

Activities Performed by Medical Nutrition Therapists

Medical Nutrition Therapy: Means the **assessment** of the nutritional status of **patients**. It involves the assessment of patient nutritional status followed by treatment, ranging from diet modification to specialized nutrition support, such as determining nutrient needs for enteral and parenteral nutrition, and monitoring to evaluate patient response to such treatment.

The practice of medical nutrition therapy must be performed under the **consultation** of a physician licensed pursuant to 71-1,104 or sections 71-1,137 to 71-1,141.

Patient: Means a person with a disease, illness, injury, or medical condition for which nutritional interventions are an essential component of standard care.

Assessment: Means the process of evaluating the nutritional status of **patients**. The assessment includes review and analysis of medical and diet histories, biochemical lab values, and anthropometric measurements to determine nutritional status and appropriate nutritional treatment.

Consultation: Means conferring with a physician regarding the activities of the licensed medical nutrition therapist.

The Practice of Medical Nutrition Therapy DOES NOT Include:

(1) Any person licensed or certified in this state pursuant to Chapter 71 and engaging in such profession or occupation for which he or she is licensed or certified;

(2) Any student engaged in an academic program under the supervision of a licensed medical nutrition therapist as part of a major course of study in human nutrition, food and nutrition, or dietetics, or an equivalent major course of study approved by the board, and who is designated with a title which clearly

indicates the person's status as a student or trainee;

(3) Persons practicing medical nutrition therapy who serve in the Armed Forces or the Public Health Service, or are employed by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, if their practice is limited to that service or employment;

(4) Persons practicing medical nutrition therapy who are licensed in another state, United States possession, or country, or have received at least a baccalaureate degree, and are in this state for the purpose of:

(a) Consultation if the practice in this state is limited to consultation; or

(b) Conducting a teaching clinical demonstration in connection with a program of basic clinical education, graduate education, or postgraduate education which is sponsored by a dietetic education program or a major course of study in human nutrition, food and nutrition, or dietetics, or an equivalent major course of study approved by the board;

(5) Persons performing general nutrition services incidental to the practice of the profession insofar as it does not exceed the scope of their education and training;

(6) Persons who market or distribute food, food materials, or dietary supplements, including persons employed in health food stores, or persons engaged in the advising of the use of those products, or the preparation of those products, or the counseling of individuals or groups in the selection of products to meet general nutrition needs;

(7) Persons conducting classes or disseminating information related to general nutrition services;

(8) Persons who care for the sick in accordance with the tenets and practices of any bona fide church or religious denomination;

(9) Persons who provide information and instructions regarding food intake or exercise as a part of a weight control program; and

(10) Persons with advanced postgraduate degrees involved in academic teaching or research.

Activities Performed by Ancillary Staff

Ancillary Staff may be referred to as "Dietary Manager", "Dietary Technician", or other similar titles.

Ancillary Staff can provide General Nutrition:

- Identifying the nutritional needs of individuals and groups in relations to normal nutritional requirements
- Planning, implementing, & evaluating nutrition education programs for individuals and groups in the selection of food to meet normal nutritional needs throughout the life cycle

Ancillary Staff collect nutritional data:

- Complete the MDS (Minimum Data Set)
- Anthropometric data (height, weight, age, etc)
- Laboratory values
- Current medications
- Diagnoses
- Food Preference and Diet History
- Recognizes routine versus at risk clients using established guidelines
- Perform routine nutrient computations using food composition tables
- Verify nutrient computations

Ancillary Staff determine:

- Dining room seating, to include: mobility (self ambulatory, uses walker, uses wheelchair, uses adaptive chair, can transfer to usual dining room chair, appropriate for special equipment - oxygen, etc)
- Location in relation to appropriate lighting
- Compatible table mates
- Staff assistance as needed
- Table service to include:
 - Need for adaptive equipment and place setting
 - Table height
 - Comfortable chair

Diet Order is recorded to assure:

- Diet is served correctly
- Texture is adjusted as needed
- Diet acceptance is recorded and monitored, both food and fluid
- Weight is recorded and monitored on a routine basis
- Observe patient during intake of food and fluid; document observations, such as anthropometric data, food preferences, etc., for medical records or on the patient's chart
- May direct questions to the physician in charge or the medical nutrition therapist and may make recommendations based on observations

The Licensed Medical Nutrition Therapist is notified of all information identified in the 'Ancillary Staff' section in writing on a form determined by the facility for purposes of a medical record.

NOTE: The section relating to *Ancillary Staff* activities is not intended to list all activities/services ancillary staff can perform, rather a sampling of those commonly identified.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

QUESTION: Is the Medical Nutrition Therapist required to attend all Care Staff Meetings?

ANSWER: No

QUESTION: Can Ancillary Staff complete the MDS Form?

ANSWER: Yes

QUESTION: Can Ancillary Staff complete the TRIGGERS and RAPS?

ANSWER: This question is being further researched by the Board; an answer will be available in the near future.

QUESTION: If a patient is having chewing problems, can Ancillary Staff direct the patient receive ground food rather than whole food?

ANSWER: Yes, in consultation with nursing and medical staff and other appropriate staff such as speech therapist.

QUESTION: Is the Medical Nutrition Therapist required to complete the initial care plan for each patient?

ANSWER: No, the care plan is based on Ancillary Staff observations and the LMNT's Nutritional Assessment; the care plan is completed by a multi-disciplinary team.

QUESTION: Who can review and revise patient care plans?

ANSWER: The revision is a joint effort completed in cooperation with the Dietary Manager and LMNT.

QUESTION: Who is required to complete the "Malnutrition Risk Assessment Form"?

ANSWER: Ancillary staff can complete; however, if a problem is identified, the issues should be referred to the LMNT (this is merely an observation form even though the term "Assessment" is in the title of the form).

QUESTION: Can Ancillary Staff chart in patients charts?

ANSWER: Yes, however, it depends on the facility's policy and what the facility requires to be documented in the chart.

This brochure is not intended to answer every question that may arise, however, we hope this brochure can be utilized as a quick reference to clarify whether the licensed medical nutrition therapist or ancillary staff can provide the identified nutritional activity in the day to day practice within facilities.

This brochure was developed in consultation with the following:

Board of Medical Nutrition Therapy,
Staff at the Licensure Unit,
and data collected from
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Nutrition Related Activities Provided by:

Medical Nutrition Therapists and Ancillary Staff



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