

# 11 MARYMOUNT CARE CENTRE

Lucan, Co Dublin

**Type:** Workplace Catering / healthcare sector  
**Country:** Ireland



## Why it is a good practice?

Marymount Care Centre's ethos is to serve good quality, 'real' food to hospital and care home residents. By providing a nutritious menu made from fresh ingredients they are proud to provide nourishment and healing food, resulting in healthier patients and residents. They avoid waste by good kitchen management and avoid over-processed and over-packaged foods by using fresh and local ingredients. By blending meals for those with special needs, they eliminate patient segregation. Food is not just sustenance but also celebrated as a social occasion and something to look forward to and to talk about.

## About

Joyce Timmins is a force to be reckoned with when it comes to food in the healthcare sector. When you think of hospital and care home food in Ireland you might think of something rather bland and colourless. Not so with The Rotunda Hospital and the Marymount Care Centre in Dublin, which have become a game-changers in hospital food. In 2017 Joyce, a Michelin star chef, took over in the catering department of the Rotunda, with a "fresh eye". Although it was her first job in the healthcare sector, she had extensive experience in restaurants around Ireland and in the UK, and she approached the challenge as a chef first and foremost. In September 2019, Joyce moved onto become the Catering Manager at The Marymount Care Centre, Lucan where she uses the same ethos of fresh food and fantastic flavours. As a result, there is far less food waste and far more nutrition in each meal, which of course makes for healthier patients and residents. Joyce would like to see more emphasis on food in the health care sector. She feels this is an area of the HSE [Ireland's health authority] that needs major changes. Hence, Joyce's next ambition is to be employed on by the HSE and work with dietitians and nutritionists to improve the catering across the board and get the menus to the standard that they should be at.

## Healthy

When Joyce came to the hospital, the food options were extremely limited with the evening meal consisting of a salad or a sandwich and many of the other meals consisted of processed or packaged foods. Joyce made a change straight away for everything to be cooked from scratch including soups and sauces. At the Rotunda Hospital nothing comes out of a jar or a packet. Simple, fresh meals are cooked and served on the same day. Out went hot boxes that kept food warm and congealing in kitchens before making its way to wards and in came fresh food, which was carved and plated up on wards and delivered to patients immediately.

*"Mealtimes are a time to look forward to for our residents. I want all residents and patients, no matter what their eating capabilities, to rest assured that they get not only nutritious meal, but it is a time of happiness too. Sometimes we need to build up some residents so we would use full fat products rather than low fat, but we make sure that the food contains all the natural nutrients that are so important for their health."*

## Ethical

Joyce has a particular skill in creating visual masterpieces for those with a dysphagia condition, where one has difficulty in the passage of solids or liquids from the mouth to the stomach, a lack of pharyngeal sensation or various other inadequacies of the swallowing mechanism. From an all puréed Christmas dinner to open salmon sandwiches, Joyce epitomises innovation in healthy food service. By doing this there is less segregation or alienation among care home residents. The same great menu for all but adapted to suit the special needs of some. This method is far more nutritious and inclusive for residents.

Follow Joyce Timmin's story

