

BQC - 89 - 027

Date: April 3, 1989

To: Wisconsin Nursing Home Associations (3)  
All Bureau of Quality Compliance Staff

From: Larry Tainter, Director  
Bureau of Quality Assurance

Subject: Nutritional Food Supplements/Snacks/Nourishments in Long Term Care

Over the past several years, an area frequently questioned has been about the issue of nutritional supplements (i.e., vitamin or mineral supplements) and nutritional food supplements (i.e., familiar food forms served with or between meals to increase total caloric and/or protein intake) and the requirement for a physician's order. The term snacks, nourishments and nutritional food supplements are often used interchangeably in the long term care setting. The attached information is an effort to clarify this issue. The clarification is needed so that facilities can best meet the unique nutritional needs of each individual.

Food technology has advanced rapidly and there are more food choices. Many familiar foods are fortified and there are many commercial products available in familiar food form to enhance nutritional intake. These foods would not necessarily require a physician's order as they are not considered to be in the realm of either drugs and/or medication.

The facility has the responsibility to meet the nutritional needs of residents. Nutritional intake may be enhanced using additional foods serviced at appropriate times along with the planned menu, to meet individual needs and is not a contraindication to a diet order. Nutritional assessment and ongoing reevaluation is essential.

Please read and share the attached information. Feel free to contact the Bureau's Dietary Service Specialist, Billie March, (608) 266-7188, if you have further questions or concerns.

LT:BM/kk 2957

cc: -Board on Aging and Long Term Care  
-Wis. Medical Records Association  
-Service Employees International Union, Local 150  
-Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy

Attachment