Family & Community Services
Ageing, Disability & Home Care

Clinical Reasoning
for Peter's positioning at mealtimes

Date: 09.02.2016

Person's name: Peter Pumpkin **Date of birth:** 02.022.1982

Person's address: The Pumpkin Patch, Pumpkinville.

Therapist conducting risk assessment: Maureen Moresome (Speech Pathologist)
Cathleen Caters (Occupational Therapist)

Goals of mealtime situation:

- Peter is sitting in a safe, stable, upright position.
- Peter has a head-forward posture so his airways are not opened.
- Peter does not fatigue throughout his meal.
- Peter is at minimal risk of penetration +/- aspiration

OPTION 1:

Mealtime position description: Peter is sitting upright in his wheelchair during mealtimes.

ARTG number *(if applicable)*:

Does the strategy meet the above goals?

- Yes – constant repositioning would ensure Peter is sitting upright and in a safe position.
- Yes – when sitting correctly in his wheelchair, Peter has a good, head-forward posture.
- Yes – good postural support means that Peter does not need to work hard to maintain his position. He is less likely to fatigue.
- Yes – Peter is at minimal risk of penetration +/- aspiration when he is positioned safely in his wheelchair.

Potential benefits for this person with this specific strategy:

- Peter is upright and safe for eating and drinking.

- His head and pelvis are in a good position for eating and drinking.
- Peter is at minimal risk of penetration +/- aspiration when sitting safely in his wheelchair.

Potential risks for this person with this specific strategy:

- It is not possible to ensure Peter remains upright without repositioning him.
- It is not practical to ask staff to continually reposition Peter using the hoist every 5 minutes throughout mealtimes.

Benefits outweigh risks Y/N *(consider general benefits listed above and specific benefits versus potential risks)*.

Currently, this strategy is not feasible for Peter as his wheelchair needs to be reviewed. Caitlin Davis (OT) is in the process of completing this review.

OPTION 2:

Mealtime position description: Peter is tilted back in his wheelchair to be repositioned during mealtimes. This involves a 2-person lift to slide him back up into an appropriate position.

ARTG number *(if applicable)*:

Does the strategy meet the above goals?

- No – when Peter is in tilt, his stability increases, but he is not upright.
- No – when Peter is in tilt, his head falls back and his airways open.
- Yes – gravity supports Peter while he is in tilt. This increase in support means that Peter is less likely to fatigue.
- No – when Peter is tilted back, his head falls back and his airways open. When Peter eats and drinks, he presents with moderate oral residue-post swallow. He also presents with limited oral awareness and poor saliva control. Peter is at a high risk (EDACS IV) of penetration +/- aspiration, especially when he is in tilt.

Potential benefits for this person with this specific strategy:

- Peter is continually being repositioned to be in an optimum position for eating and drinking.

Potential risks for this person with this specific strategy:

- Peter's airways are open when he is in tilt. He is at an extremely high risk of penetration +/- aspiration.
- Peter cannot maintain a head-forward posture when in tilt. He is at an extremely high risk of penetration +/- aspiration.

Benefits outweigh risks Y/N *(consider general benefits listed above and specific benefits versus potential risks)*.

- No. Peter is at an extremely high risk of penetration +/- aspiration. This risk increases significantly when he is put into tilt to be repositioned.

OPTION 3:

Mealtime position description: Peter is not repositioned during mealtimes. He slides down in his wheelchair, and his armpits hang off his thoracics. His pelvis is forward, and his lap belt is tight on his stomach.

ARTG number *(if applicable)*:

Does the mealtime position meet the above goals?

- No – Peter is not sitting in a safe, stable, upright position for mealtimes. He is uncomfortable, and increased pressure on his stomach may exacerbate his reflux.
- Yes – when he has slipped down in his wheelchair, Peter does have a head-forward posture.
- No – Peter fatigues throughout his meal. He is struggling to remain upright in his seating system.
- Yes and No – Peter's head-forward posture protects Peter's airways. However, Peter is at risk of penetration +/- aspiration of his reflux.

Potential benefits:

- Peter maintains a head-forward posture, protecting his airways.

Potential risks:

- Peter is at risk of exacerbating his reflux, and aspirating on same.
- Peter fatigues throughout his meal, increasing his risk of penetration +/- aspiration due to tiredness.

Benefits outweigh risks Y/N *(consider general benefits listed above and specific benefits versus potential risks)*.

Yes. Peter is possibly uncomfortable, but penetration +/- aspiration is less likely with his head-forward posture in this position than it is in the tilted position.

MEALTIME POSITION CHOSEN (*state reason(s) why*):

Option 3 – Peter is not repositioned during mealtimes. This is the safest option for Peter to decrease his immediate risk of aspiration. However, we acknowledge that this position is not optimal for Peter for the following reasons:

- He is not comfortable.
- He is not stable.
- His pelvis is not back in his chair, and he is hanging off the thoracics.
- He has increased pressure on his stomach may exacerbate his reflux.

This is an interim measure. We are currently working to address Peter's seating and positioning needs throughout the day and for mealtimes.

Therapist Signature:

Name:	Maureen Moresome	**Name:**	Cathleen Caters
Position:	Speech Pathologist	**Position:**	Occupational Therapist
Date:	09.02.2016	**Date:**	09.02.2016