### 5.6. Oral Algorithm

- **Patient is malnourished or at risk of malnutrition on screening**

  This patient should undergo a nutritional assessment by a suitably qualified health professional (e.g. Dietitian, NST), in line with local policies.

- **Nutritional intake may be improved by:**
  - Treating contributory symptoms e.g. nausea
  - Support/supervision at mealtimes
  - Expert assessment by a dietitian.

- If further weight loss or BMI already <18.5 kg/m² and/or unintentional weight loss >10% within the last 3-6 months or BMI <20 kg/m² and unintentional weight loss >5%, within the last 3-6 months then options:
  - Increasing menu choice and provision of snacks
  - Support/supervision at mealtimes
  - Food fortification
  - Oral nutritional supplements
  - Vitamin and mineral supplements to meet dietary reference values (DRV).

  (these options are not exclusive and can be used in combination)

- Review indications for, route, risks, benefits and goals of nutrition support at regular intervals depending on the patient and care setting.

- **Is nutritional intake satisfactory?**
  - Yes
  - Stop nutrition support if/when normal diet meets adequate nutritional needs and maintains nutritional status
  - No

does the patient have any of the obvious or less obvious indicators for dysphagia?

- **Can oral intake be safely maintained by use of modified food and liquids?**
  - Yes
  - Stop nutrition support if/when normal diet meets adequate nutritional needs and maintains nutritional status.
  - No

- Is the patient’s GI tract accessible and functioning and is the patient likely to meet nutritional needs through the oral route alone?

- **Is nutrient intake adequate and is weight stable or increasing?**
  - Yes
  - Continue modified food and liquids and to monitor intake, body weight, and severity of dysphagia and review need for intervention monthly.
  - No

- **Refer patient for assessment by a healthcare professional with specialist training in diagnosis, assessment and management of swallowing disorders (e.g. speech and language therapists).**

- **Is the patient unable to meet nutritional needs through oral route alone?**

  See Enteral and Parenteral Support Algorithm