

## **FOI 0138/2025 Response**

- 1. Have you undertaken an equality impact assessment for vegans at the NHS? If yes, can you provide a copy of the assessment?**

No we have not.

Please note that:

- BSMHFT wouldn't routinely do an EQIA for individual protected characteristics - you would need some context to apply the "impact".
- BSMHFT do provide meals for all requirements.

- 2. Are you following your public sector equality duty toward vegans? Please provide any documents or information to explain whether and how the PSED is being followed towards vegans.**

From a food service provision perspective, there are always vegan options available, either on the main menu (these will be clearly marked with a 'VG' menu code), or if there is not a vegan option on the main menu that day, there is a separate vegan menu that people who follow a vegan diet can order from.

This is available at both lunch and supper.

Alternatives to dairy-based milks and spreads are always available for breakfast and snacks.

All the catering staff are equipped with the information to help them answer questions about the suitability of these items for those following a vegan diet or know where to get that information if they need to clarify.

- 3. Do you guarantee a full vegan option that is nutritionally appropriate on all NHS menus and cafeterias at all times, for all meals, including breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack options. By 'guaranteed' I mean, is there always a fully vegan option available.**

Vegan options are always available as noted in question 2.

The nutritional suitability will depend on the menu and other choices the person makes and their individual nutritional requirements.

We also must consider that the entirety of the food someone eats in a day spans beyond what is on the hospital menu, so it is difficult to determine complete nutritional suitability.

If any patients following a vegan diet need additional and personalised nutritional advice, they have access to clinical dietitians while they are a BSMHFT patient.

Please note that some of our meals for patients following a vegan diet are outsourced ('cook-freeze' meals) and therefore, we cannot control the nutritional content of these meals.

However, we would always liaise with suppliers to get the best products we can, to be as nutritionally suitable as possible.

All our menus are assessed against the standards in the British Dietetic Association Nutrition and Hydration Digest, and the menus are analysed by a Specialist Food Services Dietitian.

For the meals we produce in house, the Food Service Dietitian works with the chefs and Facilities Teams to ensure the vegan meals meet the standards, e.g., this may include advising on other protein sources to ensure targets are met.

**4. Do you guarantee plant milk availability on all NHS campuses for coffee and tea? For clarity, plant milk refers to: Soy, oat, almond, or coconut milk.**

Yes