

## In-Room Meal Service Guidance

Per direction from CMS and until further notice, nursing facilities should discontinue communal dining service and group activities. Residents needing assistance with their meals and/or residents with swallowing difficulties must have the help needed and the supervision to keep them safe. Please see the *Decision Tree for In-Room Dining* to help with this decision-making process.

Please consider the following best practices for in-room dining.

The process of serving the majority of the residents in their rooms will extend the meal service and tray delivery time. It is recommended that both residents and resident families are notified of the potential delay in service times.

It is recommended that an “all hands on deck” process be implemented to pass in-room trays and help limit temperature palatability issues.

Use bright-colored tray mats, an uplifting saying or a nice flower on the trays. Use colorful garnishes and have a heightened awareness of the appearance of the meals. Offer choice within the meal.

Limiting the number of in-room trays to 10-12 per cart will assist in keeping the meals warmer while being served to the residents. If the tray pass for this number of trays is taking longer than 15 minutes, reduce the tray numbers per cart.

Fully functional plate warmers along with insulated lids and bottoms are optimal for serving in-room meals. If the facility does not have the insulated lid/bottom system, it is recommended that the number of trays served on each cart be reduced to 6-8.

The carts used to served in-room trays should be sanitized before and after each service with a solution of 1/3 cup bleach in 1 gallon of water.

Disposable dinnerware and disposable trays should be saved for actual cases of Covid-19. Following universal precautions and using regular dinnerware and trays is considered appropriate for in-room dining. Monitor dishwashing closely.

Provide hand sanitizer on the top of each meal cart for use between each tray served and each contact.

Serve all foods, beverages and condiments needed for the meal on the individual meal trays to limit access to communal items (i.e. - beverages, ketchup/mustard, etc.).

Consider playing fun music in the halls during dining times to liven up the meals.

Residents dining in their rooms have an increased risk of pressure injuries and weight loss. Meal intakes and weights should be monitored closely. It is recommended that the CDM check intakes daily with referral to the RD if a resident's intake is low x3 days. RD to review all weights weekly. It is recommended that residents dining in their rooms are weighed weekly.