

## SOP015: Thickener Ordering

<b>Purpose</b>	A guide for processing requests for fluid thickeners on the patient's repeat template, when recommended by a Speech & Language Therapist (SLT), with the aim to ensure that prescribing is safe, effective and cost-effective.
<b>Scope</b>	This SOP is for processing prescriptions requests for fluid thickeners for both new and continuing requests
<b>For the use of</b>	Prescription Clerks, Receptionists, Administrators, Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacists

### Request for prescription of thickener received (NHS App, paper slip, footfall etc.)

Please check appendix in Part 5 if you are unsure of available products

### PART 1: Repeat Prescription coordinator/administrator investigations and actions:

Please check the following before issuing the prescription:

- 1) Check that the IDDSI level and preparation instructions are clearly documented in the repeat dose box, see example below.

If the IDDSI level is not documented, this is a **patient safety** issue

→ **Highlight to your pharmacist to amend. Item can still be issued.**

#### Nutilis Clear powder (Nutricia Ltd)

525 gram - IDDSI level 2- thicken all drinks to IDDSI level according to instructions on pack

- a. **Please note:** After feedback received from N&W SLT teams, **we no longer recommend the inclusion of number of scoops per ml of fluid in the use instructions**, as these are meant to be a guide only but depending what type of drink is thickened the results may not be the correct texture when compared to testing.
  - b. Instead of stating number of scoops per ml of fluid, please state IDDSI level recommended by SLT and add the phrase "thicken all drinks to IDDSI level according to instructions on pack" (see example above). Dose instructions should be updated at review or when prescriptions are being processed.
  - c. **Exception:** Instant Carobel powder may be used as a thickener for paediatric dysphagia in children **under 3 years only**. Prescribing directions should include **number of scoops per millilitres of fluid only (not an IDDSI level)** as per SLT.
  - d. Please note Instant Carobel powder may also be prescribed for '**Thickening feeds in the treatment of vomiting**' (ACBS) in infants, though it should not be prescribed routinely. See link to [Norfolk and Waveney ICB Infant Formula Guideline and Formulary](#).
- 2) **Check quantity prescribed** in 28 day period and how often patient is requesting. If ordering is very erratic i.e. 3 months between last issue, or if repeatedly ordering before the due date → **please highlight to your pharmacist. Item can still be issued.**

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Reviewed by: Helen Carter, Dietitian Norfolk and Waveney ICB Medicines Optimisation Team		Approved by: Anna Samkin, Lead Dietitian Norfolk and Waveney ICB Medicines Optimisation Team

## PART 2: Pharmacist investigations and actions:

Please refer to [Norfolk and Waveney Thickener Guidance](#)

- 1) Quantity issues
  - a. Please check patient is prescribed the **suggested number of tins per month suitable for the recommended IDDSI level (see Table 1 below)**. A smaller or larger quantity may be prescribed if needed to match usual daily fluid intake - this should be agreed individually. If thickener prescribed is not listed in table ensure patient is prescribed correct amount according to most recent SLT correspondence (letter or entry on SystmOne / EMIS).
  - b. Under-requesting may indicate a compliance issue which may warrant investigation by GP or Clinical Pharmacist. Check patient is aware of latest SLT recommendations.
- 2) Documentation of IDDSI levels
  - a. Ensure recommended **IDDSI level and instructions** are documented. 'As Directed' is not appropriate. You can find this information in the most recent correspondence from SLT (letter or entry on SystmOne/EMIS).
  - b. Be aware, IDDSI level may change over time so please update directions, IDDSI level, and quantity prescribed if SLT recommendations change.
  - c. **Any Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) also need to be reviewed to check suitability.** Please highlight to relevant dietitian if the patient is being actively reviewed.

## PART 3: Requesting further advice

If pharmacist unable to resolve query or would like to discuss any aspect of this SOP, please contact the Dietitians at Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board, as per blue box below.

Please be aware the ICB Dietitians no longer routinely look at patient records so may only be able to provide general information. A video call can be arranged to discuss individual queries if required.

Contact details for NWICB Dietitians: [nwicb.dieteticqueries@nhs.net](mailto:nwicb.dieteticqueries@nhs.net)

Please provide the following details with your query:

- 1) Patient name
- 2) NHS number
- 3) GP practice
- 4) Type of query (ONS, thickener, infant formula) and product name
- 5) Reason why highlighted to ICB Dietitians

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## PART 4: Suggested quantities of thickener product to prescribe

See Table 1 below.

**Please note:** this is a guide only and some patients may require a smaller or larger quantity of product, depending on their usual daily fluid intake.

**Table 1: Suggested quantities per IDDSI level per 28-days, based on manufacturers' information**

Encourage at least 1.5 litres fluid / day, adjust quantity of product as needed	Dose per IDDSI Level, according to manufacturers	Calculated requirements	No. of tins to prescribe per 28-day issue
<b>FIRST LINE</b> <b>Nutlis Clear</b> (Nutricia)  Tin size: 175g 1.25g per level scoop 140 scoops per tin  Costs: £10.54 per tin 7.5p per scoop (As of Feb 2026)	<b>Level 1:</b> <b>Slightly thick</b> 1 scoop per 200ml	140 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 28 days for 1L 1 tin = 19 days for 1.5L	2 tins for 1.5L 350g total
	<b>Level 2:</b> <b>Mildly thick</b> 2 scoops per 200ml	70 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 14 days for 1L 1 tin = 9.3 days for 1.5L	3 tins for 1.5L 525g total
	<b>Level 3: Moderately thick</b> 3 scoops per 200ml	47 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 9.4 days for 1L 1 tin = 6.3 days for 1.5L	5 tins for 1.5L 875g total
	<b>Level 4:</b> <b>Extremely thick</b> 7 scoops per 200ml	20 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 4 days for 1L 1 tin = 2.7 days for 1.5L	10 tins for 1.5L 1750g total
<b>FIRST LINE</b> <b>Thick &amp; Easy Clear</b> (Fresenius Kabi)  Tin size: 126g tin 1.4g per level scoop 90 scoops per tin  Costs: £6.69 per tin 7.4p per scoop (As of Feb 2026)	<b>Level 1:</b> <b>Slightly thick</b> 1 scoop per 200ml	90 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 18 days for 1L 1 tin = 12 days for 1.5L	3 tins for 1.5L 378g total
	<b>Level 2:</b> <b>Mildly thick</b> 2 scoops per 200ml	45 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 9 days for 1L 1 tin = 6 days for 1.5L	5 tins for 1.5L 630g total
	<b>Level 3: Moderately thick</b> 3 scoops per 200ml	30 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 6 days for 1L 1 tin = 4 days for 1.5L	7 tins for 1.5L 882g total
	<b>Level 4:</b> <b>Extremely thick</b> 6 scoops per 200ml	15 x 200ml drinks / tin 1 tin = 3 days for 1L 1 tin = 2 days for 1.5L	14 tins for 1.5L 1764g total

Table 1 continued below

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Encourage at least 1.5 litres fluid / day, adjust quantity of product as needed	Recommended dose per IDDSI Level	Calculated requirements	No. of tins to prescribe per 28-day issue
<b>SECOND LINE</b>  <b>Resource ThickenUp Clear</b> (Nestle)  Tin size: 215g 1.2g per level scoop 179 scoops per tin  Costs: £15.27 per tin 8.5p per scoop (As at Feb 2026)	<b>Level 1:</b> <b>Slightly thick</b> 1 scoop per 200ml	179 x 200mls drinks / tin 1 tin = 35 days for 1L 1 tin = 23 days for 1.5L	2 tins for 1.5L 430g total
	<b>Level 2:</b> <b>Mildly thick</b> 2 scoops per 200ml	89 x 200mls drinks / tin 1 tin = 17 days for 1L 1 tin = 11 days for 1.5L	3 tins for 1.5L 645g total
	<b>Level 3:</b> <b>Moderately thick</b> 4 scoops per 200ml	44 x 200mls drinks / tin 1 tin = 8 days for 1 L 1 tin = 5 days for 1.5L	6 tins for 1.5L 1290g total
	<b>Level 4:</b> <b>Extremely thick</b> 6 scoops per 200ml	29 x 200mls drinks / tin 1 tin = 5 days for 1L 1 tin = 3 days for 1.5L	9 tins for 1.5L 1935g total

## PART 5: Appendix

List of thickeners which may be recommended by SLT

**Please note:** Table 1 above includes suggestions for *Nutilis Clear*, *Thick & Easy Clear* and *Resource ThickenUp Clear* only, other thickener products may present in different tin sizes and the suggested number of scoops indicated for IDDSI levels may change, **please always follow SLT advice**.

Gum Based Thickeners	Starch Based Thickeners
Nutilis Clear (Nutricia) Thick & Easy Clear (Fresenius Kabi) Swalloweze Clear (Nualtra) Instant Carobel (Nutricia): For children under 3 years only	Nutilis Powder (Nutricia) Thick & Easy Original (Fresenius Kabi)

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