assessment and Quarterly/Nutrition Progress Note, also located in this toolkit. A more extensive description of each encounter is located in the Medical Nutrition Therapy Encounter Process.

The format follows the Nutrition Care Process, which includes Nutrition Assessment, Nutrition Diagnosis, Nutrition Intervention, and Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation, also known as the “ADIME” format. When completing the Assessment and Quarterly/Nutrition Note, use of the most current Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Standardized Language manual is also recommended. For more information on the Academy Nutrition Care Process and Standardized Language, see [http://www.eatright.org/HealthProfessionals/content.aspx?id=7077](http://www.eatright.org/HealthProfessionals/content.aspx?id=7077).

### Screening/Referral/Consult Information

1. HBCS and Assisted Living: <30 days  OR  2. SNF and NF: 5-14 days

#### Related documents/forms:

- **Determine Checklist**
- **EAT 10**
- **MNA Short Form**
- **SNAQ**

**Sample Policy: Referrals to Registered Dietitian/Dietetic Technician Registered (RD/DTR) Communication/Referrals For RD/DTR Professional**

RD to obtain pertinent clinical data from referral source or individual’s medical record or information system.

- ✓ Laboratory values (e.g., HgbA1c, CMP, CBC)
- ✓ Other clinical data: Anthropometric data (e.g., height, weight, weight change)
- ✓ Physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant referral with signature
- ✓ Past medical history: Recent hospitalization, surgeries, fractures, admission to healthcare communities
- ✓ Nutrition Screening Risk Score (from MNA- SF or Determine Checklist)

- ✓ Swallowing problems, eating dependency, low physical activity level, decreased activities of daily living
- ✓ Presenting signs and symptoms
- ✓ Medications (dose, frequency), dietary/herbal supplements
- ✓ Physical activity clearance or limitations
Get Your Plate in Shape

Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your bowl. Foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products and lean protein foods contain the nutrients you need without too many calories. Over the day, include foods from all the food groups. Try the following tips to “Get Your Plate in Shape.”

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark-green, red and orange vegetables plus beans and peas. Fresh, frozen and canned vegetables all count. Choose “reduced sodium” or “no-salt-added” canned vegetables.

Add fruit to meals and snacks. Buy fruits that are dried, frozen or canned in water or 100% juice, as well as fresh fruits.

Make at least half your grains whole.
Choose 100% whole-grain breads, cereals, crackers, pasta and brown rice.

Check the ingredients list on food packages to find whole-grain foods.

Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk.
Fat-free and low-fat milk have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories.

If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk or a calcium-fortified soy beverage.

Vary your protein choices.
Eat a variety of foods from the protein food group each week, such as seafood, nuts and beans, as well as lean meat, poultry and eggs.