Competency-Based Education Programs – Benefits to Demonstration Programs and Students:

- The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) has released the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Associate (FA), Bachelor’s (FB) and Graduate (FG) Degree Programs, which are competency-based education (CBE) programs that integrate classroom learning with supervised experiential learning.
- Nutrition and Dietetics is joining the other allied health professions that have switched to CBE model, such as physical therapy, speech language pathology, occupational therapy, audiology, nursing and pharmacy.
- CBE fosters work readiness. In the FEM Accreditation Standards, the curriculum is guided with the competencies and their respective performance indicators, which are defined based on the desired behaviors and job skills targeted.
- Employers see potential value in job applicants who will study using CBE since it aligns academics with the skills they seek in their employees.
- Students will benefit from programs that offer both the required experiential and didactic in a single degree program versus the most common dietetics education traditional process of completing a bachelor’s degree program and then requiring a separate application to a supervised practice program; reducing both anxiety and expense for the student.
- FEM demonstration programs will have access to CBE support materials from ACEND, along with online and in-person training on CBE and competency assessment.
- FEM demonstration programs and their organizations gain national recognition as leaders and early adopters.
- Directors of demonstration programs will participate in a network of educators implementing the FEM Accreditation Standards, as well as in tele-networking and in-person meetings with other demonstration program directors.
- Directors of demonstration programs will have access to collated data, collected by ACEND from stakeholders of demonstration programs, which can be used to inform enhancements to their programs.
- Financial benefits include waived fees for a program change or candidacy application, a one-year accreditation fee, training webinars and travel and registration for the in-person training on CBE and assessment. For a list of current fees visit the website at: https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accreditation-standards-fees-and-policies/fee-schedule

Other ACEND Standards Considerations:

- No decision has been made to discontinue any program type. All existing program types (CP, DI, DPD, DT, FDE, IDE) continue under the 2017 Accreditation Standards and are expected to be compliant with these standards.
- CP, DPD, DI and IDE programs that do not offer a master’s degree must tell students they need, at minimum, a master’s degree to be eligible to take the CDR registration exam for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists after January 1, 2024.
- There has been no change to the degree requirement to take the CDR registration exam for Nutrition and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (NDTR).

Communication:

- For more information on the degree-based FEM standards and submitting applications to become a demonstration program visit https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accreditation-standards-fees-and-policies/future-education-model
- Contact ACEND at 1-800-877-1600 ext. 5400 or futuremodel@eatright.org with any questions.