

## **Statement on the implementation of the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI)**

Since 2015, the RCSLT and BDA have been involved in the work on the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI).

The RCSLT and the BDA have had representatives on the IDDSI UK Expert Reference Group and we have consulted with expert advisors and the membership through surveys disseminated via member networks. The results of these surveys informed the decision by both organisations to adopt IDDSI in October 2017. The RCSLT and the BDA have provided updates via our professional magazines to members on this work.

The IDDSI website lists other organisations, including professional bodies in other countries who have also agreed to adopt IDDSI.

In terms of implementation of IDDSI, the timeline that was agreed by the multidisciplinary Expert Reference Group in September 2017 was that implementation could take place between April 2018 and April 2019. We recognise that it is a large undertaking to implement IDDSI in all local health, social care and educational settings and so the intention of setting this timeline by the Expert Reference Group was to give local implementation teams one year to prepare for and then implement the IDDSI framework.

Despite the work members are undertaking for awareness raising, training and implementation at a local level, concerns include services feeling they are not fully prepared to support implementation of the use of the new products being developed and introduced by manufacturers.

Some manufacturers are putting on transitional labels showing both the current UK national descriptors and IDDSI for a period of six months from April 2018 whilst others are transitioning to new labels in April 2018 without reference to the old ones. Furthermore, it is likely that there will be a range of products, some unmodified and some modified, being available at the same time leading to confusion and possible misuse. We are formally writing to manufacturers to raise concerns on behalf of members about the risks to patient safety as a result of their approach and timelines for introducing their new products.

In addition, we have escalated these concerns to NHS Improvement (NHSI). NHSI colleagues have agreed to disseminating information regarding the ambition to implement the IDDSI definitions and the potential risks with regard to implementation that have been highlighted through:

- Directors of Nursing
- AHP leads in provider organisations
- The NHS Improvement provider bulletin

As NHS Trusts have contracts with specific manufacturers we would also recommend that members (or the appropriate senior manager) contact the relevant companies to raise any concerns directly and work together to ensure that patients/service users continue to receive great care and are not at risk of harm. We understand that some manufacturers have written to NHS organisations and services to offer support with implementation of the use of their new products, including training.

To support approaches to the implementation of IDDSI, we would suggest that members:

- i. Join IDDSI to access the latest information, resources and training e.g. webinars  
<http://iddsi.org/>
- ii. Regularly check the RCSLT ([https://www.rcslt.org/clinical\\_resources/dysphagia/dysphagia\\_diet](https://www.rcslt.org/clinical_resources/dysphagia/dysphagia_diet)) and BDA website ([https://www.bda.uk.com/professional/practice/international\\_dysphagia\\_diet\\_standardisation\\_initiative\\_framework](https://www.bda.uk.com/professional/practice/international_dysphagia_diet_standardisation_initiative_framework)) for the latest information, FAQs, implementation schedules, training presentations and appropriate links.
- iii. Set up and attend relevant RCSLT clinical excellence network meetings (CENs) to support the sharing of best practice
- iv. Send the RCSLT and BDA examples of best practice approaches that can be added to the website to the following: [louise.borjes@rcslt.org](mailto:louise.borjes@rcslt.org) and [J.Instone@bda.uk.com](mailto:J.Instone@bda.uk.com) respectively.
- v. Raise this within your own organisation with your line manager, AHP lead, Head of Quality (or equivalent) and/or your Director of Nursing – Is there a programme plan for implementation? Who is the lead? Who are the key stakeholders?
- vi. Seek support from other colleagues in your region – working together to support implementation may be more efficient and effective.