Food Safety and Hygiene Policy

**Name of Policy:** Food Safety and Hygiene Policy

**Effective From:** 19/08/2015

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<th>16/07/2015</th>
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<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>Director of Estates and Facilities</td>
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This policy supersedes all previous issues
## Version Control

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Contents

1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................4
2 Policy Scope ......................................................................................................................................4
3 Aim of this Policy ..............................................................................................................................4
4 Roles and Responsibilities ................................................................................................................5
5 Definitions .........................................................................................................................................6
6 Delivery of the Policy ........................................................................................................................6
   6.1 Management of Food Hygiene ................................................................................................6
   6.2 Pre-Employment Screening & the Management of Illness .....................................................7
   6.3 Foods Patients cannot bring into Hospital ..............................................................................7
   6.4 Foods Patients can bring into Hospital ....................................................................................8
   6.5 Food Handling Practice ..........................................................................................................8
   6.6 Ward Kitchens ...........................................................................................................................8
   6.7 Food Storage ............................................................................................................................8
   6.8 Patient Meals ............................................................................................................................10
   6.9 Use of Microwave Ovens .......................................................................................................10
7 Training ............................................................................................................................................10
8 Equality and Diversity ......................................................................................................................11
9 Monitoring and Compliance with this Policy ................................................................................11
10 Consultation and Review of this Policy .......................................................................................12
11 Implementation of this Policy .......................................................................................................12
12 References ......................................................................................................................................12
1. **Introduction**

The NHS has had a legal obligation to comply with the provisions and requirements of food legislation since 1987. The Trust commits itself to compliance with the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990, Food safety & Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013, DoH Chilled & Frozen Guidelines on Cook Chil and Cook Freeze and subsequent regulations/amendments as a basis for its minimum standard. It is the responsibility of the Board, Chief Executive, Directors and Service Managers responsible for food acquisition, processing and service, to ensure that standards are met and that training, along with appropriate records retention, is provided to all food handlers commensurate with their responsibilities.

The Trust will ensure that all their food premises are duly registered (EU requirement) with Gateshead Council.

In particular the Trust will ensure adherence to the Trusts Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) procedure documents used within its kitchens. Gateshead Council local enforcement officers (Environmental Health Officers) see these documents as central to food safety.

HSG(96/20 – Management of food hygiene and food services in the NHS in its Executive Summary states:

*Quote.* ‘Good Hygiene and food safety practices and informed staff are vital in the preparation, storage, distribution and serving of food. These are of particular importance in hospital catering because patients may have less resistance to infection from contaminated food.’

2. **Policy Scope**

All catering management, ‘food handlers’ and NHS premises in which food is stored, prepared or served must comply with the current food safety legislation. Due to the vulnerability of patients, good practice advice found in the approved Catering Industry Guides should be considered in appropriate circumstances.

NHS management must ensure that food production and service complies with the requirements of current legislation. Purchasing authorities must ensure that contracts with provider units lay down the requirements of food provision including food hygiene.

Providers must ensure they adopt standards of good hygiene practice to conform to current food safety legislation and that such standards are monitored.

This Policy must be followed by all Trust employees, including those on temporary contracts bank staff and students, who are involved in ordering, storing, preparing, serving or delivering any food or beverages.

3. **Aim of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to raise the profile of food safety and hygiene within the Trust, to highlight that several disciplines of NHS staff are identified as being ‘food handlers’ and to emphasise and promote awareness of the existing arrangements for the strict management of food hygiene. The Catering department has further more in depth food safety procedures that it complies with, in the form of the Trusts Hazzard Analysis Critical Control Procedures (HACCP) document.

Further help and guidance for Food Safety can be sought from the Facility Manager (Catering).
4. **Roles and Responsibilities**

**Trust Board**
The Trust Board has a responsibility to ensure that patients, staff and visitors are provided with a safe food service meeting current regulations and guidance.

**Chief Executive**
The Chief Executive is responsible to the Board for ensuring that all patients, staff and visitors are provided with a safe food service meeting current regulations and guidance.

**Director of Estates & Facilities**
The Director of Estates & Facilities ensures that the Catering Department provide appropriate services throughout the Trust to ensure a safe food service is provided in accordance with current regulations and guidance.

**Director of Nursing, Midwifery & Quality**
The Director of Nursing and Midwifery ensures that general nursing and housekeeping staff provides services in line with the Food Safety & Hygiene Policy.

**Divisional Managers and Heads of Service**
They will ensure the Food Safety & Hygiene Policy is implemented in their Division and also that staff are provided with appropriate training.

**Facilities/Catering Management**
Responsible for the Trusts day to day food delivery, hygiene and safety and the Trusts adherence to current UK food hygiene legislation. They will ensure the policy is implemented on a day to day basis and that catering staff adhere to the policy and receive appropriate training. Responsible for offering advice and assistance to Trust departments/wards on issues relating to food hygiene.

**Environmental Health Officers (EHO’s)**
EHO’s acting on behalf of Gateshead Council are responsible for the enforcement of legislation relating to food safety. The prime objectives of the EHO’s is to ensure that food legislation is enforced and to offer guidance and support as necessary.

These objectives are achieved by a combination of the following methods:
- Inspecting food and food premises
- Providing advice to assist in complying with legislation and achieving high standards of food safety.
- Giving advice to the public on food matters including health promotion to make them aware of food safety issues and allow them to make informed choices when buying, storing and preparing food

**Service Managers/Ward Sisters**
Service Managers/Ward Sisters are responsible for ensuring that within their ward/area:
- food and beverages are served quickly and efficiently without delay and that any delays in food service are reported to the catering department
- the rules on food allowed/not allowed to be brought into hospital are adhered
- hygienic standards and food storage are maintained within ward kitchens/beverage bays
- the contents of this policy are adhered to (in particular patient food service) at all times
- ward refrigerators are checked daily for correct storage and labelling and that temperatures are monitored and recorded (am and pm)
Other Staff
All staff have a responsibility to carry out their duties in accordance with the policies and instructions laid down by the Trust, in a safe and hygienic manner.

All staff must formally advise their Supervisor of any circumstances that prevent them from maintaining the hygiene standards determined by the Trust.

All staff who are involved in the handling of food, whether during distribution or at ward level have a responsibility to attend mandatory training sessions and follow identified practices and procedures.

5 Definitions

The following definitions are used within this policy.

Food Handlers
Is anyone who may deliver, handle, store or serve food or beverages within the Trust as part of their main job role. This includes all Catering staff and may also include supplies, nursing, domestic/hotel services, housekeeper & portering staff.

Secondary Food Handlers
Is anyone who may deliver, handle, store or serve food or beverages within the Trust as an associated part of their job role. This will include supplies, nursing, domestic/hotel services, housekeeper & portering staff.

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP)
Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) is the detailed procedures that the Trust follows to ensure compliance to food safety regulations, guidelines and good practice.

6. Delivery of the Policy

6.1 Management of Food Hygiene

Catering Food Hygiene is managed by the Patient Environment Action Group (PEAG):

- Director of Estates & Facilities (Chair)
- Head of Facilities
- Facilities Manager (Catering)
- Deputy Catering Manager
- Consultant Microbiologist
- Senior Nurse, Infection Prevention and Control
- Works Operations Manager, Estates
- Patient Representatives

6.2 Food Handlers Pre-Employment Screening and the Management of Illness

Pre-employment
All staff complete a pre-employment questionnaire before being passed as fit by the Occupational Health department and receiving a contract of employment.

Management of Illness
Every food handler is required to report immediately to their manager/supervisor if they are suffering from an illness involving:
• A discharge from eyes, ears or nose
• A chronic cough
• Skin rash
• Lesions on exposed skin (face, neck, hands, lower arm or scalp) that are scaling, weeping or discharging pus
• Nausea/vomiting and/or diarrhoea
• If they have had close or household contact with a person suffering from diarrhoea and/or vomiting, or a person suspected of being a carrier of infection. After returning from holiday during which an attack of vomiting or diarrhoea or any conditions listed above lasted more than two days
• After returning from holiday in a place where there has been an outbreak of enteric fever (typhoid or paratyphoid)
• When returning to work after suffering from illness involving any of the conditions mentioned above
• Any staff member with other employment which might bring them into contact with others who have symptoms.

Procedure for Dealing with Incidents of Vomiting and/or Diarrhoea amongst Food Handlers on Duty
• the food handler must report symptoms immediately to their supervisor staff member must be sent home immediately
• the supervisor should give consideration to the work undertaken by the staff member before they reported their symptoms and take appropriate action to minimise the risk of contamination;
• the manager must notify the Occupational Health Department to ascertain if it is necessary to obtain specimens for microbiology the staff member must stay away from work until 72 hours after their symptoms subside.

Procedure for Dealing with Other Infections
The supervisor or staff member must contact the Occupational Health Department for further advice.

6.3 Food Patients cannot bring into Hospital

If not handled correctly the following items may pose a risk to our patients and are therefore not allowed to be brought into Hospital:
• Cooked meats and meat products.
• Fish paste and fish products.
• Fresh or synthetic cream or cream products.
• Eggs.
• Take-away meals.

6.4 Foods Patients can bring into Hospital

If not handled correctly foods brought into Hospital can pose a serious health risk and must be strictly controlled. Provided the patient’s diet allows, the following items may be brought into hospital by the patient or patients relative/visitor:
• Individual cartons of fresh fruit juice
• Fresh & dried fruit
• Canned or bottled soft drinks
• Crisps, nuts and crackers
• Cereal Bars
• Individual pre-packed cakes (no cream)
- Sweets and chocolates

These foods must be date coded when opened, have a use by date and bear the patients name and be stored according to this policy.

### 6.5 Food Handling Practice

- Hands must be washed thoroughly before starting work, before handling food or equipment, after visiting the WC, after sneezing, coughing or using a handkerchief, after touching ears, nose, mouth or hair.
- Keep cuts and burns covered with a bright coloured waterproof dressing
- Do not lick your fingers
- Do not pick your nose, teeth or ears, or scratch your backside
- Do not cough or sneeze over food
- Do not smoke, eat, drink or chew gum in food areas
- Do not scratch your head
- Do not use an overall, apron or cloth to dry your hands
- Handle foods as little as possible

### 6.6 Ward Kitchens

Only authorised staff (domestic, auxiliary and nursing staff from that ward) are allowed access to ward kitchens.

On no account should patients have access to ward kitchens unless it is part of a recognised occupational/rehabilitation session and they are being supervised appropriately

Ward refrigerators should be of robust design and be capable of operating below 5 ºC. Temperatures should be checked am and pm and recorded. Under no account should raw products be stored at ward level. Patient food (section 6.04, 6.05) should be labelled correctly and checked daily. Staff food should be stored separately from patient foods.

### 6.7 Food Storage

The correct storage of foods is important to ensure adequate provision. Failure to ensure satisfactory conditions of temperature, humidity, stock rotation and the integrity of packaging can result in problems of unfit or spoiled food but will at the very least, result in a considerable reduction in shelf life.

**Product Date Codes**

To ensure good stock rotation and compliance with the Food Labelling Regulations, all foods with the exception of unprepared and uncut fruit and vegetables, sugar, wine and salt must be date coded.

Produce delivered by nominated suppliers will be date coded as part of the purchase specification.

Date Codes are classified under 2 headings:
- “USE BY” – applied to perishable, “high risk” products such as cooked meats and dairy products
- “BEST BEFORE” – applied to perishable and non perishable foods, e.g. cereals and packed products, cans, bottles – usually with a shelf life of over 3 months
All products must be used before the expiry of these dates but care must be taken when using products to check labelling instructions.

The rule **FIRST IN – FIRST OUT** should always be applied.

Opened packs of food should be decanted into suitable lidded containers

**Refrigeration**

Refrigeration is a method of storage by which spoilage is delayed but not prevented. The following rules should be applied when storing food in a refrigerator/freezer:

- Chilled foods should be stored between 1ºC & 5ºC
- Frozen foods to be stored below –18ºC
- Foods subjected to Cook Chill to be stored between 0ºC & 3ºC

High risk foods are usually those which contain protein and are intended for consumption without treatment which would destroy such organisms. e.g.

- All cooked meat and poultry
- Cooked meat products including gravy and stock
- Milk, cream, artificial cream, custards and dairy produce
- Cooked eggs and products made with eggs, for example mayonnaise, but excluding pastry, bread and similar baked goods
- Shellfish and other seafood, for example, oysters; cooked rice

**Dry Goods Storage**

Dry goods require protection from:

- Low Temperatures
- Damp
- Excessive heat
- Direct Sunlight
- Pests

This requires:

- Steady Temperatures of 10 –15 ºC
- Ventilation (relative humidity 50 – 60%)
- Shelving which can easily be cleaned
- Products stored off the ground
- Routine Cleaning
- Stock Rotation

**6.8 Patient Meal Service**

The following key points must be adhered to regarding patient meals

- Patients must only be served food prepared on Trust Premises (see 6.03 and 6.04 for food brought into hospital).
- Patient’s meals must never be reheated or retained for use later.
- All patients meals, used or unused must be returned to the catering department (unless advised otherwise) for correct disposal.
- Under no circumstances should patient food (including ward provisions and beverages) be consumed by members of Trust staff (including left over or waste food intended for disposal).
• Wards without industrial dishwashers must return all crockery and cutlery to the respective kitchen for correct cleaning.
• Under no circumstances should left over patient food be consumed by members of Trust staff.

6.9 Use of Microwave Ovens

Microwaves are for staff use only. Use by patients (unless it is part of a recognised occupational/rehabilitation session and they are being supervised appropriately) must be strictly forbidden.

**Under no circumstances should they be used to reheat patient’s food.** They may be used for boiling of fresh milk for beverages and cereals and other items if advised by the Facilities Manager (Catering).

Microwaves must be cleaned daily and be maintained by the Estates department. Any faults must be reported promptly and the unit taken out of use until cleared by Estates.

6.10 Food for Hospitality, Functions, Meetings etc

The provision of catering for hospitality, functions and meetings must be supplied by the Trusts (GHFT) catering department only.

The provision of catering that is supplied by outside companies and not funded by the GHFT is permitted as long as the outside catering company does not enter GHFT premises i.e. it is funded by, and held on external premises.

Foods purchased from non-GHFT catering managed outlets cannot be controlled and managed by the Trust and therefore the food safety aspects can not be the responsibility of GHFT.

7. Training

Food law requires that food handlers must be trained in food hygiene commensurate to their duties, to enable them to handle food safely. Also, those responsible for developing and maintaining the business’s food safety procedures, based on HACCP principles, must have received adequate training.

The Trust has a legal and moral responsibility to provide all food handlers with appropriate training commensurate with their responsibility for food preparation and handling. This is a key aspect of the Trust Risk Management Strategy.

Food Handlers outside the Catering Department

**Nursing, Domestic, Housekeepers and Portering Staff**

All new staff prior to commencing employment shall receive and have fully explained to them the following:

- The Agreement to Report Infection Declaration.
- The Rules of Personal Hygiene and Health.
- The Rules on Protective Clothing, First Aid and Reporting Procedures within each unit.

In addition all ‘secondary’ food handlers i.e. Nurses, Domestic and Portering involved in the delivery and service of food shall attend ‘Basic Food Hygiene’ as part of annual Mandatory training. This will be organised and delivered by Catering Management and is advertised within Gateshead.
Health NHS Trust’s Training Diary. On completion of the training session each participant will be issued with a certificate of attendance.

8. **Equality and Diversity**

The Trust is committed to ensuring that, as far is reasonably practicable, the way we provide services to the public and the way we treat our staff reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on any grounds. This policy has been appropriately assessed.

9. **Monitoring compliance with this policy**

**Microbiological Monitoring**

To support and validate the Trusts Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) procedures microbiological sampling of foods is undertaken to examine for the presence of:

- ACC
- E. Coli
- S. Aureus
- B. Aureus
- Salmonella
- C. Pref
- Listeria

Food products will be microbiologically sampled on a weekly basis using a UKAS accredited and registered company.

The sampling programme will cover a broad range of menu items, from all days of the week and will include chilled ready to eat products (primarily) and cook chill products (subject to further re-heating).

Corrective action, for samples resulting in high microbiological counts and failing testing, will be through inspection of the procedures from that food group with changes adopted as necessary to the HACCP procedures.

**Effectiveness Monitoring**

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Management monitoring of Food Hygiene and of HACCP procedures are carried out and recorded monthly by Catering Management.

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10 Consultation and review of this policy

This policy has been reviewed in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, Counter Fraud Specialist and Risk Management Team.

11 Implementation of policy (including raising awareness)

This policy will be circulated by the Trust Secretary via the Trust e-mail system and will be available on the trust intranet for all staff to access. The policy will also be made freely available to the public via the Trust's internet page. Managers will be made aware of the policy during subsequent PEAG reviews.

12 References

- Food Safety Act 1990
- Food safety & Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013
- Food service Standards at Ward Level – Hospital Caterers Association good practice guide 1997
- Food Law Code of Practice (England) June 2008