My eating and drinking matters

Back to basics: care for people who have difficulties with eating and drinking

1. **BE POSITIVE**
   - Giving me time
   - Encouraging me to be independent
   - Talking to me about what I am having and how I am doing

2. **KNOW ME WELL**
   - Listen to me
   - Give me a choice
   - Know how I communicate
   - Know what I like and dislike
   - Know what is safe for me
   - Know what equipment I need

3. **MY MOUTH NEEDS CARE**
   - Please check that:
     - My lips are pink and moist
     - My mouth and teeth are clean
     - I don't have ulcers or mouth infection
     - My teeth are in good condition
     - My dentures fit

4. **MY ENVIRONMENT MATTERS**
   - You can help me by:
     - Checking I am relaxed and comfortable
     - Checking I am not distracted
     - Helping me to concentrate
     - Sitting at the same level as me
     - Giving me your whole attention

5. **GET ME READY TO EAT AND DRINK**
   - You can help me by:
     - Checking I am awake and alert
     - Checking I am sitting upright
     - Checking I am ready to eat or drink

6. **KEEP ME SAFE**
   - You can help me by:
     - Discouraging chat during the meal
     - Ensuring I remain sitting upright for half an hour after the meal
   - Alert a healthcare professional if there is a change in:
     - Coughing or choking
     - Voice sounds wet or gurgly
     - Breathing changes
     - Food stays in the mouth when meal is finished

If you have concerns with any of the above please seek advice from my Speech and Language Therapy team