

## MDS Alert

### Clinical Care: Incorporate Speech Therapy Interventions and Recommendations in the Care Plan

**Expert shares strategy for providing feeding and swallowing instructions in the dining room.**

An ongoing dialogue between the speech language pathologist and care staff can help them stay on the same page in helping residents achieve therapy and safety goals.

If a resident is receiving speech language pathology services, the SLP should communicate specific information to all staff to "carry over from therapy" for daily routines, advises **Robert Serianni, MS, CCC-SLP**, VP of clinical services at Nyman Associates Inc. in Fort Washington, Pa. For example, "the facility may have to adjust staffing on certain units if a particularly high number of residents require assistance with feeding."

The SLP might share the following specific information with staff, advises Serianni:

Dietary recommendations

Swallowing techniques/exercises/modalities

Dental status

Feeding/positioning recommendations

Prognosis for returning to "normal" diet

Real-world tips: When providing therapy in nursing homes, Serianni develops a single sheet with feeding and swallowing instructions for each patient. Staff maintains the list in a binder in the dining room, he says, stressing that you have to follow HIPAA privacy requirements when using that approach.

In addition, Serianni observes patients in conjunction with the MDS cycle to identify significant changes. He also works with restorative aides to develop feeding programs designed to help residents hold onto the skills they acquired during therapy.