

Mealtime Management and Choking Risk: Two Regulators Wrote the Standards and the Word 'Choking' Appears Once

Programme descriptor

Programme	Mealtime Management and Choking Risk (OBA-MMC-2026)
Version	1.0, issued 28/09/2026. Review due 28/03/2027.
CPD	7.5 hours, MEASURED from the content
For	Nurses, support workers and team leaders in disability and aged care

READ THIS BEFORE THE TITLE

The title states a count. THE COUNT IS NOT PERMISSION TO SKIP CHOKING RESPONSE TRAINING. The NDIS standard requires every worker to understand the steps to take if a safety incident occurs during a meal and how to seek help, and the Practice Alert requires staff to know when to call an ambulance. The technique belongs to a CURRENT FIRST AID CERTIFICATE and to the person's own plan.

The finding this programme is built on

Counted directly from the two published documents on 28/09/2026 - the NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators V4 (November 2021, 45 pages, 14,349 words) and the ACQSC guidance material for strengthened Aged Care Quality Standard 6 (31 pages, 9,764 words) - and counted a second time from the extracted text, case-insensitively and on stems.

THE FINDING

TWO AUSTRALIAN REGULATORS WROTE MEALTIME STANDARDS, AND ONE OF THEM WROTE ITS STANDARD BECAUSE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY WERE DYING OF CHOKING AND ASPIRATION. Across seventy-six pages, 'CHOKING' APPEARS ONCE. 'Dysphagia' appears ZERO times in the aged care standard. 'IDDSI' appears ZERO times in either. And NEITHER CONTAINS A SINGLE CHOKING TECHNIQUE - first aid, CPR, back blows, chest thrusts and the Heimlich manoeuvre are zero in both. What they say instead is DINING EXPERIENCE 54 times and ENJOY 24 times.

AND THE SENTENCE THAT TRAVELS WITH IT, EVERY TIME

- AND HERE IS THE SENTENCE THAT TRAVELS WITH THAT COUNT, EVERY TIME IT IS SAID

OUT LOUD. THIS IS NOT PERMISSION TO SKIP CHOKING RESPONSE TRAINING, AND IT IS NOT A CLAIM THAT CHOKING DOES NOT MATTER. The NDIS standard explicitly requires every worker to understand 'the steps to take if safety incidents occur during meals, such as coughing or choking on food or fluids' and 'how to seek help'. The Practice Alert requires staff to know how to respond and WHEN TO CALL AN AMBULANCE. The technique belongs to a CURRENT FIRST AID CERTIFICATE and to THE PERSON'S OWN MEALTIME MANAGEMENT PLAN - not to a Practice Standard, and not to this programme.

- What the count actually shows is WHERE THE REGULATORS PUT THE WEIGHT: on the twenty minutes before the meal rather than the ninety seconds after it. Assessment, texture, positioning, pace, supervision, the plan and the review are what the standards regulate, because that is what prevents the event. A service whose entire mealtime safety programme is a first aid refresher has trained for the ninety seconds and left the twenty minutes unmanaged.

The two counts, side by side

NDIS Practice Standards V4 - 45 pages, 14,349 words

Term	Occurrences
mealtime	21
dysphagia	12
enjoyable	3
enjoy	3
texture	3
swallowing	3
nutritious	2
annually	2
choking	1
choke	0
aspiration	0
first aid	0
CPR / resuscitation	0
back blow / chest thrust / Heimlich	0 each
IDDSI	0
thickened	0
speech pathologist	0
dietitian	0

ACQSC Standard 6 guidance - 31 pages, 9,764 words

Term	Occurrences
dining experience	54
enjoy	21
modified	12
dietitian	11
texture	10
appetising	9
malnutrition	7
weight loss	5
swallow	3
speech pathologist	1
choke	1
choking	0
dysphagia	0
IDDSI	0

What you will be able to do

Module 00 - Orientation: Two Regulators, Seventy-Six Pages, and One Mention of Choking (24 min)

Two Australian regulators wrote mealtime standards, and one of them wrote its standard because people with disability were dying of choking and aspiration. Across seventy-six pages the word 'choking' appears once, 'IDDSI' appears not at all, and neither document contains a single choking technique. This module states the count, states the sentence that must always travel with it, and shows what the regulators put in the space instead.

- State the count across both documents, and say where each number comes from
- State the counterweight in your own words, without being prompted
- Explain why the standards regulate the twenty minutes before rather than the ninety seconds after
- Say what a Practice Standard is and is not, and where a choking technique actually comes from

Module 01 - Where the Obligation Is: Two Schemes, Two Standards, Two Thresholds (22 min)

Three separate instruments govern mealtimes in Australian disability and aged care, and they do not overlap the way people assume. The NDIS has TWO standards with two different thresholds; aged care has one standard with four outcomes and it applies only to residential care. This module puts each one where it belongs and reads the outcome statements in their own words.

- Name the three instruments and say which scheme and which providers each one binds
- Quote the Mealtime Management outcome, and explain why its last requirement is surprising
- Distinguish Mealtime Management from Severe Dysphagia Management, and state what changes
- Say which aged care providers Standard 6 applies to, and name its four outcomes

Module 02 - Dysphagia: What It Is, and the Fourteen Signs the Commission Lists (26 min)

Dysphagia is the medical term for any difficulty with swallowing, and the NDIS Commission's Practice Alert lists fourteen signs of it. Most are quiet: a gurgly voice, a meal running past thirty minutes, an avoided food, weight coming off slowly. This module works the whole list, because the person who sees these signs first is whoever is in the room rather than whoever wrote the plan.

- Define dysphagia in the Commission's own words
- List the fourteen signs, and say which you are most likely to see first
- Explain why aspiration pneumonia and choking are named together
- Describe the conditions dysphagia is associated with without treating the list as exhaustive

Module 03 - Who Assesses, Who Plans, Who Reviews - and Why None of Them Is You (22 min)

Mealtime management involves a speech pathologist, a dietitian, a prescriber, a provider, a worker and the person themselves. The parts are not interchangeable. This module sets out who

does what - and makes the case that the worker's part, which looks like the smallest, is the one everything else depends on.

- Name the six roles and state what each one does
- Say who assesses swallowing, who writes the plan, and who specifies the review
- Explain what a dietitian contributes and why texture modification needs one
- State what is NOT a worker's to do, and why each exclusion exists

Module 04 - The IDDSI Framework: Eight Levels, and the Two That Have Two Names (30 min)

The IDDSI framework runs 0 to 7. Drinks occupy 0 to 4, foods occupy 3 to 7, and at levels 3 and 4 a single number carries two different names depending on whether you are holding a drink or a food. Level 7 has two variants that are not the same thing. This module gives you the map - and is explicit that it gives you no test criterion at all, because the detailed definitions document could not be retrieved for this build.

- Name all eight IDDSI levels and say which apply to drinks, foods, or both
- Explain why 'Level 4' written on a whiteboard is ambiguous
- Distinguish the two Level 7 variants and say why the difference matters
- State why this programme gives no test criterion, and what to use instead

Module 05 - The Mealtime Management Plan: What Is In It, and How to Read One (26 min)

The mealtime management plan is the only document that governs what happens at an actual meal, and no course can supply it. This module sets out what the Practice Alert says goes in one, how to read it before rather than during a meal, and the three things to have in your head before you sit down.

- List what a mealtime management plan may contain, per the Practice Alert
- Read a plan for the three things that change what you do in the next twenty minutes
- Say who develops the plan, who contributes, and who sets the review
- Explain why the plan must be readable by the person delivering the meal

Module 06 - Positioning, Pace and the Environment: The Twenty Minutes Before (24 min)

The NDIS standard requires an assessment of seating and positioning, and meals prepared in an environment and manner that meets the person's needs. Aged care Standard 6 gives the dining experience an entire outcome and says the phrase fifty-four times. This module is about the twenty minutes before a meal - which is where both regulators put the weight and where a busy shift takes its shortcuts.

- Run a six-point check before a meal starts
- Explain why positioning is in the standard's assessment requirement
- Describe what pace means in practice, and why it is the first thing to slip
- Say why the dining environment is a safety matter and not a comfort matter

Module 07 - Supervision and Observation: The Thirty-Minute Meal, and the Gurgly Voice (22 min)

The Practice Alert requires trained staff to be available to MONITOR people with dysphagia during mealtimes. That word carries more than it looks like. This module is about what supervision actually means when a plan specifies it, what you are watching for, and the two observations that are almost never recorded.

- Say what 'supervised at meals' requires in practice
- Describe what you are watching for during a meal, in order of likelihood
- Time a meal and say why that single number matters
- Recognise a wet or gurgly voice and know what to do about it

Module 08 - When Something Goes Wrong: The Steps, the Escalation, and the Line This Programme Will Not Cross (26 min)

The NDIS standard requires every worker to understand the steps to take if a safety incident occurs during a meal and how to seek help. The Practice Alert requires staff to know how to respond and when to call an ambulance. Neither document contains a technique - and neither does this module. This is about what you must have, what the plan says, and what happens afterwards.

- State what the standard requires a worker to understand about safety incidents
- Say where a choking technique comes from and why it is not taught here
- Explain the difference between a cough, a partial obstruction and a complete one - as observations, not as a procedure
- Describe what happens after an incident, every time

Module 09 - Records, Incidents and Review: Annually, or Sooner If Difficulty Is Observed (22 min)

The NDIS standard states a review interval in its own words: annually, or per the practitioner's advice, or more frequently if difficulty is observed. Three triggers, and the third has no date attached - it fires only when somebody at a meal notices something and says so. This module is about what gets recorded, what almost never does, and how a review actually starts.

- State the three review triggers, and say which one depends on a person noticing
- List what should be recorded at and about a meal
- Explain why a cough and a meal duration are the two least-recorded observations
- Describe how to request a plan review, and what to put in the request

Module 10 - What Is Not Yours: The Assessment, the Level, the Plan and the Technique (24 min)

The closing module draws the lines. Four things are not a worker's to do and each exclusion has a reason. Eight things are, and they are the ones everything else depends on. And the count this programme opened with gets its qualification stated one final time, because a participant who leaves believing choking does not matter is the one genuinely dangerous outcome this programme can produce.

- State what is not yours, and give the reason for each
- State what is yours, and why noticing is the part everything depends on
- Repeat the count and its counterweight together, without prompting
- Name the nine sources this programme did not read and say where to get each

How it is assessed

Summative assessment	60 items, 80% to pass, 2 attempts. Every item answerable from the programme.
Knowledge checks	One per module, formative, no attempt limit, rationale on every option including the wrong ones.
Case studies	Constructed. Nobody is named and no service is real.
Certificate	7.5 CPD hours on completion.

How the CPD figure was measured

	Measured
Module 00 - Orientation: Two Regulators, Seventy-Six Pages, and One Mention of Choking	24 min
Module 01 - Where the Obligation Is: Two Schemes, Two Standards, Two Thresholds	22 min
Module 02 - Dysphagia: What It Is, and the Fourteen Signs the Commission Lists	26 min
Module 03 - Who Assesses, Who Plans, Who Reviews - and Why None of Them Is You	22 min
Module 04 - The IDDSI Framework: Eight Levels, and the Two That Have Two Names	30 min
Module 05 - The Mealtime Management Plan: What Is In It, and How to Read One	26 min
Module 06 - Positioning, Pace and the Environment: The Twenty Minutes Before	24 min
Module 07 - Supervision and Observation: The Thirty-Minute Meal, and the Gurgly Voice	22 min
Module 08 - When Something Goes Wrong: The Steps, the Escalation, and the Line This Programme Will Not Cross	26 min
Module 09 - Records, Incidents and Review: Annually, or Sooner If Difficulty Is Observed	22 min
Module 10 - What Is Not Yours: The Assessment, the Level, the Plan and the Technique	24 min
Programme reading	92 min
Case study assessment	34 min
Summative assessment	52 min
TOTAL	446 min = 7.43 hours
CLAIMABLE	7.5 CPD hours

ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST HALF HOUR, INCLUDING DOWNWARDS

446 minutes is 7.43 hours, which rounds to 7.5. The figure is DERIVED, not chosen - which is the whole reason it can be checked. If a higher figure is wanted, the answer is to add content, never to change the number.

What this programme will not do

	Why
ANY CHOKING TECHNIQUE - back blows, chest thrusts, abdominal thrusts, the Heimlich manoeuvre, or a sequence for a conscious or unconscious person	THE PRIMARY ONE. Techniques are taught, practised on a manikin and assessed in an accredited first aid course. A technique learned from a slide and never rehearsed is not a skill.
ANY IDDSI TEST CRITERION - a flow-test millilitre value, a particle-size millimetre limit, or a fork-drip, spoon-tilt, fork-pressure, chopstick or finger test description	The V2.2 detailed definitions document could not be retrieved for this build. Quoting the numbers second hand is the exact error the framework exists to prevent.
THE COUNT PRESENTED AS MEANING CHOKING DOES NOT MATTER, or as permission to skip first aid	The standards require workers to know the steps and how to seek help, and the Practice Alert requires them to know when to call an ambulance. The count is about where the regulators put the weight, not about whether the event is serious.
ASSIGNING, CHANGING OR CONFIRMING AN IDDSI LEVEL FOR ANY PERSON	The level is prescribed by a practitioner after an assessment.
ADVICE TO MODIFY A TEXTURE, THICKEN A DRINK, OR DEPART FROM A PLAN ON A WORKER'S JUDGEMENT	The plan is a clinical prescription. Departing from it is a clinical decision nobody at the bench is authorised to make.
A STATEMENT THAT ANY NAMED MEDICINE CAUSES DYSPHAGIA	The medications alert was not read. The dysphagia alert's own general words about epilepsy and mental health medications are the limit.
A DIAGNOSIS OF DYSPHAGIA, OR A SWALLOWING ASSESSMENT PERFORMED BY A WORKER	Assessment is a speech pathologist's. Noticing a sign and reporting it is the worker's part, and it is the part that starts everything.
ANY REPORTABLE INCIDENT OR SIRS TIMEFRAME, CATEGORY OR THRESHOLD	Those rules were not read for this build.
A VERDICT ON WHETHER ANY PROVIDER, PLAN OR SERVICE COMPLIES WITH ANYTHING	This is professional development, not a compliance sign-off.
A NAMED INDIVIDUAL, REAL SERVICE OR REAL PARTICIPANT IN ANY SCENARIO	Every scenario is constructed and nobody is named.

And the nine sources it did not read

Not read	Why	What follows
IDDSI V2.2 Detailed Definitions and Testing Methods	iddsi.org returns 403 to automated retrieval; the document endpoint 404s	So NO flow-test millilitre values, NO particle-size millimetre limits, and NO test criteria are stated anywhere in this programme. Use the current IDDSI testing card.
Trollor and Salomon (2019), scoping review of deaths of people with disability	Cited by the Practice Alert; not read	The review that produced the practice standards. Its findings are not quoted here.
NDIS Practice Alert: Medications associated with swallowing problems	Cross-referenced by the dysphagia alert; not read	So this programme names NO individual medicine, only the alert's own words about epilepsy and mental health medications.
Speech Pathology Australia Dysphagia Clinical Guideline	In the alert's references; not read	The professional guideline behind the assessment. Named, not

		quoted.
The high intensity support skills descriptor for severe dysphagia management	Named by the practice standard; not read	So this programme does not state what that training must contain.
The Incident Management and Reportable Incidents Rules, and the SIRS rules	Not read for this build	So NO reportable incident timeframe, category or threshold is stated.
Standard 6 of the Aged Care Quality Standards itself, action by action	The 31-page guidance was read; the instrument was not	Outcome names and counts come from the guidance material.
Any provider's mealtime policy, menu, or dining programme	Not read, and not knowable	The local document that actually governs a shift.
Any individual's mealtime management plan	Not read, and could not be	THE ONLY DOCUMENT THAT GOVERNS WHAT YOU DO AT A GIVEN MEAL. No course can supply it.

WHERE THE LINE IS

WHERE THE LINE IS. Every quotation, count and provision in this programme belongs to the NDIS Practice Standards, the NDIS Commission's Practice Alert, the ACQSC Standard 6 guidance or the IDDSI framework page, and is attributed at the point of use. The practical suggestions - reading the plan before the meal, the three things to have in your head, treating a cough as an event - are OBA'S TEACHING and are labelled as such wherever they appear.

SCOPE

This programme is professional development. It states what the NDIS PRACTICE STANDARDS, the NDIS COMMISSION'S PRACTICE ALERT and the ACQSC'S STANDARD 6 GUIDANCE say, quotes them where the words matter, and names the source every time. IT IS NOT CLINICAL ADVICE. IT TEACHES NO CHOKING TECHNIQUE - that belongs to a current accredited first aid certificate. IT STATES NO IDDSI TEST CRITERION, because the detailed definitions document could not be retrieved for this build. It does not assess swallowing, assign a texture level, write or amend a mealtime management plan, or decide whether anybody complies with anything. Decisions about an individual belong to that person, their speech pathologist, their dietitian, their prescriber and their provider - and the document that governs any actual meal is that person's own mealtime management plan.