



# INPATIENT FEEDING PROGRAM

The Inpatient Feeding Program at Franciscan Children's is designed to help each infant or child improve oral motor and feeding skills to the fullest extent possible.

## Program Goals

Following a referral from the physician and a review of the patient's history, pediatric feeding specialists establish a treatment plan to provide strategies and recommendations.

Goals may include:

- Facilitating prefeeding skills for children who are not eating by mouth
- Improving tolerance to oral stimulation prior to the initiation of oral feeding
- Initiating oral feedings following medical clearance
- Improving the quality and safety of oral feeding, including an on-site video swallowing study if needed
- Reducing dependence on g-tube or ng-tube feedings
- Increasing oral intake of food and/or liquids
- Maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration
- Modifying the environment to provide an optimal mealtime experience
- Providing adaptive feeding equipment
- Teaching feeding techniques to caregivers
- Providing recommendations and support for the transition to a home setting

## Program Description

Upon admission, each child is evaluated by the inpatient medical team. During this initial evaluation, the feeding plan from the referring facility is continued. Consults are then sent to the appropriate disciplines to assess the child. Following the assessment, a detailed treatment plan and multidisciplinary team are developed. Specialists on that team may include a Registered Dietitian, Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational and Physical Therapist, Behavioral Psychologist, Social Worker, Nurse, Medical Provider and/or Respiratory Therapist.



Caregivers are considered an important member of the team and are encouraged to observe and participate in therapeutic feeding sessions as frequently as possible. Family education and participation is integral to the success of the program. Mealtimes are a wonderful opportunity for caregivers to interact with their children and learn from the therapists. Progress is discussed at weekly medical rounds, and feeding plans are modified as often as necessary to reflect the changing needs of each child.

### A Plan for Success

Discharge planning is a focus from the time of admission. The length of stay for a patient in the feeding program is determined by the patient's progress toward the goals as well as medical status and discharge needs. A Discharge Planner helps to obtain any specialized feeding equipment, formulas, outpatient feeding therapy and any other services needed for transition home.



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### Franciscan Children's

Since 1949, Franciscan Children's has pioneered clinical, therapeutic and educational programs for children with a variety of disabilities. Through the years, as one of the nation's largest pediatric rehabilitation hospitals, we have expanded our complement of programs and services for children with special health care needs, as well as for children from the local community. Our continuum of care includes inpatient, residential, educational, surgical, outpatient and home care programs, a combination of services for children that is hard to find anywhere else.

### Contact Us

For more information contact Inpatient Admissions at Franciscan Children's at **617-254-3800 ext 2600**.

At Franciscan Children's, we bring an unparalleled level of expertise to children with complex medical, mental health and educational needs so they can receive specialized care in a compassionate and positive environment. We share an unwavering commitment to excellence, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential and live their best life.

