

BARNET AND CHASE FARM HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

TO: Tim Peachey, Interim Chief Executive
FROM: Martyn Jeffery, Director of Estates and Facilities
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SUBJECT: Hospital Food - Steamplicity
For: Information

1. INTRODUCTION

Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust have been using Steamplicity, a plated patient dining system, for over 5 years with high levels of customer satisfaction.

Each meal is cooked in bespoke packaging that contains a patented steam-release valve. Like a mini pressure cooker, it regulates the temperature throughout the cooking process keeping the food in optimum condition. Food retains its colour, texture and more of the valuable nutrients. The microwave's energy creates steam from water present in the ingredients and as steam builds up the patented valve controls how the pressure is released and how long the food is cooked for.

As illustrated in the table below, using Steamplicity reduces costs such as equipment, maintenance, energy, sundries and labour. This means more money is spent on the food ingredients, providing a better quality meal which can consistently be repeated as the portions are measured off the ward.

	Steamplicity	Conventional	Cook Chill
Food cost	80%	40%	60%
Labour cost	10%	50%	20%
Sundries	10%	10%	20%

In an independent study comparing the relative food intake of patients eating Steamplicity and Cook Chill food, the results showed that food consumption increased with Steamplicity meals by 36%.

2. THE BENEFITS OF STEAMPLICITY

Improved Quality and Choice

Steamplicity meals are served to the patient straight after cooking ensuring they are hot and they retain more taste due to being pressure cooked and not re heated.

Patients are offered a choice of 38 hot meal options, 5 salads and 7 sandwiches every lunch and supper. Each meal includes a starter, main meal and dessert with the standard menu being supported by ethnic, religious and modified texture menus.

To assist the patients in making their choice, Steamplicity menus are available to every patient in the standard format (Appendix A).

Steamplicity menus are also available in:

Large print and pictorial

Braille

French

Bengali

Turkish

Farsi

Gujarati

Polish

Portuguese

With separate menus for:

Halal

Kosher

Caribbean

Modified texture

REDUCED COSTS

Waste

Medirest's plated meal system operates with approx 1% waste as patients' orders are taken less than 3 hours before the meal service. Patients get what they have ordered and not the patient's before. The amount ordered is delivered to the ward, there is no need for spares and if patients do change their mind this can be provided within 30 minutes. With a bulk system, meals are prepared much further in advance, there is a choice of 3 or 4 main course items and to give the last patients on the ward a choice there is typically waste of 20-25%.

Energy Use

Microwave ovens are used to steam cook meals which use circa 40% less energy than the conventional methods of cooking patients' meals on-site.

Labour

There is a considerable food production labour saving as this is done at Medirest's cuisine centre rather than on site.

Increased Nutritional Value

Steaming is one of the healthiest ways to cook food and retains high levels of nutrients in the food. To prove this applies to Steamplicity, Medirest commissioned a number of independent reports to scrutinise the product and collectively these reports demonstrated the positive nutritional values of Steamplicity meals. In particular, independent research by Leatherhead Food International showed that, when compared with traditional cooking methods, Steamplicity broccoli retained more than twice the vitamin C and nearly twice the folic acid. Steamplicity meals are packaged with a patented pressure

valve and the food in the Steamplicity meal which is predominantly raw is pressure cooked, retaining considerably more nutrients and the taste of freshly cooked food than traditionally cooked or regenerated systems.

The menus are approved by Trust dieticians and come with full nutritional analysis.

Flexibility

It only takes 3-4 minutes to cook a Steamplicity meal which allows meals to be cooked just after the patient has been made comfortable and ready for their meal. Not only does this mean there is less waste but also meals can be cooked outside the usual meal times to suit the patients' needs rather than resorting to sandwiches.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Steamplicity meals are prepared in two cuisine centres with meals for Barnet and Chase Farm being supplied by Medirest's London Colney unit.

The meals have a 7 day shelf life with 5 days stock being held on site at any time in the catering department. Patients' orders are taken by Medirest hostesses at Barnet and nurses at Chase Farm (due to the contract set up) at circa 10am for lunch and 3pm for supper.

Ward orders are compiled by the Medirest catering department and delivered to the ward in insulated boxes (temperature probed on delivery) and decanted into ward refrigerators just in time for the meal service ensuring food safety and an audit trail throughout the process.

Whilst Medirest provide full training the cooking process is simple. All meals are temperature checked after cooking maintaining food safety up to being given to the patient ensuring the patient gets a hot meal every time.

Medirest's systems are rigorously checked biannually by STS, their external food safety organisation, giving the Trust the confidence in the safety of the process.

Equipment Required

Steamplicity is a simple system and only requires 3 13amp microwaves and refrigerator per standard ward though this is varied according to patient numbers per ward. Where there is insufficient space in the ward, we provide mobile units with the microwaves which are transported to the ward at meal times and returned to the central kitchen when not in use.

4. COSTS

Patients' meals at Chase Farm were switched from the Cook Chill contract in 2004 contract to Steamplicity in 2009 without changing the meal price.

The cost per patient day (breakfast, Steamplicity lunch and supper, 2 snacks and 7 hot drinks) is detailed below:

Chase Farm: £7.10

Barnet: £7.10

5. QUALITY CONTROL

Medirest measure customer satisfaction through their "Patient Navigator" Surveys which they carry out on 100% of the bed state over a year (Medirest are increasing to 200% in 2014). These ask over 40 questions relating to their meal experience including choice, assistance provided and the quality of the food.

The last three quarterly reports show the overall meal quality score for the two sites with the full report attached in appendix E and F and have been amended in Q 2 to include the three CQC questions asked in their surveys.

Site	Q1 2012/13	Q2 2012/13	Q3 2012/13
Chase Farm	78%	79%	81%
Barnet	100%	90%	92%

The scores could be affected by who provides the hostess service and the quality of the building.

Medirest also carry out client interviews with ward managers and nursing staff to ensure they capture the opinions of all parties especially as nurses order meals for some patients who are not able to order for themselves. STS carry out quality checks on Medirest systems.

EHO Inspections

Every business serving food must have a food management safety programme which is a systematic approach to control food safety hazards within a business in order to ensure that food is safe at the time of consumption. It is based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles as set out in Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

Environmental Health Inspections are carried out to ensure these systems are in place. Environmental Health inspections at both Barnet and Chase Farm have proved positive as the way the Steamplicity food is packaged, stored, cooked and served presents a low risk with regard to food bacteria.

All staff serving food must have food hygiene training before serving food to patients and Environmental Health Inspectors will check these records when they attend site along with other HACCP information.

Currently both Barnet and Chase Farm systems have a score of 5 (very good) following EHO Inspections. Greenfields Restaurant has a score of 4 (good) mainly due to its condition.

HACCP

The HACCP information at Barnet and Chase Farm consists of records of fridge temperatures both at the Medirest delivery point and on the wards are kept to ensure food is stored correctly and an appropriate food hygiene audit trail is maintained.

The meals are probed following cooking to ensure they are served at the correct temperature and this information is also recorded ready to be inspected by the Environmental Health Officer when they attend site.

Other HACCP information retained are the food hygiene safety training records and cleaning schedules.

PLACE

In the 2013 Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment, food at Chase Farm Hospital scored 90.01% and food at Barnet Hospital scored 85.07% against a national average of 84.98%.

Appendix A