

Mmmm...What Do You Feel Like Eating For Dinner?

How To Provide Menu Selection and Appeal in Residential Healthcare

How many of you can't wait to invite friends over for a private dinner party at your facility featuring the cuisine that is served your residents? Or, ask yourself this question: If you were served the current quality of service and food in your facility at a restaurant, would you be a repeat customer?

Most answer these with a resounding "No!"

The more pressing question however, is how to bridge the gap between current traditional tray line execution and a more hospitable "restaurant" style approach. I'll answer that, but let me first paint a picture.

We all enjoy eating. Heck, we all enjoy going *out* to eat; and when we do, we clearly have an expectation. We rate performance in several areas. If we don't achieve a simple level of satisfaction in any one of these areas, our entire dining experience will be derailed.

Atmosphere: If the restaurant does not smell or look appealing, if tables and chairs are not easy to get in and out of, or if the tables have not been bussed or set properly when we sit down we know that there is an immediate problem.

Service: What happens when a server does not greet us within a couple of minutes of being seated? How about not getting a breadbasket timely? If the menu is not communicated clearly, orders are not taken correctly, or heaven forbid the server returns to the table after about 20 minutes saying "Sorry it's taking so long for your food, but we're really busy tonight", what is our experience?

Food: We all have a level of expectation when it comes to plate presentation. Now, take a second and visualize a typical plate from your facility. Appetizing? Probably not. Have you ever been served a beverage in a dark colored glass, and you couldn't tell what was in it? Would you feel like taking a drink? And how would you feel being arbitrarily served dessert at the same time your entrée came? Even as kids we're taught that we can't have dessert until we've finished a reasonable part of our dinner.

Why should we have a different standard for our residents than we do for ourselves? Dietary restrictions you say? Pureed diets? We all eat pureed foods. Pureed potatoes are called mashed; pureed avocado is called guacamole. Or, regulations you say? They won't permit you to think outside of the box. What do you do at your favorite restaurant when your food is served cold or late? You don't go back. My experience is that regulations are nothing more than highly executed common sense measures.

The *answer* is really *easy*. *Getting there* however requires an orchestrated effort and buy in from dietary, nursing, activities, and administration. And if you are anywhere near successful in pulling off enhanced dining, count marketing in too.

- 1) Nursing is key. If they think any enhancement is just a cute little dietary exercise, forget it. They are absolutely the front line of defense, no matter what level of involvement they have before, during and after the dining experience. (Just ask a nursing aid what staff member receives the most complaints about meals from the resident). Nursing must be trained in and made aware of service skills in tandem with food service execution.
- 2) When you hire dietary personnel, hire from the restaurant industry. I'm not trying to talk you into making your dietary department into a restaurant per se, but the restaurant "style" of preparation, execution and delivery are the most efficient, and flexible systems known to man.
- 3) Envision the elimination of your tray-line. Dietary aids that have a primary role of filling tray card orders are inherently inefficient labor. This costs money, time and often runs into compliance problems. They can better be utilized by having them re-trained, and executing in a restaurant style "line" format, where all menu items that are to be prepared, can be done so in an area close to the stove, grill, fryer, and refrigeration and to order.
- 4) Establish a "pantry" area. Another restaurant term here, but basically, have all beverageing, salads, desserts, and dining room support items at a convenient location in or near the dining room (and away from the "line"), and accessible to nursing and dietary simultaneously.
- 5) Treat your primary menu offering and alternate offering as equal. Offer them tableside (where the resident is able to identify a choice). It really sounds good to a resident to hear "Emily, would you like roast beef or chicken for dinner. Which one do you feel like eating?". And yes, offer at tableside, not the day before, or week before. After all, none of us are expected to know what we want for lunch tomorrow, or next week. You say your residents are unable to make choices? If they open their mouths to receive a spoon full of food, they have made a choice. At minimum, I'll bet the nurse aid that assists in feeding has a clear idea of what that particular resident would prefer to eat at mealtime.

- 6) Course your menu offerings. Start with a salad, or soup. Remove these dishes then bring the entrée. Then try a dessert tray or dessert cart to finish the meal. It's all about dignity, and at minimum good manners.
- 7) Be conscious of the dining experience. When you go out to eat it is clearly unacceptable for servers to be overheard boasting about the party they attended last night or act in any way unprofessional. Appropriate background music is a must. These folks probably don't appreciate the Rolling Stones or Garth Brooks. Aromas in the dining room are important too. More than likely the residents olfactory sensations as they come from their rooms are less than appealing, so make sure there are smells of fresh coffee, fresh baked goods, etc.

This all sounds pretty good, but what about the budget? Keep in mind that in a retail restaurant environment, efficiency is the key. That includes fiscal efficiency. When the dietary aid position becomes obsolete with the removal of the tray line, retraining in a more lean environment for a typical 200 bed facility results in about a .4 labor ppd. Great meals can be produced for between \$3.35 to \$4.00 per day. And what about food waste? House made soups, daily specials and appealing employee meal programs all help keep waste to a minimum. Accurate tracking of purchasing, production, and inventory keep the cost of goods sold within pennies of projection.

In short, we have found that you can provide a superior meal program and probably for less dietary dollars than you are spending currently. So the only question that remains is, "What do your residents feel like eating for dinner?"

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THE 20 POINTS OF SERVICE

- 1) Approach table with water pitcher (and menus if you have them)
- 2) Greet table and fill water glasses, after handing out menus, and ask what they would like to drink
- 3) Get and deliver drinks
- 4) Inform table of appetizer, soup and daily special
- 5) Take appetizer, soup and entrée order, filling out order slip with table and position numbers
- 6) Thank them before you leave the table
- 7) Take bread/rolls to the table
- 8) Serve appetizers, soups and salads
- 9) Turn in order slip to designated place in kitchen
- 10) Check table and re-beverage; ask how they are enjoying starters
- 11) Pick up order in kitchen - check order slips to make sure everyone gets correct food - and take entrees to table
- 12) Clear all starter dishes when entire table is finished, before placing entrees
- 13) Check and re-beverage; ask if there is anything else you may get the table
- 14) Remove plates and support items (anything not relative to the dessert course) after the last person is finished - take to the bus station
- 15) Ask the table if they would like dessert
- 16) Inform table of dessert choices, or give them a dessert menu
- 17) Take dessert order; ask if they would like coffee (or refill coffee)
- 18) Deliver dessert; ask if there is anything else that the table needs
- 19) Make a final table check - ask if there is anything else that you can get them. Thank the table for dining with you!
- 20) Only bus table after last person has left - QUIETLY!

Sandusky Street Manor

COST OF GOODS SOLD ANALYSIS

AMOUNT

Beginning Inventory	ADD	\$9,410.95
Merchandise Purchased	ADD	\$31,256.00
Merchandise Received\ Not Paid	ADD	\$19,900.00
Merchandise Paid\ Not Received	SUBTRACT	\$25,900.00
Ending Inventory	SUBTRACT	\$8,470.00
TOTAL COST OF GOODS SOLD (C.O.G.S.)	=	\$26,196.95

Census Days	5172
Days in Month	31
Average Daily Census	166.84

UNADJUSTED PER RESIDENT FOOD COST PER DAY **\$5.065**

NON-RESIDENT SALES

GROSS SALES @ 100% FOOD COST @ 48%

Events & Parties	\$2,200.00	\$1,056.00
Family Menbers	\$780.00	\$374.40
Medicade	\$990.00	\$475.20
Guest Trays	\$450.00	\$216.00
Administration	\$680.00	\$326.40
Public Relations & Marketing	\$2,700.00	\$1,296.00
Employee Meals	\$1,200.00	\$576.00
Activities	\$4,700.00	\$2,256.00
TOTAL MONTHLY SALES	\$10,720.00	\$5,145.60

NET EFFECT OF NON RES SALES TO COST

AMOUNT

C.O.G.S.	ADD	\$26,196.95
Cost of Monthly Sales	SUBTRACT	\$5,145.60
ADJUSTED C.O.G.S.	=	\$21,051.35

Census Days	5172
Days in Month	31
Average Daily Census	166.84

ADJUSTED PER RESIDENT FOOD COST PER DAY **\$4.070**

Sandusky Street

CAFE

☞ Lunch Menu ☞

Starters

Sandusky Street House Made Tomato Bisque

Soup Du Jour

*House Made Daily from Fresh Ingredients -
Ask for Today's Variety*

Chilled Applesauce

Fruited Gelatin Salad

Entrees

☞ *Entrees Always Served With Fresh Warm Bread and Rolls* ☞

☞ *Starch and Vegetable Substitutions are Welcome* ☞

☞ *Smaller Portions are Always Available* ☞

Gourmet Grilled Cheese

*Swiss Cheese and Tomatoes Grilled on Five-Grain Bread
Served with Steak Fries and Crisp Carrot Sticks*

Italian Sub

*Fresh Sliced Italian Meats and Cheese Served Hot on a Hoagie Roll
Served with Pasta Salad and Steamed Broccoli Spears*

Chef's Daily Special

*House Made From Seasonal Ingredients
Ask Your Server For Today's Special*

Sandusky Street CAFE

☛ Dinner Menu ☛

I Think I'll Start With...

The Cafe Salad

*Fresh Greens Tossed with Tomatoes,
Carrots and Cucumbers and
Your Choice of Dressing*

Creamy Cottage Cheese

Fresh Fruit Salad

Tonight I Feel Like...

- ☛ *Entrees Always Served With Fresh Warm Bread and Rolls* ☛
- ☛ *Starch and Vegetable Substitutions are Welcome* ☛
- ☛ *Smaller Portions are Always Available* ☛

Roast Turkey Dinner

*Tender Oven-Roasted Turkey and House Made Gravy
Served with Savory Cornbread Dressing
And Seasoned Corn*

Stuffed Peppers

*Tender Stuffed Peppers
Served with Garlic Mashed Potatoes
And Sautéed Italian Vegetables*

Chef's Daily Special

*House Made From Seasonal Ingredients
Ask Your Server For Today's Special*



Sandusky Street CAFE

🍃 Dessert Menu 🍃

Chocolate Fudge Brownie

A Chocolate Lover's Dream!

Lemon Bar

Tart Lemon Cookie Bar

Ice Cream Cup

A Variety of Flavors are Available Daily

Ask Your Server For Your Favorite

Fresh Pie of the Day

Apple, Cherry, Lemon Meringue, Boston Cream...

You'll Never Know The Flavor of the Day

Unless You Ask

A La Mode?... You Bet!

Sandusky Street Cafe - Week 1

Regular diet / Regular texture

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Choice of Juice Cream of Wheat Scrambled Eggs Bacon Wheat Toast Choice of Condiment 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Dry Cereal of Choice Poached Eggs White Toast	Choice of Juice Oatmeal Scrambled Eggs Wheat Toast Choice of Condiment 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Dry Cereal of Choice Poached Eggs White Toast	Choice of Juice Cream of Wheat Belgian Waffle Syrup Sausage Link Wheat Toast Choice of Condiment 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Dry Cereal of Choice Poached Eggs White Toast	Choice of Juice Oatmeal Scrambled Eggs Bacon English Muffin Choice of Condiment 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Dry Cereal of Choice Poached Eggs Wheat Toast White Toast	Choice of Juice Cream of Wheat Scrambled Egg & Cheese Bran Muffin Choice of Condiment 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Dry Cereal of Choice Hard Boiled Egg Wheat Toast White Toast	Choice of Juice Oatmeal Cinnamon French Toast Syrup Sausage Link Choice of Condiment 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Dry Cereal of Choice Scrambled Eggs Wheat Toast White Toast	Choice of Juice Cream of Wheat Scrambled Eggs Breakfast Ham Wheat Toast Choice of Condiment 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Dry Cereal of Choice Hard Boiled Egg White Toast
French Onion Soup Grilled Swiss & Tomato Steak Fries Baby Carrots Summer Fruit Salad Choice of Condiment Choice of Beverage -- -- Submarine Sandwich Seasoned Broccoli	Choice of Appetizers French Dip Sandwich Oven Baked Fries Ice Cream Sundae Choice of Condiment Choice of Beverage -- -- Tuna Salad Sandwich Seasoned Green Peas	Choice of Appetizers Chili/Cheese HotDog/Bun Oatmeal Cookies Fresh Fruit Cup Choice of Condiment Choice of Beverage -- -- Chicken Salad Sandwich Parsley Cauliflower Chilled Pear Halves	Choice of Appetizers Hamburger on Bun Sandwich Fixin's Vanilla Pudding Choice of Condiment Choice of Beverage -- -- Seafood Slid Wrap Peas & Carrots	Choice of Appetizers Beef Soft Tacos Fresh Fruit Cup Choice of Condiment Choice of Beverage -- -- Ham & Cheese Sandwich Seasoned Zucchini	Chicken Noodle Soup BBQ Chicken on Bun Baked Potato Half Savory Carrots Fresh Pineapple Choice of Condiment Choice of Beverage -- -- Egg Salad Sandwich Seasoned Broccoli	Creamy Tomato Soup Hot Turkey Sandwich Mashed Potatoes Winter Fruit Cup Choice of Condiment Choice of Beverage -- -- Pizza Caesar Salad Winter Squash
Choice of Appetizers Roast Turkey Poultry Gravy Cornbread Dressing Whole Kernel Corn White Roll Choice of Condiment Key Lime Pie 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Stuffed Bell Pepper Garlic Mashed Potato Italian Mix Vegetables	Choice of Appetizers Honey Roast Pork Chop Brown Gravy Mashed Potatoes Seasoned Mix Vegetable Garlic Toast Choice of Condiment Peaches & Cream 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Parmesan Chicken Marsh Sweet Potatoes White Roll	Choice of Appetizers Beef Stroganoff Noodles Broccoli Casserole White Roll Choice of Condiment White Cake Choc Icing 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Fried Fish Hmd Herbed Potatoes Baby Carrots	Choice of Appetizers Liver & Onions Mashed Potatoes Glazed Orange Beets White Roll Choice of Condiment Fresh Fruit Cup 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Roast Pork Loin Pork Gravy White & Wild Rice Garden Mix Veges	Choice of Appetizers Beef Stew Herbed Potatoes Seasoned Green Peas White Roll Choice of Condiment Peaches 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Herbed Chicken Breast Noodles Seasoned Green Beans	Choice of Appetizers Baked Pollock Rice Pilaf Seasoned Spinach White Roll Choice of Condiment Pound Cake 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Steak & Mushroom Sauce Au Gratin Potatoes Creamstyle Corn	Choice of Appetizers Spagetti & Meat Sauce Seasoned Green Beans Garlic Toast Choice of Condiment Iced Chocolate Cake 2% Milk Choice of Beverage -- -- Herbed Chicken Breast Fluffy Rice Seas Brussels Sprouts White Roll Gelatin

Menu Cost Summary

Regular / Regular

Day	Breakfast \$/Meal	Lunch \$/Meal	Dinner \$/Meal	Total Day Cost
WK1 - Monday	\$0.721	\$1.548	\$2.217	\$4.485
WK1 - Tuesday	\$0.543	\$1.493	\$2.496	\$4.531
WK1 - Wednesday	\$0.876	\$1.411	\$2.258	\$4.544
WK1 - Thursday	\$0.816	\$1.444	\$1.473	\$3.733
WK1 - Friday	\$0.657	\$1.475	\$1.926	\$4.057
WK1 - Saturday	\$0.703	\$1.752	\$1.592	\$4.046
WK1 - Sunday	\$0.823	\$0.801	\$1.447	\$3.069
WK1 Average Cost	\$0.74	\$1.42	\$1.92	\$4.07
Total Average Cost	\$0.74	\$1.42	\$1.92	\$4.07