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## Report to the House of Delegates

### Council on Research Committee, HOD Charge Workgroup

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#### **Research-Related Abbreviations**

ANDHII – Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Health Informatics Infrastructure  
DPBRN – Dietetics Practice-Based Research Network

EAL – Evidence Analysis Library  
NCPT – Nutrition Care Process Terminology  
RISA – Research, International, and Scientific Affairs

#### **Virtual Spring 2014 HOD Meeting Dialogue**

The purpose of the dialogue on research was for delegates to:

- 1) Increase members' awareness of Academy research resources
- 2) Recognize various ways members are utilizing and contributing to research
- 3) Develop a plan to empower members (at all practice levels) to use, participate in and/or conduct research to benefit the profession and the public
- 4) Identify ways that members can build a professional culture that encourages and embraces research
- 5) Advocate for resources to conduct research

#### **HOD Motion #1: Engaging Members in Research (May 20, 2014)**

**As a result of the HOD dialogue session, the following motion was approved:**

*Therefore, be it resolved that the House of Delegates requests that the Council on Research develop a concrete plan to engage members in research, which includes an outcome measures component. The plan will empower members at all practice levels (including undergraduate and graduate students and interns) and all practice areas (management, clinical, food service, business, public health) to successfully use, participate in and/or conduct research; effectively connect members to existing research resources; recognize members' current contributions to research; and create a strong culture of research for the profession based on the HOD dialogue and recent assessment of research within the Academy. Preliminary and final reports will be submitted by fall 2014 and spring 2015 or sooner to the House of Delegates.*

Additionally, the HOD Leadership Team provided guiding principles that came out of the HOD Meeting:

- Reinforce the concept that member involvement in research is an opportunity to support advocacy for the profession. This includes justifying and expanding funding and reimbursement for nutrition and dietetic services.

- Encourage didactic and experiential learning opportunities in nutrition and dietetics research during educational preparation and entry into the profession.
- Utilize professional development and mentoring opportunities to build confidence in research participation for nutrition and dietetics students and practitioners.
- Foster a member mindset that research is an essential element of evidence-based practice and encourage practitioner participation in activities along a continuum of research. Support seamless integration into daily practice.
- Promote member engagement in research through opportunities available within the Academy.
- Promote participation in data collection, analysis, and reporting (e.g., DPBRN, ANDHII, publications, peer-reviewed journals) and outcomes research for demonstrating the value of services provided by nutrition and dietetics practitioners.
- Promote inter-professional collaboration in research to advance best practice and improve the nation's health through food and nutrition.
- Utilize consistent messaging regarding the importance of research and encourage member engagement in research opportunities available throughout the Academy. The House of Delegates, Affiliates and DPGs are key organizational units to utilize consistent messaging in engaging members in research.

The Council on Research Committee designated an HOD Charge Workgroup in August 2014 to address the HOD motion and charge.

#### **HOD Charge Workgroup Activities**

On May 2014, the first teleconference call was held to introduce the members and discuss the purpose of the Council on Research. Alison Steiber introduced the four different areas of work within the Council. The HOD Charge Workgroup is chaired by Camella Rising with 2 additional members of the Council, Kelly Tappenden and Chris Rosenbloom. The Workgroup members had a conference shortly after the May call to address the charge. The following document is a result of the discussions among members of the Workgroup and full Council between May 2014 and January 2015.

#### **Recommended Action Plan to Create a Culture of Research**

- The Council will make Academy units and members aware of the need to create a culture of research (see boxed statement, page 3). To help make members aware, the Council will submit an article on this topic to Academy groups' newsletter editors for broad and quick reach. The Council will also consider submitting an article to the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*.
- The Council will work with Academy units to address members' perceived and/or real barriers to research by applying the recommendations that begin on page 3. Perceived and/or real barriers include, but are not limited to, lack of time, mentor/principle investigator, personal incentive, employer support, opportunity, funding, experience, appropriate setting, self-efficacy, and lack of awareness of resources and opportunities that already exist.
- The Council will ask Academy units to suggest and provide to the Council research-related measurable outcomes when they develop annual programs of work. These research-related outcomes measures will become a part of the Academy's family of measures.

**Conceptualizing a strong culture of research for the nutrition and dietetics profession:** Research is perceived as an essential element of evidence-based practice and is seamlessly integrated into the daily work of all RDNs and NDTRs. RDN- and NDTR-credentialed practitioners and researchers participate collaboratively in activities along a continuum of research, using Academy guidance and support at every point along this continuum. This culture is developed early in the life of a RDN or NDTR, during her/his years as a nutrition and dietetics student. The Academy is responsible for empowering nutrition and dietetics students and “everyday RDNs/NDTRs” to use, participate in, and conduct research. Nutrition and dietetics students, RDNs, and NDTRs should be recognized across all Academy units for their research-related contributions to the field.

### **Council Recommendations**

#### ***What Can Everyone Associated with the Academy Do?***

- Utilize existing Academy research resources, such as the EAL, ANDHII, the Research Toolkit, and DPBRN, and inform the Academy of additional research resources needed
- Read and share with colleagues Hand RK. Research in nutrition and dietetics--what can the Academy do for you? *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2014 Jan;114(1):131-5
- Strengthen Academy members’ research presence and innovation by collaborating on research projects with colleagues, departments, units, and/or organizations that are both nutrition- and non-nutrition-related
- Advocate for nutrition-related research when working with decision- and policymakers; share with them existing evidence as well as gaps that can be filled by funding and supporting research that will close those gaps
- Amplify recognition of research-related achievements at all practice levels (student to expert) and in all practice areas

#### ***What Can Educators and their Students/Interns Do?***

- Integrate research into required DPD courses and supervised practice programs
- Promote graduate studies, including both basic and applied research (note: graduate degree will be required by 2024)
- Pair nutrition/dietetics graduate students/interns with graduate students/interns from other health care disciplines to promote not only interdisciplinary education but interdisciplinary research
- Encourage graduate students/interns to conduct research projects to fulfill graduate/internship requirements
- Advocate for researchers to volunteer as internship preceptors
- Build research partnerships with external departments
- Share with students of all levels how to find research funding and navigate the funding process

***What Can Practitioners and Researchers Do?***

- Utilize the Academy’s e-mentoring program as a research mentor or mentee
- Include research as part of CDR-approved continuing professional education (e.g., 100. Academic Coursework; 160. Journal Clubs; 205. Research)
- Generate policies and communicate standards of practice using evidence-based decisions
- Become involved in the EAL, such as serving as an expert workgroup member or lead analyst, and participate in the DPBRN
- Use ANDHII to demonstrate nutrition outcomes at work and with decision- and policymakers
- Share results of performance improvement activities that address nutrition outcomes or program/service deliverables
- Present research at non-nutrition/non-Academy educational events in addition to presenting at nutrition-related educational events
- Promote research conducted by RDNs of all educational levels, not only doctoral level

***What Can Academy Groups Do?***

- Promote utilization of the Academy’s e-mentoring program as a research mentor or mentee
- Encourage newsletter editors to include a member research section in their publications
- Include research-focused sessions or symposia at educational events
- Fund an Academy or Academy Foundation research project/grant of particular interest to the group
- Share their strong cultures of research with the Academy and other Academy groups

***What Can ACEND Do?***

- Share with the Council on Research their research needs
- Collaborate with RISA to expand research-related ACEND competencies

***What Can CDR Do?***

- Include a research component as part of all certificate programs
- Include questions on the RDN exam pertaining to evidence analysis
- Provide additional ways to earn CPEUs through research participation

***What Can Communication, Marketing, and Publications Do?***

- Guided by the Council on Research, 1) develop an infographic about research and present it within Academy publications; 2) create a video about the importance of research for the profession; and 3) periodically highlight the activities of the Council on Research in *Eat Right Weekly Research Briefs*
- Regularly feature research, such as member researcher “spotlights,” in *Food & Nutrition* magazine and the companion website

- Market Academy research tools already available
- Develop a flyer about the importance of research and available tools and send to members with membership renewal cards
- Provide Academy website links to external research resources, including grant opportunities from partnering organizations
- Highlight peer-reviewed research articles by RDN authors in the Daily News from the Knowledge Center
- Create an Academy Research Month, honoring nutrition and dietetics research and researchers
- Make DPBRN membership a one-step process that corresponds with annual Academy membership renewal
- Coordinate with the Center for Professional Development to enhance marketing of the FNCE Research Symposium

#### ***What Can the Center for Professional Development Do?***

- Collaborate with RISA to develop research-related webinars
- Develop a model for affiliates and DPGs to publish research in their newsletters for member CPEUs
- Showcase the “everyday RDN/NDTR” and RDNs/NDTRs of multiple practice levels as part of the FNCE Research Symposium
- Collaborate with the Foundation and RISA to develop additional ways of recognizing research conducted by RDNs/NDTRs of all experience levels through awards and showcases at FNCE
- Collaborate with DPBRN to create an abstract writing webinar to be delivered one month before FNCE abstracts are due

#### ***What Can the Foundation Do?***

- Generate funds to support member participation in DPBRN projects
- Align funding with research priorities identified by the Council on Research: 1) cost-effectiveness of nutrition care; 2) food security; 3) effect of nutrition care on health outcomes; 4) using nutrition outcomes to influence policy development; and 5) RDN-generated research
- Continue to showcase research-related Foundation achievements widely
- Reassess grant requirements and funding to encourage the submission of high-quality proposals and high-quality reviews

#### ***What Can RISA Do?***

- Continue to promote and update as necessary existing research tools, such as the EAL, DPBRN, ANDHII, the NCPT, the NutriGuides app, Academy research-related tutorials and videos, Ethics in Research Training Modules, and the Research Toolkit
- Broaden usability testing of existing research resources across a variety of practice levels and areas
- Market evidence analysis project expert workgroup and lead analyst training opportunities
- Widely promote the existence of Academy fellowships to work on RISA projects
- In collaboration with the Center for Professional Development, modify and expand the existing Research Toolkit to include topics such as grant writing; the research process and how research impacts the nutrition and dietetics field; how to use ANDHII and the NCPT for tracking and sharing data; and the pros and cons of funding from different types of external organizations

- Develop a research proposal writing “boot camp,” with an expected outcome of submitting a proposal to the Foundation
- Create talking points on topics for the “everyday RDN/NDTR,” such as how to discuss with managers and other staff the tangible benefits of research and ways to incorporate research and research tools such as ANDHII into current work streams
- Expose members to all DPBRN projects via Academy website
- Collaborate with the Foundation to develop stipends for participation in DPBRN
- Partner with Academy groups to market and train their members to use ANDHII and participate in the DPBRN; market EAL projects and opportunities through newsletter editors and social media administrators
- Initiate a topic identification proposal for a research-specific Academy practice paper
- Advance research participation through incentives, such as DPBRN participant stipends and raffles for entering data into ANDHII
- Develop FAQ sheets about the DPBRN process, including how to advance from participant to investigator
- Determine how to overcome member barriers to accessing research articles beyond the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*
- Post on the EAL a “bank” of research questions that manifest as a result of evidence analysis and DPBRN projects (for members, graduate students, researchers, grant writers, e.g.)
- Convene key scientists and practitioners from various disciplines to explore new approaches to solving nutrition and dietetics related research questions

#### **Possible Outcome Measures for Academy Units**

- % increase RDNs with graduate degrees, particularly doctoral level
- % increase EAL usage by all members
- % increase in self-reported participation in applied and empirical research
- % increase in DPBRN participation
- % increase in nutrition-related external organization research participation
- % increase in ANDHII usage
- % increase published research

#### **Website Addresses**

Academy Member Center Research <http://www.eatright.org/Members/content.aspx?id=9994>

EAL <http://www.andeal.org/>

DPBRN <http://www.eatright.org/Members/content.aspx?id=7187>

ANDHII <https://www.andhii.org/info/>

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation: Research Opportunities <http://www.eatright.org/foundation/research/>

Research DPG <http://www.researchdpg.org/>

**Academy Research-Related Papers**

Currently, there are no Academy position or practice papers specifically focused on research. A research practice paper would help advance the Academy’s research goals by informing practitioners about how to use, participate, and conduct research. Such a paper could also provide exemplars that demonstrate the value of research to nutrition and dietetics students, “everyday RDNs/NDTRs,” and the profession at large. Information on practice paper development can be found at <http://www.eatright.org/About/Content.aspx?id=7437>. DPBRN and Research DPG members make up a pool of potentially qualified authors for consideration when completing the topic identification proposal for practice papers.

**References**

HOD Fact Sheet – Outcomes of Spring 2014 HOD Virtual Meeting; HOD Motion #1 Spring 2014; Consolidated Comments – Review of HOD Motion Spring 2014; Workbook Summary Consolidation HOD Spring 2014