Feeding Tubes in Adults With Advanced Illness: Use, Overuse, and the SLP’s Role

INTRODUCTION

Studies on feeding tubes in individuals with advanced illness, particularly dementia, have raised doubts about the long-term benefit and potential overuse of feeding tubes. SLPs are often asked to offer recommendations about a person’s ability to eat and drink by mouth but may be concerned that restrictions on oral intake could lead to the use of feeding tubes. The boundaries of professional roles are often blurred, further complicating the issue. This course will address the clinical research surrounding the use of feeding tubes, offer evidence-based practice guidelines, and provide solutions to the challenges facing SLPs with regards to feeding tube overuse.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
You will be able to:

- list factors that contribute to the rapid growth of feeding tubes in individuals with advanced illness, particularly dementia, and conditions for which feeding tubes have and have not been shown to be effective
- utilize effective strategies to overcome the challenge of feeding tube overuse
- describe the role of SLPs in decision-making about gastrostomy tubes and feeding
- suggest alternatives to feeding tubes for individuals who are at high risk for dysphagia and aspiration but with a goal of comfort feeding and no tube

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PROGRAM HISTORY and IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Live webinar date: September 20, 2016
Peer reviewed: June 5, 2017
End date: June 5, 2020

To earn continuing education credit, you must complete and submit the learning assessment on or before June 5, 2020.
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To see if this program has been renewed after this date, please search by title in ASHA’s online store at www.asha.org/shop.

This course is offered for 0.2 ASHA CEUs (Intermediate level, Professional area).

STATEMENT ON EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association that audiologists and speech-language pathologists incorporate the principles of evidence-based practice in clinical decision making to provide high-quality clinical care. The term evidence-based practice refers to an approach in which current, high-quality research evidence is integrated with practitioner expertise and client preferences and values into the process of making clinical decisions.

Participants are encouraged to actively seek and critically evaluate the evidence basis for clinical procedures presented in this and other educational programs.

Adopted by the Scientific and Professional Education Board, April 2006