







Adult Speech & Language Therapy
Guidance for Behavioural Swallowing Difficulties

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Holding food/drink in the mouth  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spitting out food and drink  <p style="text-align: center;">No Spitting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refusal of food and drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide verbal prompts to chew and swallow ✓ Use indirect prompts e.g. have a taste, that looks nice ✓ Bring an empty spoon to the person's mouth to remind them to swallow ✓ Offer a variety of food and drink with a range of tastes and temperatures ✓ Take a note of food and drink that is accepted and offer this regularly ✓ Offer familiar foods, ask family about the person's preferred tastes ✓ Offer snacks throughout the day and offer finger foods if appropriate ✓ Reduce distractions at mealtimes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wandering during meal times ▪ Eating non-food items ▪ Eating from other persons plates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use gentle physical prompts at the table e.g. put cup/cutlery in person's hands ✓ Use simple verbal prompts and show the person their meal ✓ Offer finger foods to eat "on the move" ✓ Guide back to the table gently when they wander, prompt to continue eating ✓ Reduce distractions at mealtimes ✓ Lock away harmful or inappropriate items ✓ Ensure all involved are aware of the problem ✓ Ensure individual boundaries are clear ✓ Use physical or verbal prompts to help person identify their food and utensils ✓ Supervise meals

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dry mouth ▪ Problems with teeth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage regular drinks during the day, especially prior to meals ✓ Use artificial saliva spray/gel ✓ Offer extra sauce/gravy to moisten meal ✓ Encourage the person to alternate food and drink
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced levels of consciousness/sleepy  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of initiative ▪ Hemianopia/neglect ▪ Eating slowly/quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Draw their attention to the meal ✓ Describe the food/drink being offered ✓ Place cutlery in their hands ✓ Guide them to take the first mouthful ✓ Give verbal and physical prompts to continue their meal and to attend to neglected side ✓ Sit with more able people to provide a good model of eating/drinking ✓ Place the meal on the person's good side ✓ Assist the person from their good side ✓ Turn the plate during the meal ✓ Minimise distractions and attempt to create a calm environment ✓ Serve courses separately ✓ Ensure food is chewed, swallowed and cleared before the next mouthful ✓ Provide smaller, modified utensils e.g. teaspoon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficulty with utensils/messy eating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cut food into small pieces before serving ✓ Serve one course at a time, offer smaller portions ✓ Verbally orientate the person to the meal, plate and cutlery ✓ Place cutlery directly into the person's hands ✓ Consider offering finger foods