

## **Policy for the Provision of Special Diets and Communication of Allergens (Secondary, Staff and Civic)**

Lancashire County Catering Service is committed to satisfying the needs of our customers and stakeholders and shall endeavour to meet their expectations.

In order to meet our commitments it is our policy to provide a meal for all service users, including those with medical diets.

With the changes to the Food Information Regulations 2013 in December 2014, it is necessary to outline our procedures for handling the service of special diets and the communication of allergen information to our customers.

### **Allergens**

Allergen information shall be available and easily accessible to customers, in accordance with the Food Information Regulations (FIR) 2013, for all foods, for the following list of allergens:

- Celery
- Cereals containing gluten
- Crustaceans
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lupin
- Milk
- Molluscs
- Mustard
- Nuts
- Peanuts
- Sesame seeds
- Soya
- Sulphur dioxide

### **Special Diets**

It is our policy to provide a menu for those users with medically diagnosed food allergies, food intolerances or a medical condition which affects eating requirements. The Catering Service understands that some people have particular sensitivities to certain foods that non – sufferers would find harmless. When someone has a food allergy, their immune system reacts to a particular food or food groups.

We recognise that severe allergies can cause life threatening reactions and that food intolerances do not involve the immune system and are not generally life threatening, but can make the customer feel poorly.

It is our policy to safely provide special diets by operating a rigorous food safety management system as part of our central HACCP system, which identifies the

appropriate controls and working instructions required for the provision of special diets.

The organisation will provide all necessary training and instruction to Catering management and frontline staff and monitor its effectiveness. The provision of special diets will be regularly audited and if applicable corrective measures put in place.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Catering Service Management**

- To collate and provide allergen information relating to recipes and planned menus and communicate to catering staff and homes.
- To agree any product substitutions made to kitchens prior to delivery.
- To provide nutritional data if requested.
- To provide appropriate signage to advise customers on where to access allergen information.
- To ensure ingredient specifications for all products included in our menus are checked to ensure they meet the dietary requirements of our customers.
- To monitor the provision of special diets, communication of allergens and compliance with this policy.

### **Secondary Schools only**

- Make the catering staff at the production kitchen aware of pupils who require a special diet or who have an allergy.
- To ensure Catering staff (kitchen and if applicable, the dining centre) are made aware of any relevant information that will assist in the provision of a suitable menu.
- To facilitate a meeting with the parent/guardian, dietician and catering supervisor when this is necessary.
- Provide information, regarding the pupil's dietary needs, to any staff members who will be supporting the pupil.
- Provide a suitable level of supervision for pupils when lunches are selected and served so that the welfare of the pupil is safeguarded.
- To communicate seasonal menu changes to the parent/guardian when these are published by the catering service.
- Inform the catering supervisor of any changes to a pupil's dietary requirements.
- Inform the catering supervisor of any absences so a meal is not prepared when not required.

## **Consumer**

- To inform the catering staff of dietary requirements or allergy and how severe the food allergy or intolerance is.
- To read menus carefully to see if there is any mention of the food you react to in the name or description of the dish.
- To check with the catering staff about the whole dish to ensure the food you react to is not present in the food
- To check what allergens are in the dish even if you have eaten it before; recipes and ingredients can change
- If you are not sure about a dish or about the information you have been provided, don't risk it! Don't order the dish.
- To be vigilant when using self service areas.
- To be aware of particular dishes such as North African, Chinese, Thai, Indian and Malaysian, because they often contain peanuts, nuts and sesame.

## **Catering Service Kitchen Staff**

- When required, provide a suitable meal using the standard menu recipes, allergen table and special diet checklist provided.
- To advise customers of the allergen information as and when requested.
- To follow a specific set of working instructions which ensures the meal is prepared to minimise the risk of cross contamination.
- Check that the products delivered are the correct brands.
- Prior to a meal being produced for a customer with a special diet or allergy ensure that the labelling of the products being used is checked to determine that it does not contain the allergen relevant to that customer.
- To record all special dietary requirements in section 9 of the kitchen management portfolio so that in the event of staff absence the relevant information is available for temporary staff.
- Communicate with the care staff that are serving the meals to those with allergies.
- For meals transported to a day centre, the kitchen will ensure that the server is fully aware of all foods that contain one of the 14 Allergens and in which foods they may be present.
- Display the appropriate signage and advise customers of where to access allergen information.