**Patient information**

**Fibreoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) Information sheet**

Speech and Language Therapists are experts in the assessment and treatment of swallowing problems (dysphagia). You have been referred to the Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) because you have had some difficulties swallowing as a result of surgery or a medical condition.

Sometimes the therapist needs detailed information about how you swallow and you may need a more accurate swallowing test, using a camera that goes through your nose to look at your throat. This is called a FEES (Fibreoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing) and Speech and Language Therapists have specialist training in this procedure.

***1. What is a FEES?***

During FEES, the Speech & Language Therapist uses a very small tube like camera with a light on the end. This is called an endoscope. The endoscope is flexible, and connects to a computer and video monitor or screen. Your swallowing test is usually recorded so that it can be watched again later.

***2. Why have a FEES?***

When you have a bedside swallowing test the Speech and Language Therapist cannot see what is happening inside your mouth and throat. FEES can help the therapist find out:

* if food or saliva is going into your airway instead of your stomach, called *aspiration*
* what parts of your mouth and throat may not be working well
* what kinds of food are safest for you to swallow
* if certain positions or strategies help you swallow better

***3. Who will be there during the test?***

There will be a team of two people present during your test. This team will be made of two Speech and Language Therapists, or an expert Speech and Language Therapist and another member of the care team. Extra members of the healthcare team or your carers may observe the procedure. The equipment needed for the FEES can be moved to different places, which means that it may be done at your bedside or you may go to an office or clinic to have it done.

***4. Is there any preparation for the test?***

There is no preparation necessary for this test. If you are eating and drinking then you may continue to do so right up until the FEES is carried out.

***5. What happens during the test?***

You will be seated or propped up in bed so that you are comfortable. The tube will be gently inserted through your nose and will bend to look into your throat. You will be given some things to eat and drink. Food dye may be added to improve the view of your swallowing. The Speech and Language Therapist can see a picture of your throat on the computer screen and can watch the food/drink as it passes through. The test normally takes around 10-15 minutes.

***6. Are there any risks during the procedure?***

FEES is a safe test with very few problems reported, however if you have a history of nose bleeds or fainting please let your therapist know prior to the exam. FEES can cause mild to moderate discomfort as the scope is inserted but once it is in position this feeling normally improves. Anaesthetic cannot be used as it may numb the throat and affect the swallow.

***7. What happens after the test?***

The Speech and Language Therapist will tell you about the results of the test and you may even watch the video so you can see the test yourself. Out-patients can go home immediately after the appointment as there are no after-effects.

The therapist will use the results to plan your treatment and if indicated, will talk to you about what kinds of food and drink are the safest for you. Results of the test will be fed back to the healthcare team and a written report will be added to your medical notes.

If you have any questions about the clinic or the procedure, contact:

Name…………………………….

Department……………………...

Tel ………………………………