

Patient handout – expectations for refeeding admission

What is a refeeding admission?

- A refeeding admission is typically a two-week admission on a medical ward to support with nutrition and medical stabilisation. There will be an expectation to restore a regular pattern of eating. Oral food and drink will be offered in the first instance, however if you are struggling to manage enough food and drink orally to help restore physical health, an NG tube may need to be considered.

Support during admission

During your admission you will be regularly reviewed by members of the multi-disciplinary team, including ward doctors, dietitians, nursing staff and your community eating disorder service. The community eating disorder support workers will aim to provide support over meal times (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm) and the team will maintain daily contact with ward staff.

What do I take with me to hospital?

- We would encourage you to take in some personal items that provide comfort and distraction to support you during your admission. Some examples would be a blanket, pillow/cushion, books, mobile phone, laptop/tablet, colouring books, puzzle books, earphones.
- Food and drink will be provided by the hospital; therefore, we ask you not to bring your own food to the ward. Chewing gum and fizzy drinks are discouraged.

Medical monitoring

Your physical health will be monitored closely by ward staff during your admission on the ward:

- Usually, you will be weighed twice a week, preferably first thing in the morning prior to breakfast – shoes removed, outdoor clothing removed (coats/heavy jumpers), use toilet prior to weighing. Weighing can sometimes happen outside of these hours.
- Access to scales will be restricted.
- On admission you will have a physical examination which usually consists of (but is not limited to) blood tests, ECG, blood pressure and pulse. Bloods and other physical monitoring may be undertaken daily during your admission until medically stable.
- Electrolyte, vitamin and mineral supplementation may be deemed as medically necessary, to take until medically stable.

Mealtimes

- All food and drink will be provided by the hospital, please do not take any personal food items into the ward.
- A meal plan will be provided to the ward staff. This will be reviewed by the ward dietitian during your admission.
- The meal plan will be shared with you. You may discuss your likes and dislikes with the Dietitian / ward staff, however meals will be non-negotiable, and likely to include 3 meals a day and snacks.
- Meal times are to be supported by staff as we are aware that they can be very distressing times. All food and drink that you have consumed will need to be documented on food charts by supervising staff. Food charts are not to be completed by yourself or family members as they are legal documents for staff to complete.

- Meal times are limited to 30 minutes, followed by a rest period of 30-60 minutes where toilet breaks are discouraged. It is common for people to find mealtimes and the period afterwards quite difficult so we aim to provide support from our support workers for up to 60 minutes after mealtimes. We would encourage distraction activities i.e. Puzzles, card games, listening to music, talking about hobbies during this period.
- One-to-one nursing support during mealtimes may be required.
- Feeding rates will increase incrementally, e.g. every 1–2 days until you are consistently restoring weight. This will be non-negotiable.
- Specific calorie provision will not be discussed with you.

Visiting

- You will need to check with the ward regarding their visiting policy and hours.
- Visiting during mealtimes are discouraged, unless it is agreed in your care plan.

Activity levels

Activity levels are to be limited to assist the goal of medical stabilisation. Bed rest is encouraged during the admission. We ask you to not leave the ward without prior agreement from the ward sister; this will be based on physical risks. If you do leave the ward during a medical re-feeding admission, this would need to be in a wheelchair and supervised.

What happens after the 2-week refeeding admission?

There are several possible options following the refeeding admission on the medical ward:

1. Admission to a specialist eating disorder unit (out of area)
2. Admission to a local psychiatric unit
3. Discharge home with continued support from the community eating disorder service – the community team will aim to provide intensive support post discharge. This would usually include involvement from various clinicians such as nurses, health care support workers, occupational therapists or dietitians.
4. If you remain medically unstable you may require a longer stay on the ward

Decisions regarding ongoing care will be reviewed in the multi-professional team throughout your admission, and will be determined on an assessment of ongoing risk and progress. The plan for discharge and ongoing care will be discussed with you and your carers (with your consent).

This document has been verbally reviewed with the patient, and it will become part of the patient's health record.

I have read and understand the above information regarding my medical admission and agree to the above expectations.

Patient: _____ **Date:** _____ **Time:** _____

Clinician: _____ **Date:** _____ **Time:** _____

