

10 August 2016

Mr John Wilson

Sent by email via to: fyi-request-4224-5efc5223@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: H201602767

Dear Mr Wilson,

Thank you for your request for information which was transferred from Southern District Health Board to NZ Health Partnerships under section 14 of the Official Information Act 1982. The request, which was transferred on Wednesday 13 July, was as follows:

“It has come to my attention that children aged 14-18 years are being served four slices of white bread and two portions of margarine for the entirety of their lunch at Dunedin hospital. Please provide details of:

1. Who (and what role) is responsible for approving menus (specifically including this meal offering) as being fit for these patients?
2. What specific nutritional/medical advice and/or advisors are being relied upon for the decision to serve this as being nutritionally adequate?
3. How frequently is this meal being served?”

We have considered and decided to grant your request.

Background

NZ Health Partnerships is a company that it is owned by all 20 District Health Boards (DHBs). The DHBs are also our customers. One of the services we provide for DHBs is managing (a number of) commercial contracts and overseeing the performance of vendors.

This includes managing the commercial arrangements between Southern DHB and Compass Group NZ for the provision of Food Services. NZ Health Partnerships also monitors the performance of Compass Group NZ against a range of measures such as patients' satisfaction with meals, the accuracy of orders and food safety.

Dunedin Meal

We can confirm that in early-July a teenage patient was served four slices of bread and margarine for lunch. It is important to understand that this was served as a result of human error and it was an isolated incident. To be clear, plain bread and margarine is not part of the patient menu (paediatric, adult or special requirements).

As soon as this mistake was brought to Compass Group NZ's attention they conducted an investigation and found that errors were made when the patient's specific meal choices were taken. The patient ordered sandwiches with certain ingredients excluded and unfortunately additional ingredients were incorrectly excluded.

Compass Group NZ apologised to the patient and the patient's family at the time.

1. Who (and what role) is responsible for approving menus (specifically including this meal offering) as being fit for these patients?

Compass Group NZ is responsible for composing menus that comply with agreed nutritional specifications (see response to question 2 below). Menus are refreshed on a two-week cycle.



Its standard menu offers three meals and two snacks each day (breakfast, lunch, dinner, morning tea and afternoon tea). DHB nursing staff and dietitians can order additional items for patients if needed.

Typically, the breakfast offers options such as porridge, congee (an Asian rice porridge dish), cereals, fruit selection, yoghurts, bread/toast with a range of spreads.

Morning tea is a high energy baked item or biscuits.

Lunch offers a soup with bread and spreads, a hot meal, a choice between sandwich offerings, or a choice between one sandwich and a salad.

Afternoon tea consists of fruit or plain biscuits.

Typically the dinner menu offers soup, three hot main meal options to choose from (which all include a protein, carbohydrate and vegetables or salad serves). Dinner also offers a range of desserts including a hot dessert, fruit, jelly and ice cream etc.

2. What specific nutritional/medical advice and/or advisors are being relied upon for the decision to serve this as being nutritionally adequate?

When Compass Group NZ developed its menus it did so with the assistance of a Food & Nutrition Advisory Group (FNAG).

FNAG comprises of DHB food service managers, dietitians and clinical dietitians across the country. Additional input into the specifications came from paediatric dietitians and the Dietitian Leadership Group which is representative of all 20 DHBs.

FNAG also referenced existing similar specifications in New South Wales and Queensland, as well as current best practice in a number of New Zealand's large and medium-sized hospitals.

The menu specifications have been applied to both adult and paediatric patients and are designed to be appropriate for both nutritionally well and nutritionally at risk patients.

The specifications cover hundreds of individual nutritional goals (comprising numerous macro and micro nutrients), menu structure and size of meals. Examples of agreed specifications include everything from the minimum fibre content in a slice of toast, to the size of eggs and water jugs, the minimum calcium and protein content in dairy-based desserts, and how often sausages and processed meats can appear on a patient menu.

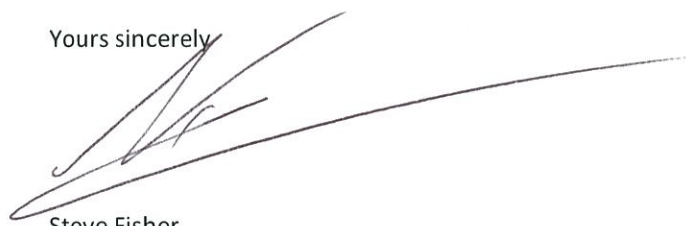
A model of continuous improvement is a key element Compass Group NZs offering. These specifications will be reviewed regularly to reflect the rapidly evolving research into nutrition and the treatment of malnutrition. This review process was designed by FNAG.

3. How frequently is this meal being served?

As above, the meal was mistakenly served to a teenage patient at Dunedin hospital in early July. It was an isolated incident and is not a part of Compass Group NZ's menu offering.

Please contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely



Steve Fisher
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