



Standard of Practice - Specialty Care

This standard of practice is to support the PSW in providing safe, respectful and effective personal care to the public population in a dignified and ethical approach. Standards of Practice outline the expectations of the PSW and their responsibility in the delivery of care.

Tube Feedings / Gastric / Enteral Pump Feedings

The PSW can care for a person(s) who is being fed by means of a feeding tube either by gravity or pump. Adding formula to a feeding pump or feeding bag is a delegated procedure and can be delegated to a PSW if the tube is a Dobhoff, J-Tube or a PEG Tube, but a PSW must never add formula to a nasogastric tube. The complexity of this type of patient requires that the PSW understands the procedure of a feeding tube and complications that can arise when someone is fed nutritionally by a tube.

Ensure you know your scope of practice.

This procedure is to be monitored and delegated to the PSW if the assigned RHP is confident in the competency of the PSW to perform this task. The PSW may not start the initial first feeding, this must be done by the RHP once an order is obtained from the managing physician.

The PSW will be instructed on the monitoring of the insertion site, its integrity and to ensure that the tube appears to be in the correct position, cleaning around the insertion site, signs and symptoms of infection at the site or reflux of food back up through the site or high residuals.

The directions for the amount and scheduling of food and water is to be clearly reviewed and written on the Plan of Care. Proper positioning of the person(s) must be done prior to every feeding. Monitoring closely for signs and symptoms that a person(s) is not tolerating the feeding is imperative so the PSW will know if and when to stop feeding immediately and inform the RHP assigned to this person(s).

Maintenance of patency of the feeding tube is critical and if there are any blockages, these too must be reported immediately to the appropriate supervisor.

PSW - Personal Support Worker

RN/RPN - Registered Nurse/ Registered Practical Nurse

RHPA - Regulated Health Professions Act

ADLs - Activities of daily living

Resources - Sheila A. Sorrentino, PhD, RN, Leighann Remmert, MS, RN and Mary J. Wilk, RN, GNC(C), BA, BScN, MN, Mosby's Canadian Textbook for the Support Worker, 3rd Edition