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## COMMUNITY TUBE WEANING PROGRAM

We are a community based, therapist led feeding team. We do not offer 'quick-fixes', but work holistically with children and their families to establish long term, sustainable, healthy eating patterns.

### ASSESSMENT / DIAGNOSTIC PHASE

The evaluation involves assessment by all members of the feeding team (Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist and Dietician). The assessment can take place in our clinic, or at your home. The team will observe a typical family meal and evaluate motor, oral, behavioural / learning, medical, sensory and nutritional factors. Following the assessment, the team will determine whether your child is suitable for tube weaning.

### TUBE WEANING PHASE

As a community based programme, we do not use the starvation method of tube weaning. Tube feeds are reduced down by 100 kcal per month initially, although this may be speeded up as oral feeding becomes established. To ensure long term success, our team takes a holistic approach to tube-weaning; alongside facilitating appetite for oral feeds, our programme aims to reduce anxiety at mealtimes and promote enjoyable family mealtime experiences.

#### ***What will the Feeding Team do?***

- The Speech & Language Therapist will initially work with your child to develop essential pre-feeding skills, working towards age-appropriate oro-motor skills (such as chewing).
- The dietician will work with you to provide strategies that will promote your child's appetite and willingness to eat. They will also ensure your child's nutritional and hydrational needs are being met during the tube weaning process.
- The Occupational Therapist will work with you and your child to reduce food aversion and sensory sensitivity.

#### **Treatment Goals:**

1. The NG tube / gastrostomy will be removed.
2. Your child will be able to meet nutritional requirements via oral feeds.
3. Your child will be able to take adequate amounts of fluids, in order to sustain hydration and to support growth.

### FOLLOW UP PHASE

Following the removal of the NG tube / gastrostomy, your child may require on-going advice or therapy to facilitate the oro-motor skills required for eating age-appropriate foods. They may also require on-going advice from the team to help broaden the range of foods accepted.

#### ***Why is this?***

Although your child will have successfully established oral feeding, they may still have quite a limited diet or delayed oro-motor development due to lack of experience.