

## The GATHER Approach to Counseling

**G**reet the client. Ask him or her to sit down and then exchange introductions.

**A**sk how the client feels.

- Discuss nutritional status and wellbeing since the last visit.
- Ask about symptoms and nutrition problems and concerns.
- Share the results of the day's nutrition assessment.
- Find out what the client has done to address any nutrition problems and how successful he or she has been.

**T**ell the client about different ways to address her/his nutrition problems.

- Use counseling materials related to the client's problems.
- Help the client set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) nutrition goals (e.g., "I will gain 4 kg by the end of March") to address the problems.

**H**elp the client make informed choices.

- With the client (and family or caregiver), help the client find ways to reach the nutrition goal he or she has set.
- Help the client come up with ideas that are practical and relevant. For example:
  - "Get weighed every month to see whether I am meeting my goal."
  - "Manage symptoms by changing my diet."
  - "Add a spoon of ghee to my evening meal or eat a mug of porridge made from fermented millet/sorghum for breakfast."
  - "Boil all the water I drink and wash my hands before preparing or eating food."

**E**xplain fully the choices the client has made.

- Explain why these choices will help improve the client's nutritional status.
- Discuss barriers that might make it difficult to make these changes.
- Ask the client to explain the actions, doing demonstrations if necessary.
- Summarize (or ask the client to summarize) what you have agreed on and how it will be done.

**R**eassure the client and agree on a **R**eturn date for the next visit. Ask the client to repeat the date.