

## PRACTICE TIPS: Reform Requirements for RDNs and NDTRs in Long Term Care Facilities

### Implementation STEPS for the revised Regulations

The Long-Term Care Final Rule, published October 4, 2016, outlined the attending physician may delegate prescribing a resident's diet to a qualified dietitian\* or other clinically qualified nutrition professional. The Final Rule stated the regulations will be rolled out in three phases, which are outlined in the timeline below. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the revised State Operations Manual (SOM) Appendix PP – Guidance to Surveyors for Long Term Care Facilities effective November 28, 2017. This revision reflects Phase 2 of the September 28, 2016 Final Rule. Access the CMS SOM Appendix PP using the link: [https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap\\_pp\\_guidelines\\_ltcf.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltcf.pdf)

[https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap\\_pp\\_guidelines\\_ltcf.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltcf.pdf)

- Most regulatory sections have been revised and re-designated per the final rule.
- Timeline: The final rule also stipulated that regulations will be effective through three different phases from November 28, 2016 through November 28, 2019. The phases and their effective dates are as follows:
  - 1) Phase 1 – November 28, 2016 = upon the effective date of the final rule.
  - 2) Phase 2 – November 28, 2017 = 1 year following the effective date of the final rule.
  - 3) Phase 3 – November 29, 2019 = 3 years following the effective date of the final rule.
- Crosswalk: Table 1: Title 42 Cross-Reference to Part 483 Subpart B in the final rule lists the previous and new regulations. CMS Final Rule link is as follows: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/10/04/2016-23503/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-reform-of-requirements-for-long-term-care-facilities>
- Regulation Numbering: Most regulations groups were re-designated and have new numbers, e.g., Food and Nutrition Services changed from §483.35 to §483.60.
- Revisions to State Operations Manual (SOM) Appendix PP: CMS has incorporated revised regulation text into the SOM Appendix PP – Rev. 173, 11-22-17 (no new updates as of 08-20-21).
- Revised F-Tags: The current F-Tags have been revised with new numbers and to include the requirements and regulation text as is presented in the final rule.
- Assess State Practice Act, Certification, or Title Protection laws for Dietitian Nutritionist for the State(s) in which you provide care and services.
  - Find the State Law – Practice Acts, Title Protection or Certification via the **State Licensure Agency Contact List** link: <https://www.cdrnet.org/state-licensure-agency-list>
  - Outcome of review will determine how the RDN practitioner who is licensed or certified in the State will proceed.
- Review the **Summary Table of State Long Term Care Regulations** which outlines specifics on how to proceed with facilitating the process of delegated orders for therapeutic diets. CMS final rule allows the

REVISED September 2021

resident's attending physician in long term care facilities to delegate the ability to order therapeutic diets to qualified RDNs, consistent with state laws. See F-Tag 711.

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/advocacy/licensure/therapeutic-diet-orders>

- Contact the **State Affiliate Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics** to work with the RDN members of the Public Policy Panel for latest update. Use the **Affiliate** link to select your State:  
<https://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/membership/academy-groups/affiliates/state-affiliates>
- Read the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) **State Operations Manual (SOM)** Appendix PP-Guidance to Surveyors for Long Term Care Facilities: [https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap\\_pp\\_guidelines\\_ltcf.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltcf.pdf).
- NOTE: Service, responsibilities and job function changes in regulations pertaining to food service, dietitians and other nutrition professionals which includes nutrition and dietetics technicians, registered (NDTRs) as well as support and administrative staff in long-term care facilities.
  - See Section §483.60(a) Staffing- NDTRs qualify to serve as the director of food and nutrition service under section (2)(i)D as they have an associate’s or higher degree if the course of study includes food service or restaurant management from an accredited institution of higher learning.
  - Revisions in the **State Operations Manual (SOM), Appendix PP Revised Regulations and Tags** since the last revision are written in **red color**.
- Listed below are highlighted sections applicable to Food and Nutrition Services, RDNs and NDTRs in the State Operations Manual (SOM) Appendix PP that changed with the November 27, 2017 revision. Changes within the regulation are written in **red**, terminology with definitions listed below are starred (\*). Below are select sections, please review all appropriate sections of the SOM Appendix PP for information applicable to your job and position.

Section	F-Tag and Page Number	Information
§483.21(b) <b>Comprehensive Care Plans</b>	F657 Page 225-230	(2) A compressive care plan must be- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (i) Developed within 7 days after completion of the compressive assessment</li> <li>• (ii) Prepared by an interdisciplinary team, that includes <b>but is not limited to—</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The attending physician.</li> <li>b) A registered nurse with responsibility for the resident.</li> <li>c) A nurse aid with responsibility for the resident.</li> <li>d) <b>A member of the food and nutrition services staff.</b></li> <li>e) To the extent practicable, the participation of the resident <b>and the resident’s representative(s). An explanation must be included in a resident’s medical record if the participation of the resident and their</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Section	F-Tag and Page Number	Information
		<p>resident representative is determined not practicable for the development of the resident’s care plan.</p> <p>f) Other appropriate staff or professionals in the disciplines as determined by the resident’s needs or as requested by the resident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (iii) Reviewed and revised by the interdisciplinary team after each assessment, including both the comprehensive and quarterly review assessments.</li> </ul> <p>(3) The services provided or arranged by the facility, as outlined by the comprehensive care plan, must—</p> <p>(i) Meet professional standards of quality.</p> <p><u>Intent:</u> The intent of this regulation is to assure that services being provided meet professional standards of quality.</p> <p><u>Guidance:</u> “Professional standards of quality” means that care and services are provided according to accepted standards of clinical practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards may apply to care provided by a particular clinical discipline or in a specific clinical situation or setting.</li> <li>• Standards regarding quality care practices may be published by a professional organization, licensing board, accreditation body or other regulatory agency.</li> <li>• Recommended practices to achieve desired resident outcomes may also be found in clinical literature.</li> <li>• Possible reference sources for standards of practice include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Current manuals or textbooks on nursing, social work, physical therapy, etc.</li> <li>○ Standards published by professional organizations such as the American Dietetic Association (<i>now the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics</i>), American Medical Association, American Medical Directors Association (<i>now AMDA-The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine</i>), American Nurses Association, National Association of Activity Professionals, National Association of Social Work, etc.</li> <li>○ Clinical practice guidelines published by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research.</li> <li>○ Current professional journal articles</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>§ 483.25(g) Assisted nutrition and hydration.</p>	<p>F692 Pages – 342-344</p>	<p>(Includes naso-gastric and gastrostomy tubes, both percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy and percutaneous endoscopic jejunostomy, and enteral fluids). Based on a resident’s comprehensive assessment, the facility must ensure that a resident—</p>

Section	F-Tag and Page Number	Information
		<p>(1) Maintains acceptable parameters of nutritional status*, such as <b>usual</b> body weight <b>or desirable body weight range</b> and <b>electrolyte balance</b>, unless the resident’s clinical condition demonstrates that this is not possible <b>or resident preferences indicate otherwise</b>;</p> <p>(2) <b>Is offered</b> sufficient fluid intake to maintain proper hydration and health;</p> <p>(3) <b>Is offered</b> a therapeutic diet* when there is a nutritional problem <b>and the health care provider* orders a therapeutic diet</b>.</p> <p><u>Intent</u></p> <p>The intent of this requirement is that the resident maintains, to the extent possible, acceptable parameters of nutritional <b>and hydration</b> status and that the facility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides nutritional <b>and hydration</b> care and services to each resident, consistent with the resident’s comprehensive assessment;</li> <li>• Recognizes, evaluates, and addresses the needs of every resident, including but not limited to, the resident at risk or already experiencing impaired nutrition <b>and hydration</b>; and</li> <li>• Provides a therapeutic diet* that takes into account the resident’s clinical condition, and preferences, when there is a nutritional indication.</li> </ul> <p><u>Guidance:</u> <b>Weight loss, poor nutritional status, or dehydration should be considered avoidable unless the facility can prove it has assessed/reassessed the resident’s needs, consistently implemented related care planned interventions, monitored for effectiveness, and ensured coordination of care among the interdisciplinary team.</b></p>
<p>§483.30(b) Physician Visits</p>	<p>F711 Pages 414-415</p>	<p><u>Guidance:</u></p> <p><b>Except where the regulation specifies the task must be completed personally by the physician, the term “attending physician” or “physician” also includes a non-physician practitioner (NPP) involved in the management of the resident’s care, to the extent permitted by State law.</b></p> <p><b>During visits, the physician must also sign and date all orders, with the exception of influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations, which may be administered per physician-approved facility policy after an assessment for contraindications. This includes co-signing orders written by NPPs, qualified dietitian*s, other clinically qualified nutrition professionals and qualified therapists, as required by state law.</b></p>
<p>§483.30(e) Physician delegation of tasks in SNFs</p>	<p>F714 Page 423</p>	<p>(1) - Except as specified in paragraph (e)(4) of this section, a physician may delegate tasks to a physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist who—</p>

Section	F-Tag and Page Number	Information
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (i) Meets the applicable definition in §491.2 of this chapter or, in the case of a clinical nurse specialist, is licensed as such by the State;</li> <li>• (ii) Is acting within the scope of practice as defined by State law; and</li> <li>• (iii) Is under the supervision of the physician.</li> </ul>
§483.30(f) Performance of physician tasks in NFs	F714 Page 423	At the option of State, any required physician task in a NF (including tasks which the regulations specify must be performed personally by the physician) may also be satisfied when performed by a nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, or physician assistant who is not an employee of the facility but who is working in collaboration with a physician.
§483.30(e) Physician delegation of tasks in SNFs.	F715 Pages 426-427	<p>(2) - A resident’s attending physician may delegate the task of writing dietary orders, consistent with §483.60, to a qualified dietitian* or other clinically qualified nutrition professional who—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (i) Is acting within the scope of practice as defined by State law; and</li> <li>• (ii) Is under the supervision of the physician.</li> </ul> <p>(3) - A resident’s attending physician may delegate the task of writing therapy orders, consistent with §483.65, to a qualified therapist who—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (i) Is acting within the scope of practice as defined by State law; and</li> <li>• (ii) Is under the supervision of the physician</li> </ul> <p>(4, pg 423) - A physician may not delegate a task when the regulations specify that the physician must perform it personally, or when the delegation is prohibited under State law or by the facility’s own policies.</p> <p><u>Guidance (483(e)(2)-(3):</u> Physicians and NNP may delegate the task of writing orders to qualified dietitians* or clinically qualified nutrition professionals and qualified therapists if the State practice act allows the delegation of the task, and the State practice act for the qualified individual being delegated the task of writing orders permits such performance. . . .Dietary orders written by a qualified dietitian*/clinically qualified nutrition professional, or therapy orders written by therapists, do not require co-signature, except as required by State law.</p>
§483.60 Food and nutrition services.	F800 Page 564	The facility must provide each resident with a nourishing, palatable, well-balanced diet that meets his or her daily nutritional and special dietary needs, taking into consideration the preferences of each resident.
§483.60(a) Staffing	F801 Pages 565-566	The facility must employ sufficient staff with the appropriate competencies and skills sets to carry out the functions of the food and nutrition service, taking into consideration resident assessments, individual plans of care and the number, acuity and diagnoses of the facility’s resident population in accordance with the facility assessment required at §483.70(e)

Section	F-Tag and Page Number	Information
		<p>(2) If a qualified dietitian or other clinically qualified nutrition professional is not employed full-time, the facility must designate a person to serve as the director of food and nutrition services who-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (i) For designations prior to November 28, 2016, meets the following requirements no later than 5 years after November 28, 2016, or no later than 1 year after November 28, 2016 for designations after November 28, 2016, is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. A certified dietary manager; or</li> <li>B. A certified food service manager; or</li> <li>C. Has similar national certification for food service management and safety from a national certifying body; or</li> <li>D. Has an associate’s or higher degree in food service management or in hospitality, if the course study includes food service or restaurant management, from an accredited institution of higher learning; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (ii) In States that have established standards for food service managers or dietary managers, meets State requirements for food service managers or dietary manager, and</li> <li>• (iii) Receives frequently scheduled consultations from a qualified dietitian or other clinically qualified nutrition professional.</li> </ul>
§483.60(b)	F802 Page 568	A member of the Food and Nutrition Services staff must participate on the interdisciplinary team as required in §483.21(b)(2)(ii).
§483.60(c) Menus and nutritional adequacy.	F803 Page 569	<p>Menus must</p> <p>(4) Reflect, based on facility’s reasonable efforts, the religious, cultural and ethnic needs of the resident population, as well as input received from residents and resident groups.</p> <p>(6) Be reviewed by the facility’s dietitian or other clinically qualified nutritional professional for nutritional adequacy.</p>
§483.60(d) Food and drink.	F806 Pages – 573-574	
§483.60(e) Therapeutic Diets*	F808 Pages 576-577	<p>(1) Therapeutic diets* must be prescribed by the attending physician.</p> <p>(2) The attending physician may delegate to a registered or licensed dietitian the task of prescribing a resident’s diet, including a therapeutic diet*, to the extent allowed by State law.</p> <p><u>Guidance:</u> If the resident’s attending physician delegates this task he or she must supervise the dietitian and remains responsible for the resident’s care</p>

Section	F-Tag and Page Number	Information
		even if the task is delegated. The physician would be able to modify a diet order with a subsequent order, if necessary.
§483.60(f) Frequency of Meals	F809 Pages – 577-579	
§483.60(g) Assistive devices	F810 Page 579	<u>Guidance:</u> The facility must provide appropriate assistive devices to residents who need them to maintain or improve their ability to eat or drink independently, for example, improving poor grasp by enlarging silverware handles with foam padding, aiding residents with impaired coordination or tremor by installing plate guards, or specialized cups. The facility must also provide the appropriate staff assistance to ensure that these residents can use the assistive devices when eating or drinking.
§483.60(h) Paid feeding assistants	F811 Pages 579-587	
§483.60(i) Food safety requirements	F812 Pages – 587-606	
§483.75(a) Quality assurance and performance improvement (QAPI) program.	F865 Pages – 657-663	Each LTC facility, including a facility that is part of a multiunit chain, must develop, implement, and maintain an effective, comprehensive, data-driven QAPI program that focuses on indicators of the outcomes of care and quality of life. The facility must: §483.75(a)(2) Present its QAPI plan to the State Survey Agency no later than 1 year after the promulgation of this regulation [§483.75(a)(2) implemented November 28, 2017 (Phase 2)]

**DEFINITIONS**

Select definitions are provided to clarify clinical terms related to nutritional status.

“**Acceptable parameters of nutritional status**” refers to factors that reflect that an individual’s nutritional status is adequate, relative to his/her overall condition and prognosis, such as weight, food/fluid intake, and pertinent laboratory values.

“**Artificial nutrition and hydration**” are medical treatments and refer to nutrition that is provided through routes other than the usual oral route, typically by placing a tube directly into the stomach, the intestine or a vein.

“**Clinically significant**” refers to effects, results, or consequences that materially affect or are likely to affect an individual’s physical, mental, or psychosocial well-being either positively by preventing, stabilizing, or improving a condition or reducing a risk, or negatively by exacerbating, causing, or contributing to a symptom, illness, or decline in status.

**“Dietary supplements”** refers to herbal and alternative products that are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and their composition is not standardized. Dietary supplements must be labeled as such and must not be represented for use as a conventional food or as the sole item of a meal or the diet.

**“Health Care Provider”** includes a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist, or a qualified dietitian\* or other qualified nutrition professional acting within their state scope of practice and to whom the attending physician has delegated the task. For issues related to delegation to dietitians, refer to §483.60(e)(2), F808.

**“Mechanically altered diet”** means one in which the texture of a diet is altered. When the texture is modified, the type of texture modification must be specified and part of the physicians’ or delegated registered or licensed dietitian order.

**“Non-physician practitioner (NPP)”** is a nurse practitioner (NP), clinical nurse specialist (CNS), or physician assistant (PA) as defined above.

**“Nourishing snack”** means items from the basic food groups, either singly or in combination with each other.

**“Nutritional status”** includes both nutrition and hydration status.

**“Nutritional Supplements”** refers to products that are used to complement a resident’s dietary needs (e.g., calorie or nutrient dense drinks, total parenteral products, enteral products, and meal replacement products).

**“Qualified dietitian”** – is defined in §483.60 as follows: §483.60(a)(1) A qualified dietitian\* or other clinically qualified nutrition professional either full-time, part-time, or on a consultant basis. A qualified dietitian\* or other clinically qualified nutrition professional is one who:

- Holds a bachelor’s or higher degree granted by a regionally accredited college or university in the United States (or an equivalent foreign degree) with completion of the academic requirements of a program in nutrition or dietetics accredited by an appropriate national accreditation organization recognized for this purpose.
- (ii) Has completed at least 900 hours of supervised dietetics practice under the supervision of a registered dietitian or nutrition professional.
- (iii) Is licensed or certified as a dietitian or nutrition professional by the State in which the services are performed. In a State that does not provide for licensure or certification, the individual will be deemed to have met this requirement if he or she is recognized as a “registered dietitian” by the Commission on Dietetic Registration or its successor organization, or meets the requirements of paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section.
- (iv) For dietitians hired or contracted with prior to November 28, 2016, meets these requirements no later than 5 years after November 28, 2016 or as required by state law.

**“Suitable and nourishing alternative meals and snacks”** means that when an alternate meal or snack is provided, it is of similar nutritive value as the meal or snack offered at the normally scheduled time and consistent with the resident plan of care.

**“Therapeutic diet”** refers to a diet ordered by a physician or other delegated provider that is part of the treatment for a disease or clinical condition, to eliminate, decrease, or increase certain substances in the diet (e.g., sodium or potassium), or to provide mechanically altered food when indicated.

**“Tube feeding”** refers to the delivery of nutrients through a feeding tube directly into the stomach, duodenum, or jejunum. It is also referred to as an enteral feeding.