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Nutrition Knowledge of Texture Modified Diet (Soft Meal) for Elderly with Dysphagia for Workers in a Day Care Centre

Author: Angel, O.K. LEUNG

Community Nutrition Service, United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service, United Christian Medical Service

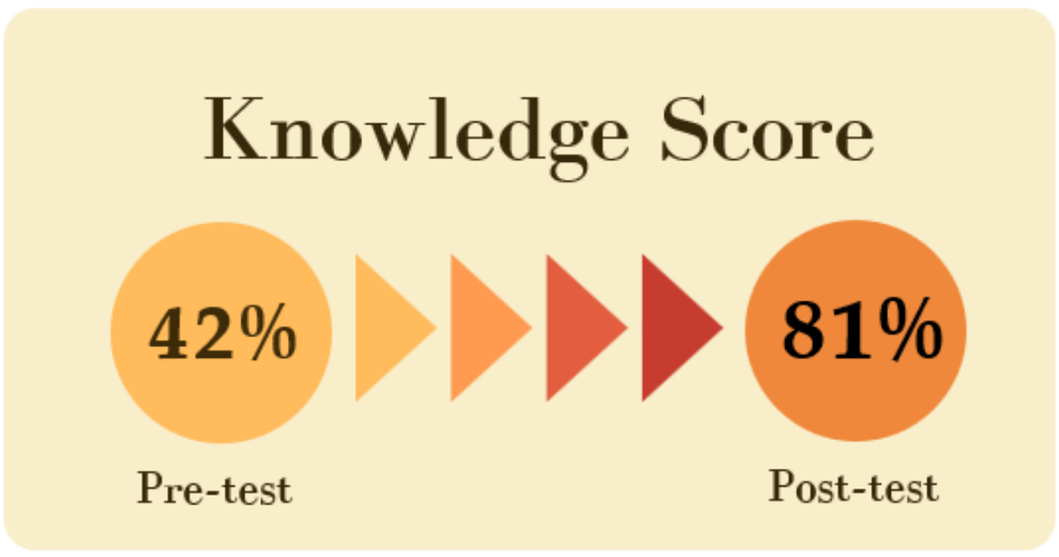
Introduction

The provision of adequate nutrition is of paramount importance for the elderly, particularly for individuals with dysphagia and physically considered as frail. To address this need, a soft meal workshop was designed for staff at the day care centre, aiming to bridge the gap in their knowledge and preparation of soft meals. By emphasizing the practical aspects of soft meal preparation and incorporating a cooking demonstration, this workshop aims to enhance the staff's knowledge and skills for soft meal preparation.

Methods

The workshop was facilitated by community dietitians at the day care centre, with eight participating staff. It consisted of a 30-minute knowledge and theory presentation covering the basic knowledge of diet and nutrition for dysphagia and the role of soft meal in improving the nutritional intake of residents, followed by a 45-minute cooking demonstration of tomato chicken sandwich with The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) Level 4. A pre-test and post-test were completed by the staff, consisting of eight knowledge-based questions and two attitude-based questions.

Results



By comparing the pre-test and post-test, based on the total number of correct answers chosen by the participants, the average knowledge score increased from 42% to 81%, demonstrating an improvement in the staff's knowledge of soft meal preparation.

For the attitude section, the average score rose from 4.32 to 4.50, indicating their acknowledgement of dietitians' supportive role in enhancing food service.

Conclusions

By organizing a soft meal workshop for the staff at the elderly day care centre, the participants' knowledge and attitude scores improved, highlighting the importance of the training workshop in enhancing knowledge and the skills for preparing nutritious soft meals. Future workshops could be expanded to various groups, such as staff at nursing homes and caregivers in the community, contributing to enhanced quality of life for the elderly.

Keywords: Community dietitian, Texture modified diet, Soft meal