



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

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Suzanne P. Merrill, Director
Division of Aging and Adult Services

DAAS Administrative Letter No. 15-15

To: Area Agency on Aging Directors
Aging Service Providers

From: Suzanne P. Merrill, Director *Suzanne P. Merrill*

Subject: Revised Liquid Nutritional Supplements Policy, NC Senior Nutrition Program

Date: December 7, 2015

This Administrative Letter serves as notification of the revision of reimbursement for serving liquid nutritional supplements under the Older Americans Act. Per an Administration for Community Living communication through the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, nutrition program service providers may continue to receive Home and Community Care Block Grant reimbursement for a liquid nutritional supplement only when:

- Served in addition to a complete congregate nutrition or home-delivered meal. May be counted as 2 meals but together they must provide 66% of the RDA.
- Replacing a meal based on assessed need as determined by the authorizing professional. Such products cannot replace conventional meals unless a disability or condition warrants their sole use. Liquid supplements may be served to participants who cannot tolerate solid foods or cannot chew food.

The intent of the Older Americans Act is to provide food, not supplements. It is inappropriate to substitute supplements for a meal if the client can tolerate solid foods even if the older adult is underweight, has a poor appetite, or is at high risk of malnutrition.

Providers who do serve liquid nutrition supplements must continue to comply with the current nutrition program standards.

- Prior to distribution, a written authorization must be on file from one of the following professionals: a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, or licensed dietitian/nutritionist.

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- The nutrition provider must disclose to the professional who has authorized distribution the product's brand name, nutritional content of one serving and the amount that will be needed to constitute the required Dietary Guidelines for Americans requirements for Home and Community Care Block Grant reimbursement.
- The authorization must include name of recipient, reason why product is needed, amount and frequency of product to be provided, duration (not to exceed 6 months), name/signature/telephone number of the authorizing professional, and date of authorization.
- **NEW:** Nutrition Services Incentive Program, NSIP, funds only shall be used to purchase food, not liquid nutritional supplements. The use of NSIP funds for liquid nutritional supplements is not allowable.
- Liquid nutritional supplement meals must still be submitted for reimbursement under ARMs service codes 182 (congregate) and 022 (home-delivered).

All nutrition program providers who are currently receiving HCCBG and/or NSIP funding for reimbursement for liquid nutrition supplements must notify their Area Agency on Aging and modify their program to ensure compliance with the Older Americans Act. Each impacted local provider's corrective action plan must be submitted to their AAA by January 15, 2016. All providers must be in compliance by June 30, 2016.

Please feel free to contact Audrey Edmisten, DAAS Nutrition Program Consultant, at 919-855-3418 if you have questions/concerns.

SPM:ae

