



Attachment B

Summary of international guidelines for older people

A summary of key themes identified from a search of international dietary guidelines

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1. Method

International guidelines were identified via Google search using the following search term 'ageing dietary guidelines COUNTRY'. The first 2 pages of results were assessed for appropriate results that met the inclusion criteria. Where this term did not return any results, additional search terms 'older people dietary guidelines COUNTRY' and/or 'ageing dietary guidelines COUNTRY government' and/or 'older people dietary guidelines COUNTRY government' were used, and the first 2 pages of results were assessed again for appropriate results that met the inclusion criteria.

Guidelines were included if they:

- were from countries with a classification of very high (0.800 or greater) on the Human Development Index
- had a full text copy of the guidelines available in English
- were published between 2014 and 2023.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) website lists countries food-based dietary guidelines and provides links to resources where available. The FAO webpage was cross-checked for each country searched.

Guidelines for Finland, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America met the inclusion criteria for analysis of international guidelines for older people.

2. Results

2.1 - Finland

The *Vitality in later years – food recommendation for older adults* was published in 2020 as a joint project between the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) and the National Nutrition Council. The publication is intended to serve as a national quality recommendation that defines how to support the nutrition of older adults and organise high-quality food services based on the needs of older people and promote eating together. Use of the guidelines are aimed at decision-makers, staff who work with older people, families providing informal care and older people themselves.

2.2 - Ireland

The Scientific Committee of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland provided an evidence-based report to underpin food-based dietary guidelines for older adults living in Ireland, outlining the nutritional issues related to ageing. Older adults living in Ireland were defined as those aged 65 years and older and included four subgroups:

1. healthy older person living independently
2. older person with compromised mobility and/or with comorbidities and living independently
3. semi-independent older person
4. older person dependent on residential care.

Recommendations were based on the eating guidelines for the general adult population, but also addressed nutritional issues specific to the older adult population including socioeconomic status, dependence on residential care, mobility, comorbidities, etc.

Recommendations are summarised in Appendix A.

2.3 - United Kingdom

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) was commissioned by Public Health England to develop a position statement on nutrition and older adults living in the community. The 2021 position statement considers evidence relating to adults aged 65 years and over living in the community. It was an overview of the systematic review and meta-analysis evidence up to February 2019 on nutrition in older adults and its impact on healthy ageing, not a comprehensive review of the evidence base.

2.4 - United States of America

These guidelines comprise 6 chapters exploring nutrition and health across the lifespan and providing key recommendations relevant to each age group. Chapter 6 provides specific recommendations to older adults (individuals aged 60 and older).

Recommendations are summarised in Appendix A.

3. Guideline comparison

Guidelines which met the inclusion criteria were compared to identify common components of their recommendations (Table 1). All guidelines included recommendations for:

- Increased protein intake
- Increased fluid intake
- Increased vitamin D
- Limit sodium
- Limit saturated fat
- Maintain levels of dietary fibre
- Oral health and nutrition
- Physical activity
- Recommended energy levels
- Special considerations for age-related issues
- Supplements use where required.

Table 1 – Country specific food based dietary guideline recommendations for older people, by category

A tick mark (✓) reflects inclusion in the guidelines. A cross (X) signifies that the concept was not included in the guideline.

Country	Finland	Ireland	United Kingdom	United States
Accompanying factsheets and/or consumer resource	X	✓	X	✓
Biochemical and/or weight screening	✓	✓	✓	X
Decline in appetite	✓	✓	✓	X
Effect of medicines on nutrition	✓	X	X	X
Food safety advice	✓	✓	X	✓
Functional decline in gastrointestinal tract with age	✓	✓	✓	X
Guidance as standalone	✓	✓	✓	X
Guidance included in general dietary guidelines	X	X	X	✓
Increase protein	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase fluid intake	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase Vitamin D	✓	✓	✓	✓
Integration of references to other resources	X	✓	X	✓
Limit alcohol	✓	✓	X	✓
Limit sodium	✓	✓	✓	✓
Limit saturated fats	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maintain levels of dietary fibre	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oral health and nutrition	✓	✓	✓	✓
Obesity and ageing	✓	✓	✓	X
Promote meal enjoyment by eating with others	✓	X	X	✓
Physical activity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recommended energy levels	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special considerations for age-related issues	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use supplements where required	✓	✓	✓	✓



4. Appendix A – International Guideline recommendations for older people

4.1 - Finland

Recommendations are in four parts and cover:

Food services for older people

- Good meals and nutrition for elderly people needing support and services at home.
- Implementation of meals in residential care
- Good practices when implementing food services and nutrition care.

Nutrition care for older persons:

- Monitoring and assessing nutrition status and food use
- Nutrition care as a whole for persons in residential care, division of responsibilities and multi-professional cooperation
- Oral nutritional supplements and food supplements.

Special characteristics of nutrition for older persons:

- Increased nutrient requirement
- The impact of ageing and chronic diseases on nutrition and nutritional care
- Nutrition and medicine
- Oral health and nutrition
- Recommendations to maintain functional capacity and muscle strength.

Procurement, tendering and public steering of food services for older people:

- Planning and tendering for the procurement of services and food items
- Public steering and evaluation of operations.

4.2 - Ireland

Nutrition-related issues for older adults living in Ireland:

- High levels of overweight and obesity
- Dental health
- Hydration and advice on beverages
- Salt.

Macronutrients of public health concern:

- Protein – Part A. General older adult population
- Protein – Part B. Frailty, sarcopenia and undernutrition
- Dietary carbohydrate and fibre – Part A. Dietary carbohydrate
- Dietary carbohydrate and fibre – Part B. Dietary fibre
- Fat.

Micronutrients of public health concern:

- B vitamins
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin D
- Calcium
- Iron
- Zinc.



4.3 – United States of America

Recommendations are based on the following:

- Healthy dietary patterns
- Special considerations for older people: protein, vitamin B12, beverages including alcohol
- Supporting healthy eating: enjoyment of food, ability to chew or swallow foods, food safety, government resources
- Physical activity.