

Feeding and dysphagia services

Information for referrers

Referral process

A written referral from a paediatrician or paediatric sub-specialist is required for both the Multidisciplinary Feeding Clinic and the Dysphagia and Nutrition Clinic.

The Feeding Clinic (Speech Pathology) requires a written referral from a paediatrician or a specialist associated with The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Feeding support clinics at The Children's Hospital at Westmead include comprehensive services for children with varying degrees of feeding difficulties. These address ongoing feeding concerns that cannot be managed by local health or community-based services and requires tertiary assessment.

Children requiring support and co-ordination of nasogastric tube feeds may also be managed by the Kids GPS service.

Clinic services

Multidisciplinary Feeding Clinic

We assist children with feeding difficulties that result from, or are associated with various medical conditions, such as cardiac, renal, and mild to moderate disability, but excluding cerebral palsy. We provide a continuum of care for discharged inpatients. The majority of our patients are infants whose prognosis for oral feeding is yet to be determined. A written referral from a paediatrician is required.

The clinic offers:

- Consultation and in-clinic assessment of feeding and nutrition
- Breast feeding assessment with a Child and Family Health CNC
- [Videofluoroscopic Swallow study](#) (also known as Modified Barium Swallow)
- Specialist medical investigations
- Review, including dietetics and speech pathology
- Ongoing management, with referral back to local services as necessary
- You may be referred to our clinic for any of these reasons:
 - Transition from non-oral to normal oral feeding patterns, whilst supporting a healthy nutritional status.
 - Oral motor and sensory problems (for eg. oral aversion) resulting in poor growth
 - Swallowing incoordination

Dysphagia and Nutrition Clinic

This multidisciplinary clinic provides a service to children with feeding difficulties as a result of chronic and complex medical conditions, including cerebral palsy and other physical and intellectual disabilities. Feeding goals include restoration of healthy nutritional status, safe oral feeding and support of non-oral feeding (nasogastric tubes, gastrostomy, jejunostomy) as required. A written referral from a paediatrician is required.

The clinic offers:

- Comprehensive multidisciplinary review- including medical, dietetics, speech pathology and feeding assessments
- [Videofluoroscopic Swallow study](#) (also known as Modified Barium Swallow)
- Advice on oral and non-oral feeding and stoma therapy support (gastrostomy, jejunostomy)
- Endoscopy through the Gastroenterology Department
- Referral for other medical investigations as required
- Ongoing management in conjunction with local services
- You may be referred to our clinic for any of these reasons:
 - Persistent nutritional concerns
 - Persistent poor growth and weight issues
 - Gastro-oesophageal reflux/vomiting and food intolerance
 - Problems with non-oral feeding (Naso-gastric, gastrostomy or jejunal feeding)
 - Swallowing incoordination and choking concerns

Feeding Clinic: Speech Pathology Department

The Speech Pathology department provides a targeted service to children whose feeding difficulties arise mainly from oral motor, swallowing and sensory difficulties and other mealtime management issues. The referral process requires a written referral from a paediatrician and specialists associated with The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

The clinic offers:

- Assessment and consultation by a speech pathologist
- Ongoing management, with referral back to local services as necessary
- Review
- [Videofluoroscopic Swallow study](#) (also known as Modified Barium Swallow)
- Therapy
- Reasons for referral include:
 - Oral motor and sensory problems
 - Swallowing difficulties
 - Behavioural or interaction issues surrounding eating/food refusal
- The clinic works with families to establish safe feeding practices, normalise mealtime patterns and develop oral feeding skills

Contact details

- Multidisciplinary Feeding Clinic: (02) 9845 2076
- Dysphagia/Nutrition Clinic: (02) 9845 3971
- Feeding Clinic - Speech Pathology Department: (02) 9845 2076