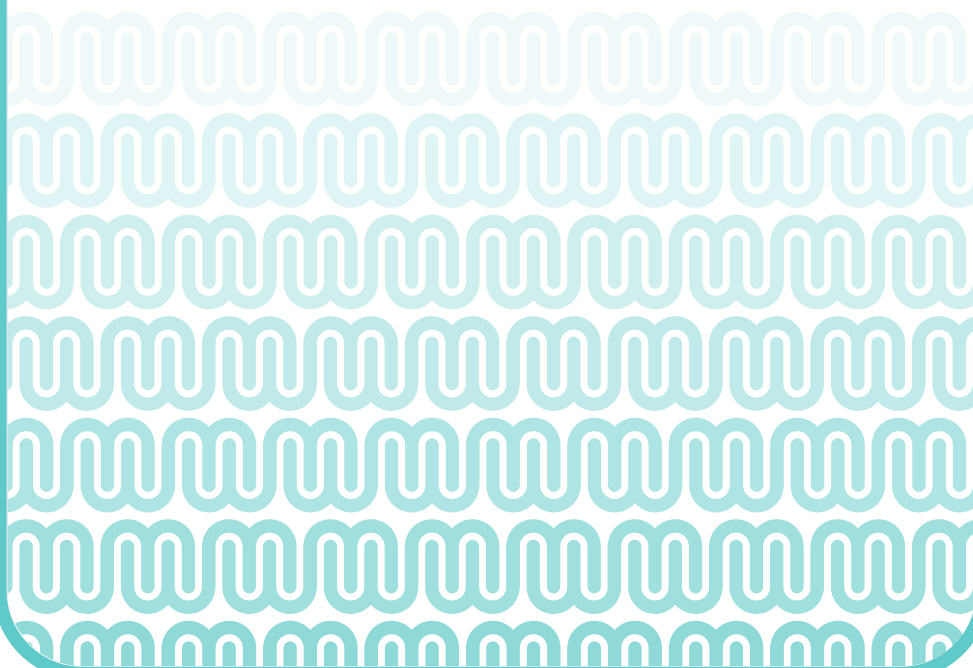




mental welfare
commission for scotland

Easy read

What is nutrition by artificial means?





What is nutrition by artificial means?

Sometimes your health might be at risk because you have an eating disorder or mental illness and you are not getting enough nutrition.

Nutrition means getting enough food to stay healthy.



Your doctor might decide to give you nutrition by artificial means.

Rules in the Mental Health Act say that a doctor can do this when it is for your own good.

Doctors may want to feed you this way to help you get better.



How is nutrition by artificial means given to someone?

Nutrition by artificial means can include:



Nasogastric feeding tube – where a thin, bendy tube is gently put into your nose, down the back of the throat and into your stomach.



A PEG tube – a bendy feeding tube is placed through your skin and into your stomach.



Intravenous drip – a short, small plastic tube that is put into your vein using a needle.



These may be used by your doctor:

- to treat you for an eating disorder
- or if you do not want to eat because you have a mental illness.



The doctor will be as careful as possible but it can be unpleasant to have these treatments.

They will do them as quickly and gently as possible.



The law says that force can be used if you need treatment and there is no other way to do it. Staff should use a small amount of force for a very short time.



Hydration by artificial means is giving you fluid though a tube to save your life.

This does not give you nutrition.



If I am given nutrition by artificial means, what will happen?

Your staff team will talk about this decision with you. They will tell you why the treatment is needed.



You must be treated in a place where staff know a lot about their work and have a lot of experience.



Your family or other important people in your life should be involved in making decisions about your care.



Staff must check the treatment is working well and if it is right to keep treating you in this way.



What if you do not agree to nutrition by artificial means?

If you do not agree to have this treatment it can only be used if you are at risk and there is no other way to treat you.



If you do not agree and the doctor feels it is necessary, they ask for a second opinion from the Mental Welfare Commission.



If the second opinion doctor agrees that you need the treatment to help you get better, then the treatment can be given even if you do not want it.

Sometimes this second opinion doctor is called a designated medical practitioner, or DMP for short.



What are my rights if I get nutrition by artificial means?

You have the right to get support from an advocate.



An advocate can help you say what you think and what you are worried about.

The nurses or doctors can give you information about your local advocacy service.



If you are detained in hospital you have the right to a named person.

Sometimes being detained is called being sectioned.



You can choose who your named person is.

It should be someone who knows you well and who you trust.



A named person can help you make important decisions if you are not able to decide by yourself.

They must be told about your treatment and asked what they think.



If you are under 16, you cannot choose who your named person is.

Your parent or the person who looks after you will be your named person.



The second opinion doctor must talk to your named person if they can, before agreeing you can be given nutrition by artificial means.



Your named person can also ask for copies of medical information given to you.

This includes information about treatment your advance statement says you did not want.

There is more information in our advance statement guide.



What does the Mental Welfare Commission do?

It is the Mental Welfare Commission's job to make sure that the law is used properly to look after people.

We make sure people's rights are protected.

The Commission is independent.

This means it does not work for another organisation.



We give advice to the Scottish Parliament about making things better for people with mental health problems, learning disabilities, dementia and other related conditions.



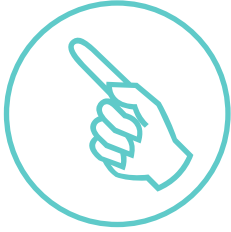
We visit people in hospitals, care homes and at home to make sure their rights are being respected and they are getting proper care and treatment.



If we think someone is not getting the right care and treatment we can look into it. Most of the time we do this by talking or writing to people.



Sometimes if things have gone badly wrong we look into it to make sure things change and to stop it happening again.



We use what we learn to help services and government policies to change and be better.



We give advice on the laws that affect people with mental health problems, learning disabilities, dementia and other related conditions.



We check how services use the laws.

We tell people what is working well.

We have guidance to help professionals, people who use services, families and carers.



Get in touch with us

You can talk to us confidentially.

This means we will not tell anyone what you have said:

- unless we are worried about your safety or the safety of other people.
- unless we have asked you.



Call Freephone:

0800 389 6809

email:

mwc.enquiries@nhs.scot



Write to:

Mental Welfare Commission
for Scotland,
Thistle House,
91 Haymarket Terrace,
Edinburgh EH12 5HE



Do you use British Sign
Language?

You can use the
ContactScotland online
interpreting service.



You can find out more
about the Mental Welfare
Commission and our work at:
www.mwcscot.org.uk