

# Knowledge & Update Webinar

Food Service Specialist Group  
26<sup>th</sup> November 2026



ISS Classification - Unrestricted



# Agenda

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- Knowledge Webinar: Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Supplementary Guidance
- Member updates: Food Service Specialist Group Projects
- AGM



# Nutrition & Hydration in Mental Health & Learning Disability Inpatient Settings: Supplement to the BDA Nutrition & Hydration Digest



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# Member Updates

from your committee



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# Agenda

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- Research Symposium and Project
- Easy to Chew and IDDSI
- BSA Sandwich Guidance
- Advance Practice in Food Service Dietetics
- Sustainability
- Nutrition & Hydration Digest
- Food in Hospital – Scotland
- Social Media



# Research Symposium

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- The symposium provides dietitians, dietetic students and researchers an opportunity to showcase their research.
- In 2025 the Food Services Specialist Group launched a new stream - Food Services.
- Several submissions were received, and they were scored against the BDA scoring guidance.
- The submissions covered very different topics within food services, but all provided research surrounding a subject of interest to current developments within food service dietetics.



# Research Proposal

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- Research officers designed a proposal to review the standards set out in the Nutrition & Hydration Digest 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition
- Trial carried out in September 2025 to test the data collection of 60 patients and the meal service they received
- Data reviewed the portions served throughout a meal services vs the expected nutritional standard and the amount eaten by each patient
  - The trial was insightful and will be presented at a later webinar this year along with the final research proposal
  - Trial showed influences into meeting standards that should be captured as a variable ex: Wards who embedded “the last nine yards”.



# Easy to Chew and IDDSI Guidance: Overview

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## **Challenges in Implementation**

Ambiguities and inconsistencies in EC and IDDSI application



## **Need for Standardization**

Consensus statements and clarified definitions are essential to achieve mutual understanding among clinicians and stakeholders.



## **Improving Patient Safety**

Clear guidance and robust educational resources enhance patient safety and menu variety





# Easy to Chew and IDDSI Guidance: Challenges

CHALLENGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>IDDSI Guidance Ambiguity</b>	Unclear application for dysphagia, choking risk and diet progression.
<b>Inconsistent SLT Practices</b>	Variability across NHS trusts creates confusion.
<b>Testing Methods &amp; Descriptors</b>	Restrictive approach limits menu variety and suitable options.
<b>Menu Planning</b>	Uncertainty between best approach: EC à la carte or standard menus with coding
<b>Staff Understanding</b>	Lack of clarity among clinical and non-clinical staff increases risk.
<b>Coding Limitations</b>	Unable to code EC foods in fresh cook food service models

# Goals for Improvement and Standardisation

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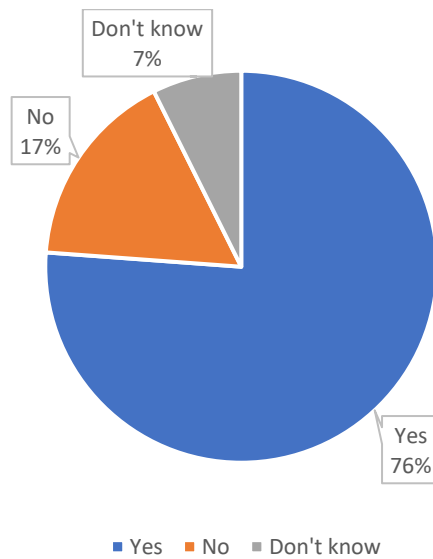
OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION
<b>Shared Understanding</b>	Clarify what EC <b>is and is not used for</b> among all stakeholders.
<b>Testing vs Descriptors</b>	Decide whether restrictions are based on testing methods or food descriptors.
<b>Level 6 vs EC Differences</b>	Achieve agreement on distinctions between these levels.
<b>Consensus Statement</b>	Develop joint guidance from RCSLT, BDA, and IDDSI.
<b>Guidance Review &amp; Education</b>	Update IDDSI guidance and create robust resources for staff training.



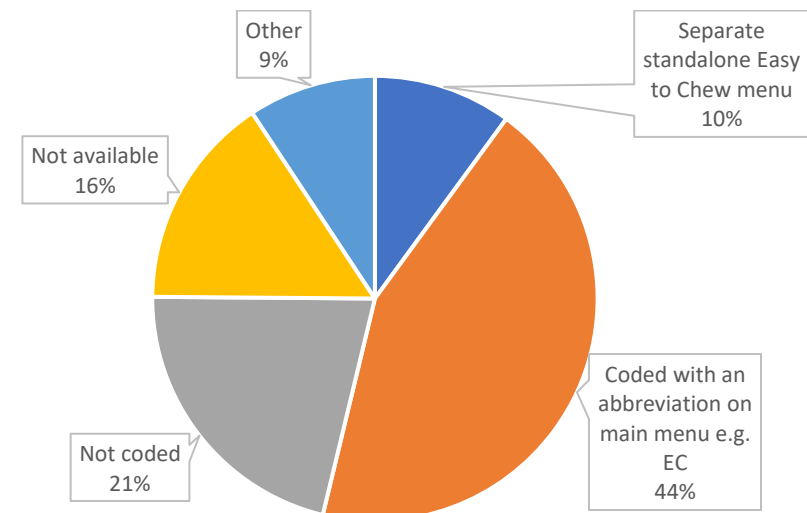
# RCSLT/BDA Member Survey

- 588 people answered a joint survey

Do the service users have access to level 7 easy to chew diet at your facility?



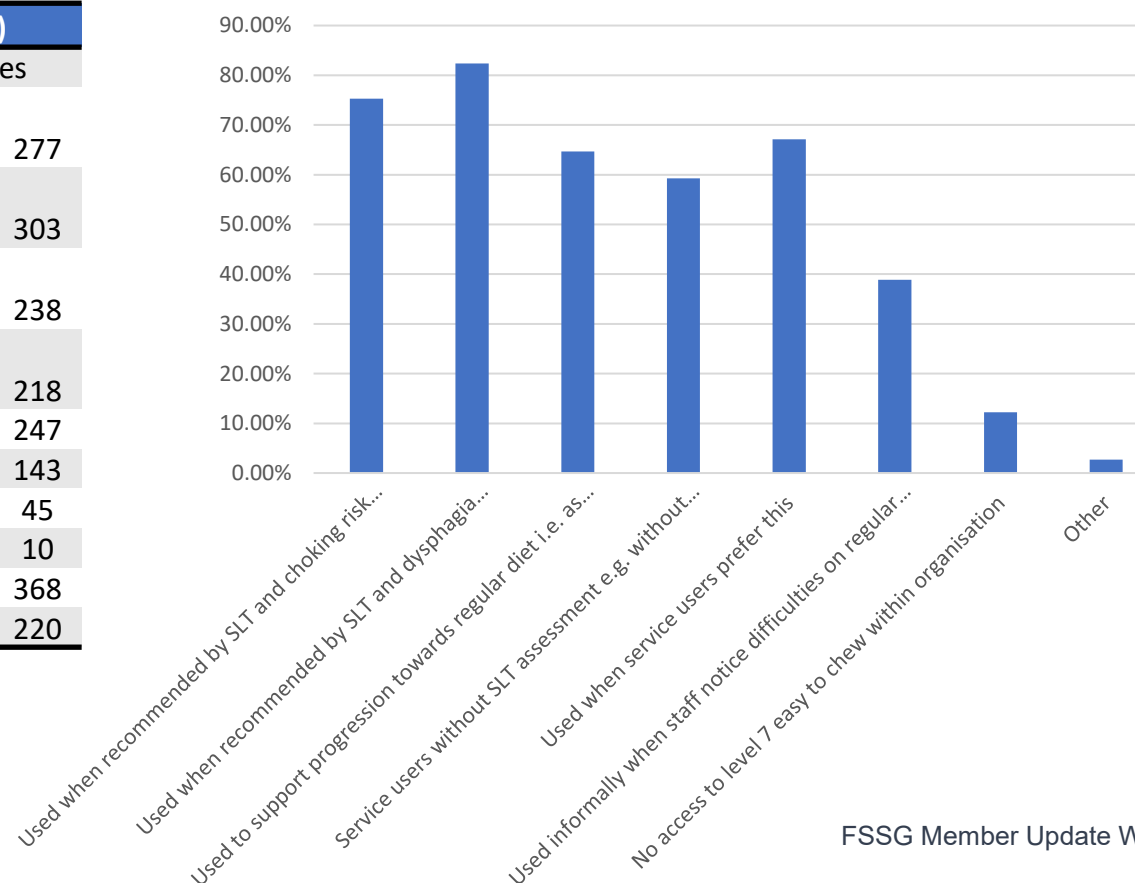
How are your level 7 easy to chew options coded on the main menu?



# RCSLT/BDA Member Survey

- How is Level 7 Easy to Chew used in settings?

Q22. How is level 7 easy to chew used within your organisation: (Tick all that apply)		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Used when recommended by SLT and choking risk identified, (new or pre-existing)	75.27%	277
Used when recommended by SLT and dysphagia identified (new or pre-existing)	82.34%	303
Used to support progression towards regular diet i.e. as a rehabilitation tool	64.67%	238
Service users without SLT assessment e.g. without dentures/ sore mouth/ fatigue etc.	59.24%	218
Used when service users prefer this	67.12%	247
Used informally when staff notice difficulties on regular diet	38.86%	143
No access to level 7 easy to chew within organisation	12.23%	45
Other	2.72%	10
	Answered	368
	Skipped	220



# Summary & Next Steps

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- There are inconsistencies with knowledge AND application of Level 7 Easy to Chew among clinical SLT's and Dietitians
- We need clear & consistent guidelines for safety & to ensure we can provide better variety for all patients
- Survey results provide some evidence of the confusion/mixed practice that exists
- More stakeholders to be engaged for next stage of this work



# BSA Guidance

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- Guidance for hospitals regarding sandwiches for patients
- Initial guidance
- BDA support
- Next steps



# Advance Practice in Food Service Dietetics

- Three Sold-out sessions delivered since 2023
- Over 60 attendees to date
- Two-year course review underway
  - *Currently completing the courses two year BDA review and have made several amendments including expanding the nutritional analysis workshops in response to feedback*

## Course Timetable

Timings	DAY 1 (10 – 5pm) Arrival, refreshments & networking
10.00 – 10.30	Welcome and Housekeeping Introductions and one objective they wish to achieve with attending the course
10.30 – 11.00	Role of Food Service Dietitians
11.00 – 11.15	Workload planning pre work discussions
11.15 – 11.30	Break and Networking
11.30 – 12.15	Menu Planning and Design
12.15 – 12.45	Menu Planning & Design: Workshop
12.45 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.00	Nutritional Analysis Introduction
14.00 – 15.00	Nutritional Analysis: Cyclical Menus
15.00 – 15.15	Break and Networking
15.15 – 16.00	Menu Analysis: A la Carte Menus
16.00 – 16.30	Assessing Capacity: is it the right fit?
16.30 – 17.00	Pre day 2 worksheets, Reflections, Q+A Close

Timings	DAY 2 (9 – 4pm)
9.00 – 9.15	Any reflective comments from day 1 Introduction to day 2 content
9.15 – 10.15	Practical Nutritional analysis – reflection
10.15 – 10.30	Break
10.30 – 11.00	Nutritional Analysis
11.00 – 12.00	Legal and Regulatory Frameworks
12.00 – 12.45	Lunch
12.45 – 13.45	Sustainability
13.45 – 14.00	Considerations during a tender
14.00 – 14.15	Break
14.15 – 15.00	Writing a food and nutrition strategy
15.00 – 15.05	Break
15.05 – 15.45	Healthcare standards: retail
15.45 – 16.00	Reflections and close



**Upcoming Course in 2026:** *Facilitated by Rachel & Saachi*  
21 January – Birmingham  
28 January – Online via Teams



# Sustainability

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- Plant first by default campaign
- BDA roundtable discussions March 2025
- BDA position statement
- Collaboration with BDA and Sustainability Specialist Group





# Nutrition & Hydration Digest Update

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- Digest 4<sup>th</sup> Edition – Due for launch 2028
  - Rethinking how the Digest works
1. A new review process: *focus on updating sections at a time, supported by the online, updatable format*
  2. A more practical structure: *to act as a user guide for reviewing and improving healthcare menus*
  3. More supplementary guidance: *expand on key patient groups with more robust guidance*



# Paediatric Supplementary Guidance

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*Aim: Provide nutrition standards, guidance and practical ideas to help hospital caterers meet the unique dietary needs of children of different age groups in hospital*

Progress so far:

- Formed initial working group to scope and guide project
- Setting up collaboration with Paediatric specialist group
- Member survey – coming out soon for wider input from FSSG

Keep an eye out for updates in the first quarter of 2026



# Food in Hospitals Specification: Next Steps

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- Final rewrites required based on feedback from consultation
- Publication of document – Current timeline Spring 2026
- Board implementation (timeline to be confirmed)
- Phase 3 self assessment to determine compliance (timeline to be confirmed.)

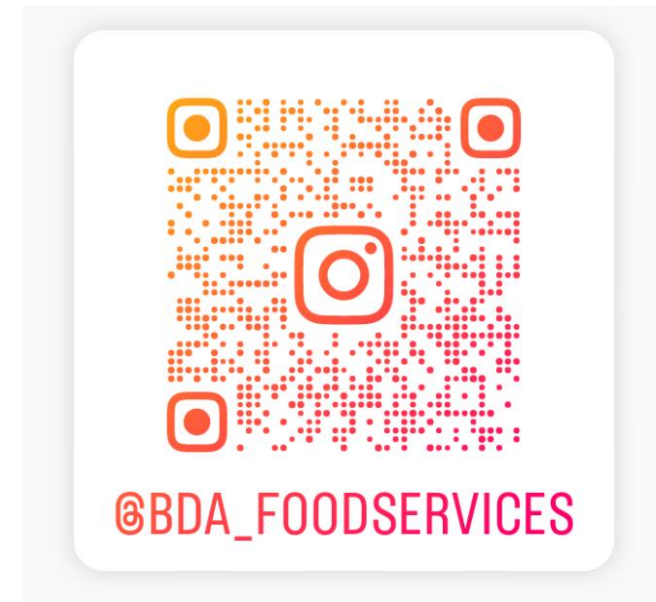


# Social Media

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**BDA\_Food Services**



**BDA Food Services Specialist Group**



**@BDA\_FoodServ**



# Annual General Meeting



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# Welcome

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- Apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM

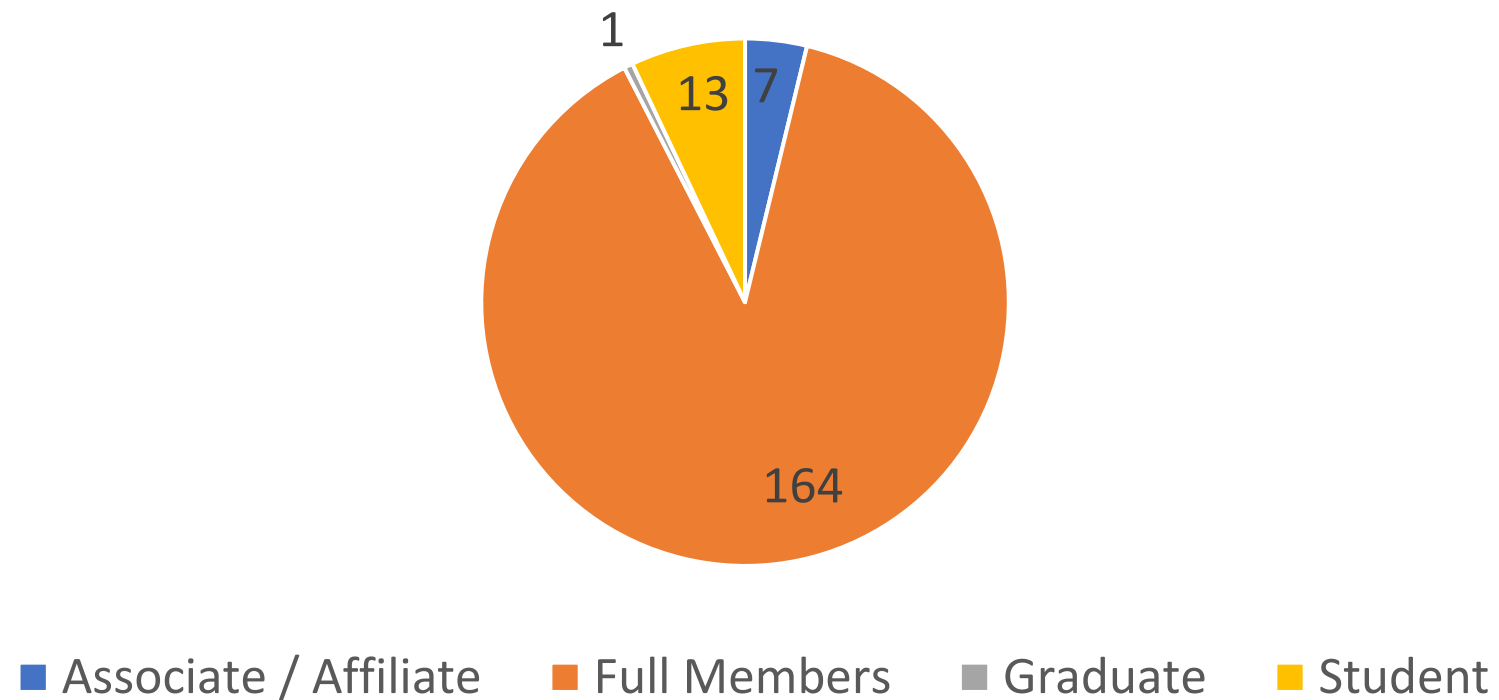


# Membership

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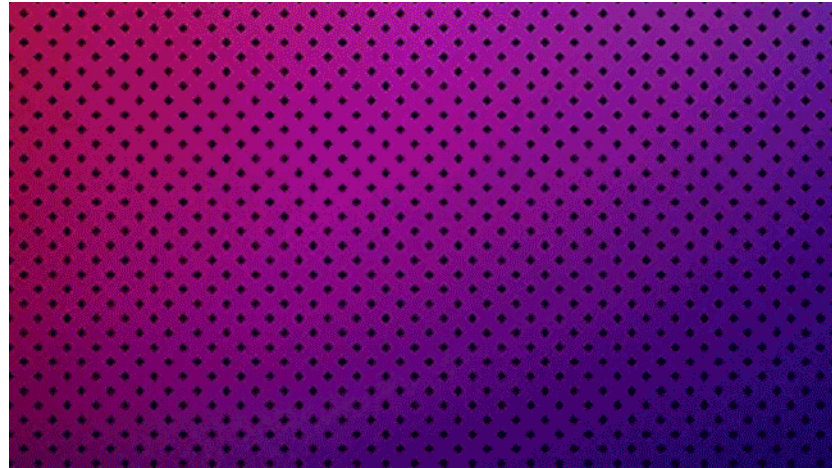
183 members this year

FSSG Members Breakdown



# Recognition

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# Treasurers Update

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- Delegate fees have been our main source of income
- No major expenses as all our study days have been online and more frequent to add value to our members.
- We continue to roll out the Advancing Practice in Food Service Dietetics Course. This has been done with the financial support of the BDA.
- First bursary towards the BDA research symposium
- 2026-27: face-to-face event, developing the supplementary guidance for children, supporting the research symposium again and more webinars



# Activity for 2026

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- Digest and supplementary guidance for children
- Conducting research to help understand patient's nutritional intakes while in hospital and to identify any barriers to reaching these
- Continuing to deliver the food service dietetic BDA approved course.
- Continuing dialogue with the BDA and other BDA specialist groups with regards to plant based menus in hospital.
- Continuing dialogue with the RCSLT and IDDSI with regards to EC coding and menus.
- Using social media to engage with our members.
- Member value – more events, webinars
- Working closer with the HCA and other professional bodies.



# Committee Update

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- Role changes
- New member welcomes



# AOB & Close

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