

Supporting people with Dementia to eat and drink

- Ensure the person is alert, *upright* and comfortable
- If wearing dentures, check they are well-fitting
- If able, encourage the person to eat and drink independently. Provide hand-over hand assistance if required
- If you are fully assisting the person, talk them through the feeding process i.e. what food they are having and when you will be feeding them
- Provide strong flavours to stimulate e.g. sweet, sour or cold
- Take care with hot foods as the person may have lost the ability to judge temperatures
- Often an individual with dementia prefers 'finger foods' i.e. snack foods that do not require a knife and fork, *on a little and often basis*
- If a person is not responding to a cup or spoon to their mouth, try cueing them in with a taster e.g. apply a small taste of yogurt or ketchup on their lower lip
- If the person is holding food or drink in their mouth, verbally prompt them to swallow, or try bringing an empty teaspoon to their mouth; this can sometimes work as a cue or reminder to swallow