



## Feeding, Swallowing and Nutrition Program Referral Guide

The Feeding, Swallowing and Nutrition Program is an **interdisciplinary team** that evaluates feeding and nutrition concerns and treats children who are diagnosed with Pediatric Feeding Disorders.

Pediatric Feeding Disorder (PFD) is a condition of sustained feeding disturbance which is manifested by underlying conditions of medical, feeding skills and/or feeding behavior problems, resulting in unhealthy nutrition and poor growth concerns. These disorders require multidisciplinary evaluation to determine the underlying etiology of the feeding problem so that the appropriate treatment recommendations can be provided. These concerns often impact multiple domains (medical, nutrition, skills and safety, behavior) and generally require multidisciplinary management so that appropriate treatment plans may be implemented.

### Conditions treated:

- Pediatric Feeding Disorder – characterized by at least 2 of the following: skills concern, behavioral concern, and/or medical concern, resulting in complex etiology
  - Feeding skill-based concerns due to complex etiology
  - Poor nutrition status due to complex etiology
  - Delayed advance of diet to age-expected levels due to complex etiology
  - Behavioral feeding concerns stemming from complex etiology

Example: Patients that require 3 of the 4 specialties (Gastroenterology, Clinical Nutrition, Speech Pathology and Psychology) are generally appropriate for feeding team. Feeding disorders due to altered foregut anatomy (TEF, CDH, etc.), foregut inflammation, pharyngo/esophageal/gastric motility, G-tube dependence. In general, kids whose genetic predisposition or disease state caused disorder in the foregut and secondary feeding disorder.

### Conditions **not** treated include:

- Patients under 12 months (refer to Speech-Feeding). If nursing, add referral to Lactation.
- Patients that have feeding skill-based as only concern (refer to Speech-Feeding)
- Eating disorders (refer to Adolescent Medicine)
- Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) (refer to Adolescent Medicine)
- Patients who cannot tolerate enteral feeds into the stomach (refer to Gastroenterology)
- Rumination or PICA (refer to Gastroenterology)
- Failure to thrive or inadequate weight gain as **ONLY** concern (refer to Gastroenterology)
- Concerns with overeating, sneaking and/or hiding food (refer to Psychology and Behavioral Medicine)

## What a patient/family can expect:

- All referrals are triaged by members of our feeding team to determine if appropriate to treat. We will make every effort to explain the rationale when a referral is denied and offer alternative resources to the referring provider by letter.
- If referral is accepted, families will be asked to share a history with the team by filling out forms prior to their appointment. Once forms are completed and sent back, they will be called to schedule.
- During the patient's evaluation appointment, the child will be observed eating a meal by the team of specialists to assess skills and interactions with caregivers.
- Evaluations are completed by a physician, a behavioral psychologist, a registered dietitian, a speech-language pathologist and a nurse.
- The family will meet with the physician to discuss any medical needs or medical workup that may need to be completed.
- The interdisciplinary team will deem the appropriateness for feeding team treatment at the end of the assessment and work with the family to schedule appointments for follow-up care with team members based on individual patient needs. Treatment options may include outpatient treatment, intensive outpatient treatment, intensive inpatient treatment and/or a referral to another specialty for additional treatment.
- We do not admit children directly into our intensive outpatient or intensive inpatient programs without an initial team evaluation appointment by the interdisciplinary team.



## Send referrals to Central Scheduling.

- **Internal referral via Children's Epic**  
Send an ambulatory referral to GI Feeding Team.
- **External referral via Epic**  
Send to CHW GASTROENTEROLOGY CLINICS.  
Include GI Feeding Team in the notes/comments.
- **Via fax**  
(414) 607-5288

