

Nutrition and Swallowing Risk Checklist

Eating and drinking are not just crucial for nutrition and hydration but contribute significantly to our health and wellbeing. In all parts of the world, mealtimes have been a place of social interaction, a time to nourish ourselves, and an occasion for celebrating and expressing cultural identity. The Life Without Barriers (LWB) My Meals My Way approach is designed to enable the people we support to tell us their preferences and choices around their mealtime support.

Swallowing abilities vary greatly among people with disabilities. Life Without Barriers (LWB) uses the [NDIS LWB 5521 Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist](#) to assist in finding any nutritional concerns or swallowing problems for the people we support.

Note: The Nutrition and Swallowing Risk Checklist cannot make a diagnosis of a medical condition. This checklist is a guide to help identify if a person is at risk and requires further assessment by an Appropriately Qualified Health Practitioner (AQHP).

Our approach to safe and enjoyable mealtimes

Safety is important, and so is the quality of someone's life. Our role is to support not only safe but enjoyable mealtimes.

Helping a person express their unique likes and dislikes, traditions and customs, attitude toward mealtime and any mealtime support required is very important.

All LWB staff delivering mealtime supports will use person-centred active support to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of the person and minimise risk.
- Provide choice and respect for a person's decisions and actions around food and mealtimes.
- Support identity, as who people are will impact how they experience mealtimes.
- Get to know the person and how they like to connect with others at mealtimes.
- Engage in meaningful mealtime roles. Involve the person in familiar or new meal-related activities to make them feel a valued part of an everyday routine.
- Create a welcoming, relaxed, and friendly dining environment that can lead to more mealtime enjoyment.
- Support mealtime events for special occasions, such as birthdays or cultural holidays.

Who needs to have the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk Checklist completed?

If the person we support has a Mealtime Management Plan, completion of the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist is NOT required.

For all other people LWB supports, it is mandatory that the opportunity to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist is offered. All people we support have the right to decline to complete the checklist. Where a person chooses not to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist staff must complete the [LWB NDIS 909 Staff Record of LWB Support Offered](#) outlining that they clearly explained the role of the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist and why the person has made their decision.

New people accessing support from LWB will complete a preliminary questionnaire as part of the National Intake process, to determine if they have current mealtime management requirements and help identify any swallowing issues. The local Client Services team is responsible for working with someone who knows the person well to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist at the local Intake meeting.

If a person we support has previously declined to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist or if a previously completed checklist did not identify any risks, and changes in the person's usual way of eating and drinking are subsequently identified, or if there are any changes in the person's circumstances (for example, a change in a medical condition or the introduction of a new medication associated with swallowing difficulties), the opportunity to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist must be offered again.

Completing the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist

The [NDIS LWB 5521 Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist](#) must be completed by a staff member who knows the person well, working with the person and their support network.

The Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist is made up of three (3) parts that must be completed.

Part 1 – Preliminary Profile	Records information about the person's weight and height, BMI and who is completing the checklist.
Part 2 – Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist	The Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist helps to see if a person has signs of nutritional or swallowing problems.
Part 3 – Summary of Results	<p>The Summary of Results table records the risks or issues of concerns relating to questions answered with a 'Yes' or 'Unsure'.</p> <p>The General Practitioner should review the Summary of Results and advise actions to be taken in the 'Further Action Required' column.</p>

Supporting individual participation and choice

- The Disability Support Leader (DSL)¹ will involve the person and a member of their support network with the person's consent, in choosing a staff member/s who will help them complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist.
- The DSL and a staff member will make sure the person is provided with information about the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist and what the checklist is used for.
- Staff members will work with the person to pick a suitable time and place to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist and ask if there is anyone else they may like involved.
- If a person declines to complete the [NDIS LWB 5521 Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist](#), the DSL must complete the [LWB NDIS 909 Staff Record of LWB Support Offered](#) and save it in CIRTS: Plans>Assessments>Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist>Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist. SURNAME. First Names. YYYY.MM.DD
- Where the DSL believes there is significant risk/s associated with the person's decision to decline completion of the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk Checklist, the DSL should escalate their concerns to the Practice Support Lead for evaluation.

Completing Part 1 – Preliminary Profile

- LWB staff will follow the [NDIS LWB 5528 Measuring Height and Weight - Procedure](#) to correctly measure the person's weight and height.
- Make sure you have all the information you need to complete the checklist. For example, you may need to look at the person's weight records to determine if they have lost or gained weight over the past three (3) months.
- Record details in part 1 of the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist.

Completing Part 2 – Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist

- The DSL will choose a staff member/s to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist. The person completing the checklist should know the person well. For example, it may be the DSL, key worker, or a staff member responsible for supporting the person with their health support needs or developing their Individual Support Plan.
- Staff members will work with the person, parent/family members, and other staff to ensure their involvement and answer all of the questions in Part 2 of the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk Checklist.
- It may be helpful to watch the person when they are having a meal or drinking so you can answer the questions about how the person eats and drinks.
- Answer each question by ticking the relevant box (Yes, No or Unsure).

¹ All references to a DSL includes other Frontline Leadership roles, such as House Supervisors.

- If you are unsure or don't know the answer to a question, you need to seek another person's opinion or advice.
- If the answers are still uncertain, then tick the UNSURE box and add these to the Summary of Results section to discuss with the person's General Practitioner.
- Immediately discuss any risks identified (questions answered YES) with the DSL so strategies to keep the person safe can be developed and put into action.
- Staff completing the checklist, the person, and anyone else involved in the completion of the checklist, will sign the completed checklist.
- The DSL will review the completed Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist, and complete follow-up actions on any questions marked YES or UNSURE in Part 3. They will ensure there is a Progress Note detailing actions taken to address any risks identified in questions answered as YES and UNSURE, and an appointment is made for follow-up with the person's General Practitioner.

Completing Part 3 – Summary of Results

- Complete the Summary of Results table as follows:
 - If there were no questions answered with "Yes" or "Unsure" tick the **"No-Risk was identified for the client, GP review is not required" box.**
 - All questions answered with "Yes" or "Unsure" need to be added to the Summary table.
 - Add the question number in the first column.
 - Outline the risks and issues of concern in the 'Nutrition and Swallowing Risks Identified' column.
 - Explain 'how this risk affects the client' in the next column.

What to do with the completed Nutrition and Swallowing Risk Checklist

The Disability Support Leader will:

- Add the identified Nutrition and Swallowing risk to the Alerts section of [NDIS LWB 5001 Client Profile](#) and ensure the Client Risk Management Plan is completed.
- Alert other providers who also deliver support to any identified risks and risk management plans. A Progress Note is to be recorded, detailing the information shared, the date and to whom the information was given.
- Escalate any immediate risks noted in the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist to the Practice Support Lead/Specialist within the Centre for Practice Excellence (CPE). The Practice Support Lead will assist in making sure immediate actions to keep the person safe are developed and implemented.
- Ensure the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist is reviewed by the person's General Practitioner ASAP.

- The General Practitioner should review each question entered in the Summary of Results table. They should provide written advice in the "Further Action Required" column describing the action they will take or want staff to take, including referrals they make to other Allied Health Professionals.
- The General Practitioner should sign in the allocated area within the Part 3 Summary of Results page.
- Ensure follow-up actions identified by the General Practitioner in 'Further Action Required' are completed in a reasonable timeframe.
- Check the completed Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist with the [NDIS LWB 5561 Hospital Support – Plan](#)
 - Update the Hospital Support - Plan with any eating and drinking support requirements.
 - Add a Progress Note detailing that a new plan has been created and needs to be followed by all staff.
- Where a person has no risk identified within the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist, or the General Practitioner has determined there is no further support required, the person should be supported to update their [NDIS LWB 5526 My Meals My Way - Profile](#) (if applicable).

Save the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist

Save the completed [NDIS LWB 5521 Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist](#):

Plans & Assessments > Assessments - <Nutrition and Swallowing Checklist> Nutrition and Swallowing checklist. SURNAME, First Name. YYYY. MM.DD.

Review requirements

- If there are any changes in circumstances in the person's usual way of eating and drinking habits, the offer to complete the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist must be made again, and the DSL will make sure the person is referred to their General Practitioner immediately.
- When reviewing the Nutrition and Swallowing Risk - Checklist, refer to the previously completed checklist (where a person has completed one previously) and explain the situation and changes within Part 3 – Summary of Results.

