

Nutritional support to fight malnutrition; the impact of a new hospital food service

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Description of the initiative

Screening and nutritional support are key to avoid malnutrition-related complications. In the Netherlands, all inpatients are screened for the risk of malnutrition on the first day of admission. The quality/nutritional value of hospital food is also increasingly coming into the limelight. Accordingly, the **ministry of Health** has put this issue high on the research agenda. Currently available food services need to be improved to optimize protein intake during hospitalization. To this end, we have implemented a novel meal service in our academic facility, FoodforCare*, that aims to encompass all the notions above.

Objective

Compare nutritional goals (protein and energy intake versus protein and energy requirements), nutritional status and clinical outcomes in patients between the traditional meal service and FoodforCare (figure 1).

Nutritional intervention study

Data collection between 2015 July – 2016 December

Figure 1: Cohort

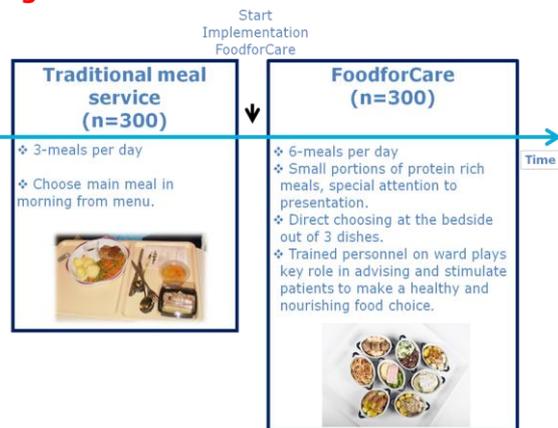
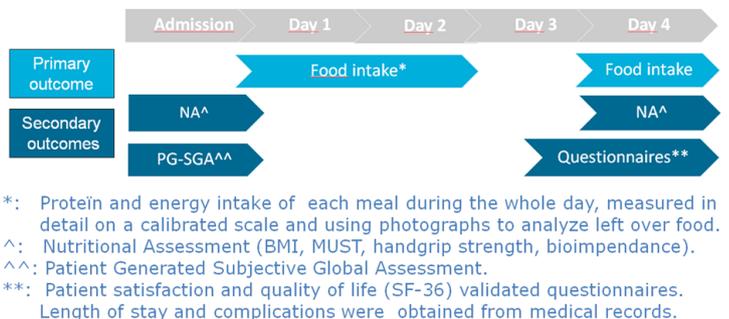


Figure 2: Outcomes



Innovative aspects

1. **Patient-generated** adequate foodservice for patients; FoodforCare originates from patient demands and pays attention to requirements of specific populations
2. **Nutritional intervention study:** provides insight in the efficacy of this novel meal service concept, that promises to improve protein and energy intake in inpatients. This is the first study to measure nutritional intake in detail in such a large cohort.

Main achievements / Implementations

- **(Inter)national:** This high quality study aims to accurately establish the relevance of this new concept. Findings can subsequently be extended to other hospitals.
- **Awareness:** adequate food should be an integral part of a patient's medical treatment worldwide. This study will bring food services during hospital stay to the health care arena and capture the attention of physicians, policymakers and the general public.
- **Costs reduction:** less plate waste and lower health care costs by reduced necessity to apply expensive nutritional support techniques, less complications and shorter length of hospital stay.
- **Preoperative and postoperative nutrition:** data from this study will prove the relevance of this concept in the extended out of hospital setting.