

Writing Long and Short Term Goals

Rule	Example	Comments
Simple, clear and succinct Goal should ideally be 1 single sentence. Do not use acronyms.	Patient will be able to eat and drink foods of xxx texture/quantity/viscosity consistently without any signs of aspiration, as evidenced by family and therapist observation with no reported episodes of coughing during or after oral intake.	Multiple sentences are not wrong per se but should be avoided. Do not use acronyms, unless clarified in accompanying documentation.
Forward looking Start sentence with statement of future status.	Patient <u>will be able to</u> ...	The goal statement should create a snap shot of the patient's functional ability at some point in the future. In the case of a Long Term Goal (LTG), this end point will be at the anticipated completion of treatment. In the case of a Short Term Goal (STG) the end point will often be 1 week from date of note.
Functional wording Describe future status of the patient in functional terms.	Patient will be able to <u>eat and drink</u> ...	Answers the question, "WHAT will patient be able to do?"
Modifier of functional activity Quantify the functional activity.	... eat and drink <u>foods of xxx texture / quantity / viscosity</u> ...	Answers the question, "WHAT will patient be able to eat and/or drink? How much? What kind? What consistency?"
Measurable criterion Qualify functional activity in objective and measurable terms.	... viscosity <u>consistently without any signs of aspiration,</u> ...	Answers the question, "HOW will patient be able to eat and/or drink these foods? How fast? How well? How safely?"
Objective measuring method Specify the objective measure.	... aspiration, <u>as evidenced by family and therapist observation with no reported episodes of coughing during or after oral intake.</u>	Answers the question, "HOW will you know the goal has been met?" Use words such as, "as evidenced by" or, "as confirmed by."

Note: The treatment interventions (e.g., head turn, use of thermal-tactile stimulation, VitalStim Therapy, etc.) are not mentioned in the goal statements.

Goal writing exercise

In the following examples, identify which of the required elements is missing or incomplete. Check all that apply.

1. Mr. Smith presents to the department with aspiration pneumonia. He is very motivated to participate in treatment, is cognitively intact and has great potential to benefit from treatment. Treatment will consist of VitalStim Therapy 3 x per week for 4 weeks after which a repeat MBS will be ordered.

- ☐ Simple, clear and succinct
- ☐ forward looking
- ☐ functional wording
- ☐ modifier of functional activity
- ☐ measurable criterion
- ☐ objective measuring method

2. Patient will be able to tolerate VitalStim therapy for 30 minutes.

- ☐ Simple, clear and succinct
- ☐ forward looking
- ☐ functional wording
- ☐ modifier of functional activity
- ☐ measurable criterion
- ☐ objective measuring method

3. At the completion of treatment the patient will tolerate least restrictive diet as evidenced by self- and family report.

- ☐ simple, clear and succinct
- ☐ forward looking
- ☐ functional wording
- ☐ modifier of functional activity
- ☐ measurable criterion
- ☐ objective measuring method

4. At the end of treatment the patient will have maintained or increased weight without the assistance of percutaneous gastrostomy feeding and will have improved quality of life as evidenced by improved score on the SWALQOL.

- ☐ simple, clear and succinct
- ☐ forward looking
- ☐ functional wording
- ☐ modifier of functional activity
- ☐ measurable criterion
- ☐ objective measuring method