

Nutritional Standards in Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

What are Nutritional Standards for Staff and Visitors?

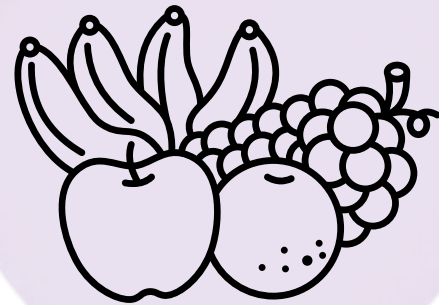
Nutritional Standards were introduced across Health and Social Care (HSC) settings to improve the nutritional quality of food and drink available to staff and visitors. These food-based standards are aligned with the Eatwell Guide and aim to make healthier choices more accessible across HSC cafés, restaurants and vending machines.

These standards were developed and reviewed by the Public Health Agency, Food Standards Agency, safefood and HSC. They form part of the wider regional obesity prevention strategy 'Healthy Futures Obesity Strategic Framework'.

What do the standards cover?



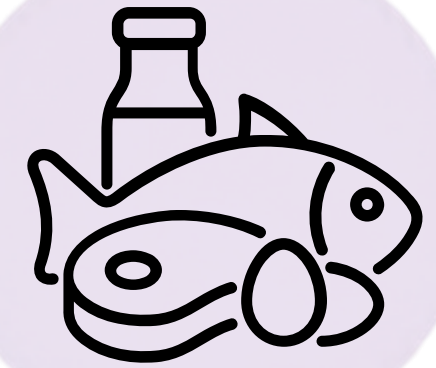
**Starchy
Carbohydrates**



Fruit & Vegetables



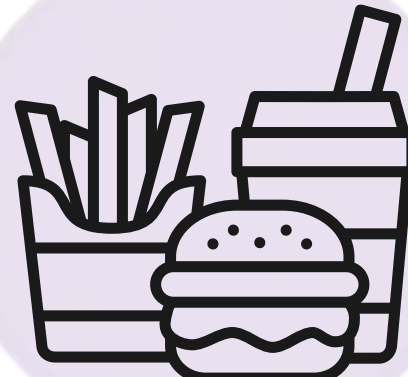
Dairy & Alternatives



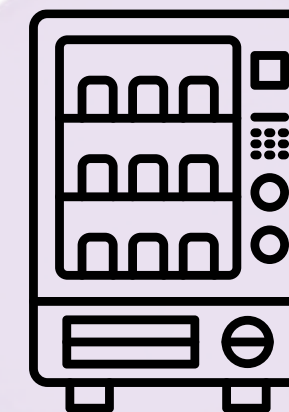
Proteins



**Oils &
Spreads**



**Foods High in
Fat/Salt/Sugar**



**Food Environment
(including vending)**

Why was change needed?



1. Our scale and opportunity



Approximately **22,000** staff.



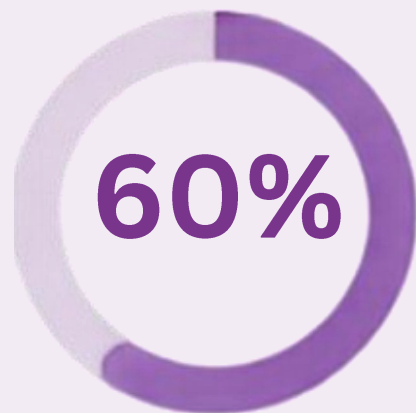
1.4 million food and drink transactions during 2025/26.



Thousands of patients, staff and visitors use Trust facilities every day



2. Why workplace food environments matter



Around **60%** of food is eaten during working hours

Source: Cowbrough & Gardner (2016), Nutrition at Work



3. National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) data shows that people in Northern Ireland consume:



Too much sugar



Too much saturated fat



Too much red and processed meat



Not enough fibre



Not enough fruit and vegetables



Not enough oily fish

Source: National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) 2017-2023: Northern Ireland Report (DoH, FSA and safefood).



4. As a major healthcare organisation, Belfast Trust recognises its opportunity and responsibility to lead by example and create a food environment that supports healthier choices and improves population health.



Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

caring supporting improving together

The Belfast Trust challenge



- **Multiple sites**



- **Diverse food outlets**



- **Complex customer base**



- **Financial pressures**

Building a partnership

The people behind the changes



Dietetics



**Nutritional Standards
Coordinator**



Catering

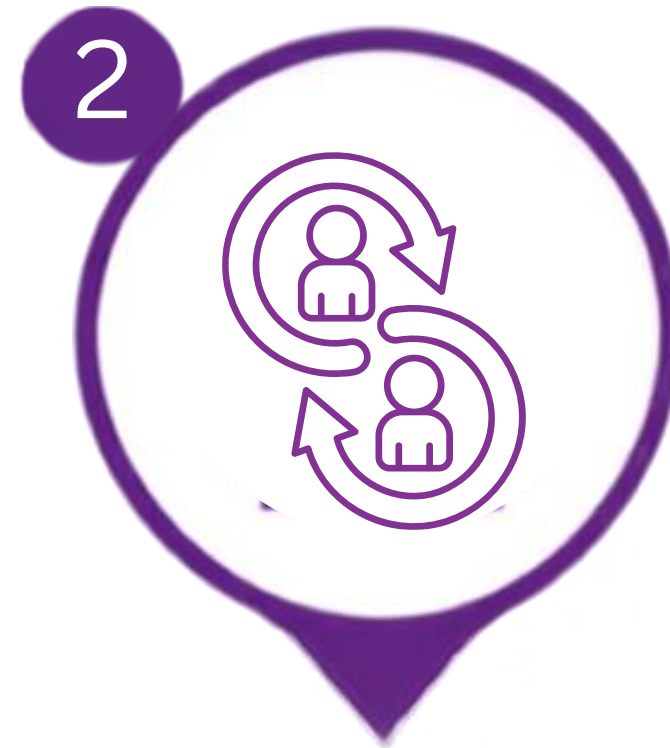


Procurement

What changed?



Transforming the Food Environment



**Partnership working
across Catering,
Dietetics and
Procurement**



**Increasing awareness of
the Nutritional
Standards and
sustaining change**

Measuring success

- Improvement in Nutritional Standards compliance



- Vending compliance

100%
**vending
compliance**

Beyond compliance



Street food stall promoting healthier choices



Leadership Video Messages



Customer Engagement



Restaurant Wall Vinyls



Healthy Eating Promotions



Healthier Food Environment



Point-of-Sale Messaging



Awareness sessions



Promotion in restaurants



Social Media Campaigns

Achievements



Successful rollout of no processed meat and fried foods on Mondays & Thursdays



Positive engagement and support from catering staff



Strengthened collaboration between catering, public health dietitians and nutritional standards coordinators



Positive feedback from staff and visitors regarding changes within catering sites



What our staff and visitors said

"If healthier options are available, I choose them."

"Readily available in building of work- avoids having to spend time on break running to the shop"

"more conscious of eating habits and food choices"

"More likely to pick overnight oats than fried breakfast"

"They promote healthy eating Monday and Thursday which is great and affordable"

"I think it is a reminder to us to choose something healthy and not just go for chips each time"

"eating better when unprepared at work."

"free fruit is v welcome and available at MIH sites"

Lessons learned

- ✓ Partnership working drives success
- ✓ Change takes time
- ✓ Healthier choices must be practical and appealing
- ✓ Communication is key

Looking forward



Continue collaboration across Catering, Dietetics and Nutritional Standards Coordinators

Maintain compliance through ongoing monitoring and engagement

Develop innovative initiatives that make healthier choices easier and more appealing

Increase availability of Nutritional Standards compliant products through collaboration with procurement