

Clinical Task Instruction

Delegated Task

D-S005: Thickened fluids and texture modified diet preparation and education

Scope and objectives of clinical task

This CTI will enable the Allied Health Assistant to:

- instruct the client (or carer if relevant) to prepare thickened fluids and/or a texture modified diet.

VERSION CONTROL

Version: 1.0

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Acknowledgements: Speech Pathology Allied Health Assistant working group

The CTI reflects best practice and agreed process for conduct of the task at the time of approval and should not be altered. Feedback, including proposed amendments to this published document, should be directed to the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer (OCAHO) at: allied_health_advisory@health.qld.gov.au

This CTI should be used under a delegation framework implemented at the work unit level. The framework is available at: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/ahassist>

Prior to use please check <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/clintaskinstructions.asp> for the latest version of this CTI.

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Requisite training, knowledge, skills and experience

Training

- Completion of CTI D-WTS01 When to stop.
- Mandatory training requirements relevant to Queensland Health/Hospital and Health Service (HHS) clinical roles are assumed knowledge for this CTI.
- Completion of the following Queensland Health allied health assistant training modules (or corresponding units of competency in HLT43015 Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance) or equivalent work-based learning:
 - Speech Pathology Learner Guide: provide support in dysphagia management

Access the module/s at: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/ahassist-modules>

Clinical knowledge

- The following content knowledge is required by an AHA delivering this task:
 - understand the purpose and rationale for a thickened fluids and texture modified diet as part of the management plan
 - awareness of the client considerations when preparing the thickened fluids and texture modified diet e.g. cost, required equipment, processes to order, places to purchase thickener
 - the common products and method/s a client can use to prepare thickened fluids and texture modified diets for personal use that are available in the local service
 - the appearance and differences between various texture modified diets and thickened fluids.
- The knowledge requirements will be met by the following activities:
 - completing the training program/s (listed above)
 - reviewing the Learning resource.
 - receiving instruction from an allied health professional in the training phase.

Skills or experience

- The following skills or experience are not identified in the task procedure but support the safe and effective performance of the task and are required by an AHA delivering this task:
 - If required by the local service model competence in the measurement of clinical observations for oxygen saturation using a pulse oximeter.

Safety and quality

Client

- The AHA will apply CTI D-WTS01 When to stop at all times.
- In addition, the following potential risks and precautions have been identified for this clinical task and should be monitored carefully by the AHA during the task:
 - the prescription of thickened fluids and modified diets are to support swallowing/ feeding problems. If tasting products occurs during the task the client may show signs of:

- aspiration. Signs may include coughing, throat clearing or wet voice before, during or after swallowing. If the client demonstrates signs of aspiration, cease the task, provide reassurance, encourage the client to cough and implement local workplace procedures e.g. inform the health care team and the delegating health professional that potential aspiration has been observed.
 - choking. Signs of choking may include: holding or touching the throat; coughing, wheezing or gagging, which may be weak or ineffective; difficulty breathing; making a whistling or 'crowing' sound when trying to breath; or an inability to make sound or cry. If ignored, choking may lead to lips, faces, earlobes or fingernails turning blue and loss of consciousness. Airway obstructions are considered a medical emergency and local procedures should be commenced immediately e.g. code blue activated.
- prior to product usage and/or tasting, check the allergen information for client suitability and source alternate products and/or fluids if required.

Equipment, aids and appliances

- Check the equipment is clean prior to preparing the thickened fluids or modified diets e.g. washed with warm soapy water and thoroughly dried.
- If the client has hearing aids, glasses or dentures, these should be fitted prior to commencing the task. If the client has difficulty fitting devices, provide assistance. If uncertain about fitting requirements, seek guidance from a healthcare professional.
- As this task includes food items, expiry dates should be checked and storage requirements adhered to, to prevent spoilage prior to use. This may include observing for coagulation or thickening of milk. All spoiled food items should be disposed of and replacement products sourced. Any fluid and/or food remaining at the end of the task should be disposed of in the appropriate receptacle e.g. in the servery area or for clients who are infectious in the bedside receptacle.
- If using electrical equipment (blender), all equipment should be examined to be in good working order e.g. no observable fraying of cords, switches working properly and if in a Queensland Health facility, test and tag in situ and current.

Environment

- The task should be performed in an environment that supports effective communication and safe practice. This may include minimising distractions by turning of the TV or radio.

Performance of clinical task

1. Delegation instructions

- Receive the delegated task from the health professional
- The delegating allied health professional should clearly identify parameters for delivering the clinical task to the specific client, including any variance from the usual task procedure and expected outcomes. This may include:
 - the client's current diet and fluid e.g. IDDSI level, regular, mildly thick fluids or a soft and bite sized diet.
 - information to be provided, including resource/handout for use

- location for the task e.g. patient bedside, rehabilitation gym kitchen
- specific client considerations and management strategies e.g. allergies, visual neglect, use of an interpreter, hearing aid, dentures or communication device.
- if providing a demonstration or practice opportunity, food items to be used e.g. hot/cold/carbonated drinks, tea, coffee, lemonade, beer.
- and if the session is to include taste testing by the client.

2. Preparation

- Collect or print the required education/information resource/s
- Collect the thickener powder/ liquid samples, cup, measuring jug, spoon and fork and planned fluids and/or foods to be used for demonstration

3. Introduce task and seek consent

- The AHA introduces themselves to the client.
- The AHA checks three forms of client identification: full name, date of birth, **plus one** of the following: hospital unit record (UR) number, Medicare number, or address.
- The AHA describes the task to the client. For example:
 - “I have been asked show you how to prepare your own thickened fluids and modified foods”.
- The AHA seeks informed consent according to the Queensland Health Guide to Informed Decision-making in Health Care, 2nd edition (2017).

4. Positioning

- The client’s position during the task should be:
 - sitting upright in bed or in a supportive chair.
- The AHA’s position during the task should be:
 - facing the client and at eye level, ideally in a position where the AHA is easily able to converse with the client, point to stimulus items and provide instructions.

5. Task procedure

- Explain and demonstrate (where applicable) the task to the client.
- Check the client has understood the task and provide an opportunity to ask questions.
- The task comprises the following steps:
 1. Provide the information/education resource to the client.
 2. Present information/education including any variants to the standard information requested by the delegating health practitioner e.g. a summary of the resource.
 3. Discuss any particular strategies on the information brochure that have been highlighted by the delegating health professional e.g. contact details of suppliers.
 4. If providing a demonstration of thickened fluids
 - a. Wash hands and don gloves prior to handling food items.
 - b. Locate the recommended quantity of thickener (powder or liquid) and preparation requirements as per the product instructions.

- c. Measure the fluid for thickening and determine the required quantity of thickener to be added. Reinforce with the client the need to measure accurately each and every time and to avoid eyeballing strategies or use of generic kitchen cups and spoons.
 - d. Measure the required quantity of thickener for use and add to the fluid.
 - e. Follow the preparation instructions by mixing the fluid until thickener is well dissolved/dispersed and no lumps are present.
 - f. Use the IDDSI fork drip test and spoon tilt test to confirm the fluid thickness. See Learning resource.
 - g. Provide the client an opportunity to observe the fluid and if part of the delegation instruction, taste the thickened fluid. See Safety & quality.
 5. If the delegation instruction included client practice, instruct the client to perform step 4, providing feedback to the client to support performance.
 6. If providing a demonstration of modified diet
 - a. Wash hands and don gloves prior to handling food items.
 - b. Prepare the food sample to align to the required IDDSI level description/ characteristics by cooking, chopping or pureeing.
 - c. Use the IDDSI testing method to confirm the food meets the prescribed level.
 - d. Provide the client an opportunity to observe and if part of the delegation instruction, taste the food. See Safety & quality.
 7. If the delegation instruction included client practice, instruct the client to perform step 6, providing feedback to the client to support performance.
 8. On completion of the session dispose of thickened fluid/food items, wipe over the counter, clean and store the demonstration products and equipment.
- During the task:
 - provide feedback and correct errors in the performance of the task including:
 - check that the client understands the information provided by asking if they have any questions and by gauging whether the client appears confused or concerned about the information.
 - note any questions or concerns that the client has that are not covered by the printed resource or by the AHA's training and indicate to the client that these questions will be provided to the relevant health professional for follow-up.
 - Some thickening powders/liquids are not stable over a period of time e.g. the longer the thickened fluid sits, the thicker it becomes. If there is a delay between preparation and taste testing occurring, re-test for thickness prior to consumption.
 - Each thickener will have differing instructions for the time required to mix and/or rest the mixture prior to consumption. Refer to the instructions on the packaging.
 - As food preparation and storage can alter the characteristics of a food, IDDSI testing should always occur prior to consumption.
 - monitor for adverse reactions and implement appropriate mitigation strategies as outlined in the Safety and quality section above including CTI D-WTS01 When to stop.
 - At the conclusion of the task:
 - encourage feedback from the client on the task.
 - provide summary feedback to client, emphasising positive aspects of performance and areas to work on

- provide instructions for independent practice of the task (including reinforcing safety considerations) if this was requested by the delegating health professional.
- ensure the client is comfortable and safe.

6. Document

- Document the outcomes of the task in the clinical record, consistent with relevant documentation standards and local procedures. Include observation of client performance, expected outcomes that were and were not achieved, and difficulties encountered or symptoms reported by the client during the task.
- For this task, the following specific information should be presented:
 - the topic or title of the written education/information resource/s provided
 - if demonstration, or client/carer practice occurred, the type of fluids and/or food used and the IDDSI level practised
 - if taste testing occurred a list of items consumed
 - problems encountered and any actions taken.

7. Report to the delegating health professional

- Provide comprehensive feedback to the health professional who delegated the task.

References and supporting documents

- International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI). Available at: <https://iddsi.org/>
- Queensland Health (2015). Clinical Task Instruction D-WTS01 When to stop. Available at: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/clintaskinstructions.asp>
- Queensland Health (2017). Guide to Informed Decision-making in Health Care (2nd edition). Available at: https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/143074/ic-guide.pdf

Assessment: performance criteria checklist

D-S005: Thickened fluids and texture modified diet preparation and education

Name:

Position:

Work Unit:

Performance criteria	Knowledge acquired	Supervised task practice	Competency assessment
	<i>Date and initials of supervising AHP</i>	<i>Date and initials of supervising AHP</i>	<i>Date and initials of supervising AHP</i>
Demonstrates knowledge of fundamental concepts required to undertake the task.			
Obtains all required information from the delegating health professional, and seeks clarification if required, prior to accepting and proceeding with the delegated task.			
Completes preparation for the task including collecting required education/information resource/s e.g. handout, thickener powder/ liquid samples, cup, measuring jug, spoon and fork and planned fluids and/or foods to be used for demonstration.			
Introduces self to the client and checks client identification.			
Describes the purpose of the delegated task and seeks informed consent.			
Positions self and client appropriately to complete the task and ensure safety.			
<p>Delivers the task effectively and safely as per delegated instructions and CTI procedure.</p> <p>a) Clearly explains the task, checking the client's understanding.</p> <p>b) Provides the information resource to the client and refers to the resource to guide education.</p> <p>c) If providing a demonstration of thickened fluids washes hands, correctly identifies preparation instructions and accurately measures and mixes the required quantities of thickener and fluid.</p> <p>d) Accurately determines the IDDSI level.</p> <p>e) Appropriately instructs and supports the client with practice.</p> <p>f) If providing a demonstration of modified diet washes hands, prepares the food sample to align to required IDDSI level.</p> <p>g) Repeats steps d & e</p> <p>h) On completion correctly disposes of food items, cleans and stores products and equipment.</p>			

i) During the task, maintains a safe clinical environment and manages risks appropriately.			
j) Provides feedback to the client on performance during and at completion of the task.			
Documents the outcomes of the task in the clinical record, consistent with relevant documentation standards and local procedures.			
Provides accurate and comprehensive feedback to the delegating health professional.			

Comments on the local service model e.g. workplace instructions and protocols included during the training phase:

The AHA has been trained and assessed as competent to deliver the following resources:

- Food & Drinks Classification and Testing: Adult
- Food & Drinks Classification and Testing: Paediatric
- _____

Thickened fluid demonstration for:

- Slightly thick
- Mildly thick
- Moderately thick
- Extremely thick

Modified meal demonstration for:

- Easy to chew
- Soft and bit size
- Minced and moist
- Puree
- Liquidised

Comments:

Record of assessment competence:

Assessor name:		Assessor position:		Competence achieved:	/ /
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Scheduled review:

Review date:	/ /	
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Thickened fluids and texture modified diet preparation and education: Learning resource

Textured modified food and fluids have their natural food texture/consistency changed to allow safer and/or easier swallowing. There are internationally agreed levels of texture modified food and fluids (International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative). The texture level needs to match the client's requirements to be safe for swallowing. For example, fluids that are too thin or too thick may be unsafe.

Different types of thickening agents can be purchased by the client:

- pre-packaged thickened fluids (as used in the hospital) or
- thickening powder/liquid, that is added to drinks and liquidised foods to achieve the appropriate thickness.

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of pre-packaged versus hand thickening with powder/liquids

Thickened fluid	Advantage	Disadvantage
Pre-packaged	Quality assured accurate thickness No preparation time required Easily transportable/ accessible e.g. travelling	Expensive to purchase Available products/ flavours may not meet client preference Can be difficult to open
Hand-thickening with powder/ liquids	Cost-effective Can thicken any drink/ fluid	Inaccuracies may occur due to human error

Required reading

- Queensland Children's Hospital (2018). Dysphagia (swallowing difficulties) in children. Resource No: FS320. Available at: <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/fact-sheet-swallowing-difficulties-children/>
- The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation institute (IDDSI). Available at: <https://iddsi.org/>
 - IDDSI Framework. Available at: https://iddsi.org/IDDSI/media/images/Complete_IDDSI_Framework_Final_31July2019.pdf
 - The local service may also include range of IDDSI Framework Posters for use including
 - Food & Drinks Classification and Testing: Adult https://iddsi.org/IDDSI/media/images/Posters/IDDSI_Framework_Poster_Adult_Food_Drink_FINAL_with_bleed_Jan2020.pdf
 - Food & Drinks Classification and Testing: Paediatric https://iddsi.org/IDDSI/media/images/Posters/IDDSI_Framework_Poster_Paediatric_Food_Drink_FINAL_with_bleed_Jan2020.pdf

- Flow Test. Available at:
https://iddsi.org/IDDSI/media/images/Posters/IDDSI_Poster_Flow_Test_Jan2020.pdf
 - IDDSI Funnel – Instructions for use. Available at:
<https://iddsi.org/IDDSI/media/images/Flow%20Test%20Instructions/IDDSI-Funnel-instructions-English-Jan-2023.pdf>
- Available at: <https://iddsi.org/Resources/Posters>

Example client resources

The following list is provided for learning purposes as examples. Client resources chosen for required reading will be determined by the local service and be relevant to the information that the AHA will be trained and assessed to deliver to a client and listed in the AHAs individual Performance Criteria Checklist.

Meal

NEMO handouts

- Puree Diet (IDDSI level 4) Available at:
https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0030/1065828/txt-mod-puree.pdf
- Minced and Moist Diet (IDDSI level 5) Available at:
https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/1065854/txt-mod-minced.pdf
- Soft & bite sized (IDDSI level 6) Available at:
https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0033/1065858/txt-mod-soft.pdf

IDDSI website

- Patient handouts. Available at: <https://iddsi.org/Resources/Patient-Handouts>

Recipes

- Nestle Health Science. Dysphagia diet recipes. Available at:
<https://www.nestlehealthscience.co.uk/health-management/dysphagia/recipe-ideas>
- Simone Howells and Griffith University Master of Speech Pathology Students (2014–2017). Beyond the Blender. Dysphagia made easy. Available at:
https://www.griffith.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/540012/Beyond-the-Blender-dysphagia-cookbook.pdf

Thickened fluid

NEMO handouts (IDDSI levels 0–4). Available at:

https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/146567/txt_mod_tf.pdf

Flavour Creations

- Instant Thick – mixing instructions. Available at: [M-IT006-Single-Serve-Mixing-Guide.pdf \(flavourcreations.com.au\)](https://www.flavourcreations.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/easy-thick-rapid-mixing-guide-single-serve.pdf)
- Easy Thick Rapid – mixing instructions. Available at: <https://www.flavourcreations.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/easy-thick-rapid-mixing-guide-single-serve.pdf>

Resource Thicken Up Clear

- Preparation guides and recipes which includes a range of drinks, supplements and Movicol. Available at: <https://www.ncare.net.au/resource-centre/preparation-guides-and-recipes>

Precise Thickn

- Thickn – mixing instructions for supplements and laxatives. Available at: <https://precisethickn.com.au/mixing-instructions-for-supplements-and-laxatives/>

IDDSI website

- Consumer handouts available in languages other than English. Available at: <https://iddsi.org/Resources/Patient-Handouts>

