



Team Name: Nutrition and Food Services  Team Lead: Regional Manager Nutrition and Food Services  Approved by: Regional Lead – Corporate Services & Chief Financial Officer	Reference Number: CLI.6410.SG.003  Program Area: Personal Care Home  Policy Section: General
Issue Date: October 21, 2015  Review Date: March 18, 2021  Revision Date: May 20, 2021	Subject: Significant Weight Change – Dietitian Referral

*Use of pre-printed documents: Users are to refer to the electronic version of this document located on the Southern Health-Santé Sud Health Provider Site to ensure the most current document is consulted.*

**STANDARD GUIDELINE SUBJECT:**

Significant Weight Change – Dietitian Referral

**PURPOSE:**

To provide professional staff with a procedure to identify and notify the clinical dietitian of a significant weight change for a client, resident or patient.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Current Weight** – The most recent documented weight

**Previous Weight** – Is a reference point (to previous week, month, quarter or year) to compare to current weight

**Significant Weight Change** – Can be a weight loss or a weight gain and is identified as:

- 2% in 1 week
- 5% in 1 month
- 7.5% in 3 months
- 10% in 6 months
- 10-20% in unlimited time

**IMPORTANT POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- Changes to usual body weight can be indicators of nutritional risk, particularly if weight change occurs rapidly or unintentionally, as it may reflect changes in a persons’ appetite, body composition, fluid retention, mobility changes, medications, etc.

- Weight loss/ gain (change) is a normal part of the aging process. Weight fluctuations are normal.
- The clinical dietitian will assess multiple factors to determine severity of nutritional risk and if intervention is required.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Determine significant weight change by using the following formula:
  - $\% \text{ weight Change} = \frac{\text{Current Weight} - \text{Previous Weight}}{\text{Previous Weight}} \times 100$
2. If a client, resident or patient is identified with a significant weight change, consult clinical dietitian utilizing site specific referral process.

**EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES:**

Calculator

**REFERENCES:**

Best Practice for Nutrition, Food Service and Dining in Long Term Care Homes 2013, Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition, Dietitians of Canada