

To:
All General Practitioners
All Community Pharmacists

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16th November 2018

Dear Colleagues

TRANSITION FROM UK NATIONAL TEXTURE DYSPHAGIA DIET DESCRIPTORS TO INTERNATIONAL DYSPHAGIA DIET STANDARDISATION INITIATIVE (IDDSI) TERMINOLOGY

The way in which dysphagia diets are classified is changing. It is essential that all healthcare professionals are aware of this change and what it may mean for people with dysphagia.

The transition from the old UK “National Descriptors” to the new “International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative” (IDDSI) levels will take place over the coming months with full implementation of IDDSI occurring by April 2019.

In the interim period, manufacturers will be making changes to their dysphagia products as they move to the new classification. These changes will involve new labelling and new scoops with the thickening powders used to modify foods and fluids. The manufacturing companies have different timescales for making these changes. **Therefore, during this transition phase, patients could receive products labelled with the previous UK descriptors or with the updated IDDSI descriptors with potential for confusion and therefore risk to patient safety.**

Timescale for local Implementation

Each of the five local Health and Social Care Trusts has a different date for starting to implement IDDSI, depending on which manufacturing company they use as their main supplier. As such, each Trust has set up an IDDSI implementation team in order to manage the transition to IDDSI. From this agreed date, speech and language therapists (SLTs)

and dietitians within the Trust will start to use the IDDSI terminology in new SLT dysphagia care plans, and new IDDSI compliant thickening products will be available within the Trust. **The following table shows the planned implementation dates but healthcare professionals should be vigilant for packaging changes from now on. If you have any queries on the implementation of the new descriptors, please contact your local Health and Social Care Trust SLT service.**

HSC Trust	IDDSI implementation date	Contacts
NHSCT	15 th October 2018	Jill.bradley@northerntrust.hscni.net
SEHSCT	5 th October 2018	Lorraine.coulter@setrust.hscni.net Pauline.mulholland@setrust.hscni.net
SHSCT	15 th October 2018	Wendy.taggart@southerntrust.hscni.net
WHSCT	February 2019	Tanya.cuddy@westerntrust.hscni.net
BHSCT	February 2019	Cathy.jordan@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Healthcare professionals are asked to familiarise themselves with resources on IDDSI implementation in order to manage the potential risk to patients:

- Resources to Support Safer Modification of Food, DH circular (HSC (SQSD) 16/18), 5th July 2018. [http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/HSC%20\(SQSD\)%2016%2018%20%20Resources%20to%20support%20safer%20modification%20of%20food%20and%20drink%20-%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/HSC%20(SQSD)%2016%2018%20%20Resources%20to%20support%20safer%20modification%20of%20food%20and%20drink%20-%20FINAL.pdf)
- Resources to Support the Safer Modification of Food and Drink, PHA PL/2016/024, 1st August 2018. <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/Resources%20to%20support%20safer%20modification%20of%20food%20and%20drink.pdf>
- HSCB Medicines Management Supplement, NI Formulary website, Northern Ireland Formulary website, September 2018. <http://niformulary.hscni.net/PrescribingNewsletters/MedicinesManagement/Vol9/Vol%209%20Supplement/Pages/default.aspx>
- HSC poster (see page 4). This gives information on how to map between IDDSI levels and the UK National descriptors. Note: the poster provides a broad read across from UK National to IDDSI descriptors, and are not a complete match.
- Further information on IDDSI can be found at <http://iddsi.org/> or by downloading the App.

Actions for GP practices:

- Inform patients, carers and nursing / residential homes on the change to the new labelling and mixing instructions and the need to follow the new directions on the tin.
- Liaise with SLT if there is a clinical need, e.g. patient is not managing the matched IDDSI descriptor.

Actions for Community Pharmacies:

- Inform patients, carers and nursing / residential homes on the change to the new labelling and mixing instructions and the need to follow the new directions on the tin.
- Ensure patients, carers and nursing / residential homes are given the patient information resources that are provided by the respective nutritional company at the point of dispensing, in order to guide transition from previous descriptors to IDDSI descriptors.
- If the IDDSI compliant product has a new scoop, ensure patient is counselled to use the new scoop and to discard the old one. **There is a risk of patient receiving the incorrect thickness if the wrong scoop is used.**
- If ordering a parallel import (PI) for a thickener, ensure that the PI is IDDSI compliant once the UK product has changed over to IDDSI — see HSCB Supplement for timescales (or order as UK product). While IDDSI is the recognised international descriptor, not every country has adopted it and there is a risk of patients receiving incorrect mixing instructions or incorrect scoop size if non-IDDSI compliant products are supplied.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Brogan
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management

Terminology is changing for Modified Diets and Fluids for people with swallowing difficulties

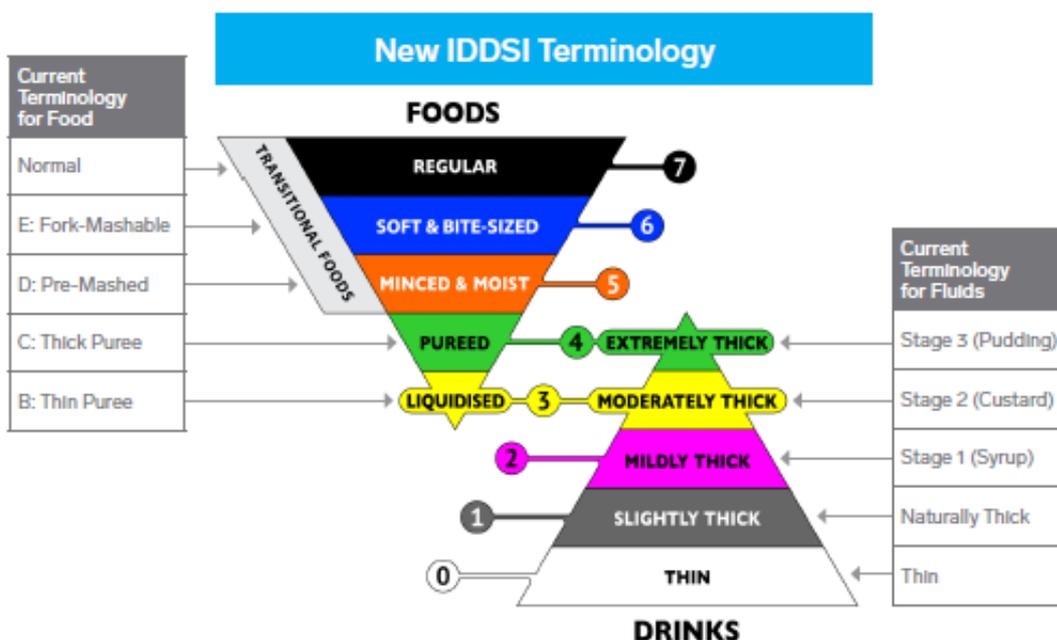


UK National Descriptors → IDDSI*

Over the next few months watch out for:

- ✓ New terms and levels for thickened fluids and modified foods
- ✓ New dosage instructions for thickening powders
- ✓ New scoop sizes for some thickening powders
- ✓ New product labelling

For further information download the IDDSI app or see www.iddsi.org



*International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative

29/08/18



Please note: the conversion chart should be used as a guide from the current terminology to the new IDDSI terminology. The UK National descriptors broadly match IDDSI levels, but are subjective and less detailed. There may be minor differences between the UK National descriptor levels and the IDDSI levels for specific patients. **Be aware that drinks may appear slightly thicker or thinner than the patient is used to. Monitor the patient carefully and, if a patient is not managing their new IDDSI descriptor level, speak to SLT urgently.**