

## **Wellness Policy**

### **Volunteers of America-Omegon**

Omegon is a 26-bed dual diagnosis residential treatment center located in Minnetonka, Minnesota that serves youth dealing with mental health and chemical health issues ranging from ages 12 to 17. Residents reside within the center in a one floor dormitory area and participate in group sessions, education, recreation, individual therapy, family therapy, psychiatric services and meal times. This building also houses the administrative offices. Omegon works in collaboration with an accredited school district, Intermediate School District 287, located within the facility. Omegon places a large amount of importance on teaching and role modeling the importance of wellness.

Omegon's wellness components include residents actively taking account of what they put into their bodies, including food, music, movies, reading and the effects that follow after events take place. Hygiene, sleep, emotional regulation and physical activities are other components that are taught and reviewed during program levels. Omegon's treatment program is comprised of six levels of treatment prior to completion; level two is centered on teaching residents about wellness and implementing these skills into daily living practices.

Omegon supports and promotes proper dietary habits contributing to resident's health status and academic performance. In support of healthy living habits, all foods that are available at Omegon meet or exceed the school district's nutritional standards. Food served is done in a manner that promotes nutritional reliability, diversity, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure premium meals and snacks. Meals are provided to all Omegon residents, despite their social or economic status. Treating all residents the same helps to eliminate social stigma associated with free meals. Omegon does not support or use food as a punishment for poor behavior.

Omegon has developed a local wellness policy committee comprised of the following representatives: Omegon Program Director, Unit Supervisor, Assessment Coordinator, Omegon's Registered Nurse and Food Service Manager.

### **NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PROMOTION**

#### **Nutrition Messages**

Omegon will provide nutrition education and promote good nutrition via nursing staff, residential counselors and living skills and level/phase group curriculum materials. Additionally, Omegon's cafeteria contains colorful and inviting posters which promote nutrition. Another area of education is the teaching of social skills and appropriate manners by direct care staff to residents during meal times.

Discussions with residents as a group or individually will occur as needed to also assure that these needs are met. In addition, there is a registered dietician available for resident consultation if determined appropriate by a physical or the agency nursing department for things such as unusual food allergies/intolerance, weight issues, etc.

Omegon does respect our residents' rights to observe religious/belief based practices in regard to food choices. In cases of verified religious/belief based restrictions on food, appropriate and healthy substitutions are provided. Also to further promote appropriate portion sizes, the Food Service Management Company uses portion sized scoops when serving meals.

### **NUTRITION GUIDELINES FOR ALL FOODS AVAILABLE ON SITE**

#### **Agency Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- Be appealing and attractive to children (residents/residents);
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;

- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal law;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- Serve only skim and 1% milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives (as defined by the USDA)
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain

Omegon uses the Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning system.

Omegon is committed to engaging residents in selecting or identifying foods offered through the meal program in order to identify healthy and appealing food choices. This will be done through a biannual resident and staff survey and meeting with resident representatives so that they are empowered to provide input into the Omegon menu planning.

Finally, at discharge, residents and referring parties from the community are provided a survey, that among other issues, gives them an opportunity to rate their meals/food service while with us. This information from residents as they leave the program, and from the community members responsible for their placement with us, is reviewed and is part of the continuous quality improvement process used to make modifications as necessary.

### **Breakfast**

To ensure that all children have breakfast, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn, Omegon will provide a breakfast program to all residents, to the extent possible.

### **Meal Times and Scheduling**

Omegon will:

- Provide residents with 30 minutes for breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- Schedule meal periods at appropriate times (breakfast between 6:45 until 7:15; lunch between 12:00 until 1:00pm; and dinner 5:00-6:00pm)
- Provide residents access to hand washing before they eat meals or snacks.

### **Qualifications of Food Service Staff**

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the meal programs. Continuing education is provided to them through New Horizon Foods, Inc.

### **Sharing of Foods**

Omegon discourages children from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times. Omegon staff will hand out condiments to residents.

### **Free Meals**

All residents in the residential program receive free meals. Omegon does not utilize a lunch ticket system

### **Foods Sold Outside the Meal (e.g. vending)**

Omegon does not offer ala carte or separate sales of food items. Pop machines are available and intended primarily for staff use. Only staff and/or visitors have direct access to the pop machines. Residents have limited use of pop machines outside of the school day.

### **Snacks/desserts**

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care programs will be healthy in nature and make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits, fruit products, or healthy starch/wheat products with water and/or juice as the primary beverage should Residents request this.

### **Rewards**

Omegon will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, nor will Omegon withhold foods or beverages (including food served through meals) as a punishment.

### **Celebrations**

Omegon continually evaluates its celebration practices that involve food during the school day. In general the celebrations that involve food are special prepared for Holidays (meals) and to celebrate Birthdays (snack) and Program Discharges (a snack) as well as agency wide events such as an annual Omegon Talent Show (meal). Meals provided as part of these celebrations do meet or exceed nutritional requirements.

### **Food Safety**

All food made available via foodservice at Omegon adhere to food safety and security guidelines.

- All foods available at Omegon will comply with stated and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness.
- For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations are limited to Food Service Staff and authorized personnel.

### **Summer Meals**

Omegon provides the Food Service Program throughout the entire summer vacation since all children in the program are eligible for free meals

## **WELLNESS GOALS**

### **Nutrition education**

#### **Goals:**

- Provide knowledge and teach skills that helps Omegon residents how to make food choices that maintain and promote health
- Coordination between the foodservice staff and Omegon staff in regards to the nutrition provided in the menu planning
- Offer parent/family education opportunities about wellness and healthy nutrition choices

#### **Objectives:**

- Food Service Vendor will provide a dietician biannually who will discuss nutrition and education Omegon residents on healthy food choices, portion control, nutrition and overall effects from healthy and unhealthy diets
- Food Service Vendor will consult with a dietician about menu options prior to approval for implementation
- Families will be offered a wellness education session during required family psychoeducational group biannually

### **Physical Activity Goals:**

- Opportunities for residents to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities
- Regular physical activity to maintain residents' physical fitness
- Resources to promote physical activity will be accessible to all residents, regardless of age, gender, disability, etc.
- Instruction on the short and long-term benefits of a physically active lifestyle

#### *Objectives:*

- Residents are given the opportunity for a minimum of one hour of physical activity during programming each day
- All physical education curriculum has been reviewed by the Hopkins School District to ensure compliance according to school guidelines on physical education
- Physical education is provided for all residents throughout the entire year
- Staff will engage residents in moderate to vigorous activity during at least 50 percent of the physical education class time

- A variety of resources will be provided (some availability varies by program)
  - Indoor
    - Gymnasium, basketball court, volleyball court, weightlifting, misc. indoor recreation equipment/games
  - Outdoor
    - Basketball court, volleyball court, kickball, softball field, walking paths, bicycle, miscellaneous outdoor recreation equipment/game

#### **OTHER AGENCY BASED ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE OVERALL RESIDENT WELLNESS**

Omegon will provide for times of *required* physical activity as follows:

- One hour of large muscle activity per day
- Varies in activity required
- Utilizes the various recreational resources available (see above)
- Is documented and kept on file

Physical education group occurs three times per week for 50 minutes per day. Outside of these scheduled groups, physical education and active recreational programming in the weekday evenings and weekends includes physical education components (e.g. YMCA gym, active recreation, such as kickball, Frisbee golf games). All residents have a minimum of 50 minutes of active time per day.

Omegon employees do not use physical activity (e.g. running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. physical education, etc.) as punishments. If for any reason a resident is unsafe to leave the building to attend a physically active exercise due to safety, then accommodations are made to ensure that the resident is provided an alternative physical activity.

For residents to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity and to fully embrace regular activity as a personal behavior, residents need opportunities for physical activity beyond what is required of them (one hour of large muscle activity per day). Therefore, Omegon will:

- Discourage extended involvement in sedentary activities, such as watching television and playing video games. These activities are done very sparingly and with therapeutic or educational purpose.
- Encourage direct care staff to promote various physical activities while role modeling and engaging in recreational activities with residents. Each month a different direct care staff is chosen to plan an activity calendar thus a variety of options can be introduced to residents.
- Regularly planned agency wide events focusing on physical activity, such as volleyball and basketball tournaments, a summer Olympics event and physical games are programmed.
- Membership to the nearby YMCA has been purchased to allow for varied physical activities.
- Residents are given scheduled breaks to go outside, weather permitting during school and group breaks throughout programming.

Additional wellness activities and programming includes:

- Planting plants and a garden every spring during living skills group
- Education on wellness and balanced choices in mandatory Independent Living Skills group (which occurs twice weekly)
- Education biannually by a dietician who discusses nutrition, healthy food choices and portion control to all residents
- Volunteers of America has an assigned wellness policy for staff to follow; which assists in role modeling for residents
- Biannual food survey is distributed and collected anonymously from all residents and discussed with Food Service Manager to make additional adjustments, if possible.

- Resident Council acts as an advocacy group for fellow peer residents to incorporate any adjustments, including food and physical programming.

## **PLAN FOR MEASURING & ON-GOING IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Monitoring**

The members of the Wellness Policy Committee will ensure compliance with established school nutrition and physical activity guidelines discussed herein through the following steps:

- The Wellness Policy Committee will meet annually to review the Wellness Policy
- The Wellness Policy Committee will develop additional monitors and work plans to facilitate implementation as needed based on review
- The Quality Improvement Committee will submit a summary of this review to Omegon's Program Director
- Quarterly reviews by Registered Dietician per New Horizon Foods
- The Food Service Staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within the food service area and will report on this matter to the Omegon Administrator
- The Omegon Administrator will compile all reports/information received from the Food Service Staff into the Quarterly Quality Improvement Report. This is reviewed by the Omegon Quality Improvement Committee on a quarterly basis.
- Additionally, compliance will be reviewed by the Wellness Committee on an annual basis

### **Policy Review**

To help with the initial development of the Omegon Wellness Policy, a review was completed of the existing nutrition and physical activity practices of agency residents. The following formal reviews will be used to ensure ongoing compliance:

- USDA/MDE Review
- State Licensing Review by the Minnesota Department of Human Services
- Menu reviews by a Registered Dietician through New Horizon Foods
- Monitors are completed and reviewed monthly and results are documented and reviewed in the Quarterly Quality Improvement Report
- The Wellness Committee will meet annually to review the Wellness Policy, develop monitors, and develop work plans to facilitate implementation.

### **Staff Involved with Wellness Policy Development include:**

1. Omegon's Division Director
2. Omegon's Program Director
3. Omegon's Unit Supervisor
4. Omegon's Registered Nurse
5. New Horizon On-Site Food Service Manager

### **Continued Professional Development Goals**

Agency direct care staff, including the Unit Supervisor is trained annually on Offer vs Serve requirements as well as Civil Rights for School Nutrition Programs. Annual Job Performance Reviews are also conducted on residential counseling staff, with ratings given regarding healthy role modeling and appropriate recreational activities, thus providing feedback to staff in regard to performance of these duties.