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## **2017 Standards Guidelines on Supervised Practice**

The draft 2017 Standards for Coordinated Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics (CP) and Nutrition and Dietetics Internship Programs (DI) include the following guideline in Standard 1:

*Guideline 1.7 a. The program must specify the program length [in academic units (CP)/months (DI)]. The program must document that students complete at least 1200 hours of supervised practice experiences and must document hours of actual supervised practice, simulation, case studies and role playing.*

A similar guideline is included in the draft 2017 Standards for Nutrition and Dietetics Technician Programs (DT):

*Guideline 1.7 a. The program must specify the program length (in academic units). The program must document that students complete at least 450 hours of supervised practice experiences and must document hours of actual supervised practice, simulation, case studies and role playing.*

These guidelines were designed to offer more flexibility for programs in the ways they prepare students to demonstrate the required competencies. Many health profession education programs, including those in nutrition and dietetics, have effectively used simulation, role-playing, and case studies to develop the needed competence in their graduates. ACEND offers programs flexibility in designing their supervised practice activities with the use of these alternative forms of experiential learning to meet some of the supervised practice hours.

The draft 2017 Standards do not specify a number or percentage of the supervised practice hours that come from real-life experiences in actual practice or that come from these alternative forms; rather program directors are asked to track the hours from each. ACEND will collect these data and use them to help determine if future standards should define the proportion of these hours that come from actual practice versus from alternate forms of experiential learning.

ACEND values your input on this new guideline; especially whether it achieves increased flexibility for programs and what additional guidance should be provided to programs about use of alternate forms of experiential learning. Please consider providing comments on the online survey (info below) or email your comments to ACEND at [acend@eatright.org](mailto:acend@eatright.org).

### **Provide Comments on the 2017 Standards**

ACEND invites comments on the draft 2017 Standards for Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics. Comments can be provided until May 13, 2016 at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2017Std2>.

### **For Additional Information**

- Review information on the ACEND Standards Committee Website [www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards](http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards).
- Participate in a monthly ACEND virtual town hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 11:30 CT; information on how to connect to the town hall is available at [www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards](http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards).
- Contact ACEND (acend@eatright.org; 312-899-4872).

## Questions That Have Come to ACEND

**Question: Do the 2017 Draft Standards require experiential learning be a component for Didactic Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics (DPD)?**

**ACEND Response:** The 2017 draft standards do not require that experiential learning be a component of DPD programs.

**Question: What is the rationale behind asking programs to track graduates' involvement as preceptors and are all programs being asked to have this objective?**

**ACEND Response:** One of the major concerns that has been identified in our educational preparation of future nutrition and dietetics practitioners is the need for more practitioners to serve as preceptors for the experiential learning component of the education process. ACEND believes that nutrition and dietetics education programs can play a critical role in reducing the shortage of preceptors by preparing students with an understanding of the role of preceptors, the importance of this role and the need for graduates to serve in this role once they enter practice. The 2012 Standards included the requirement that "students/interns must have opportunities to learn professional behaviors and expectations, including public service and the service to the profession as preceptors and mentors" (Standard 20.1 f) but did not have a required outcome measure for this expectation. ACEND is emphasizing the importance of better preparing graduates for this role by including "KRDN 2.8: Describe the role of a professional in mentoring and precepting others"; "CRDN 2.16: Experiment with mentoring others"; "Guideline 5.3 d. Learning activities must provide opportunities for students to learn professional and ethical behaviors and expectations including ways to contribute to the nutrition and dietetics profession such as serving as preceptors and mentors" and "Guideline 3.3 d. The program must develop an objective that states the percent of program graduates who are expected to be involved as preceptors or instructors in the education of future dietitian nutritionists within five years of program completion." ACEND is not setting a specific percentage of graduates who must be serving in the preceptor role, programs will set a percentage goal for their program.

**Question: When accepting students to shadow at my hospital, must I have an affiliation agreement in place?**

**ACEND Response:** The 2017 Standards do not include requirements for a facility, such as a hospital, to have an affiliation agreement with a program to permit a student from that program, who asks, to shadow. The 2017 Standards do require, however, affiliation agreements when programs routinely place students in an institution, such as a hospital, for learning experience, for example a DPD program that require all students to shadow practitioners at Hospital A (see Standard 8 of the 2017 draft Standards for more information).

**Question: When will programs be expected to come into compliance with the 2017 Standards?**

**ACEND Response:** The exact date for compliance with the 2017 Standards has not yet been determined. The draft 2017 Standards are currently available for public comment until May 13, 2016. Those comments will be reviewed and revisions made as needed before the standards are finalized. ACEND anticipates having the final 2017 Standards released later summer 2016 and at that time will release the date for compliance. ACEND expects programs will be given at least six months to come into compliance with the new standards.

**Question: What was the rationale for moving to the use of only one year pass rate data rather than both first time and one year data?**

**ACEND Response:** Prior to the 2012 Standards, ACEND tracked only the first time pass rate of students on the CDR credentialing exam. Based on requests from educators to also examine the one year pass rate, ACEND included both the first time and one year pass rates as outcome measures in the 2012 Standards. ACEND reviewed both first time and one year pass rate data for the past several years and explored what pass rate data are used by other accreditors. ACEND decided to go with only one indicator, the one year pass rate, because it typically was a more positive outcome for programs than the first time pass rate and because a one year pass rate was used by several other health profession accreditors (Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology) . Programs have the option to set a first time pass rate objective for their program, if they choose.

**Question: What are expectations for existing accredited nutrition and dietetics programs at institutions who apply for and are accepted as programs to pilot one of the future education model programs?**

**ACEND Response:** All currently accredited nutrition and dietetics programs (DPD, DI, CP, DT) will be expected to come into compliance (exact date for compliance has not yet been determined but will be sometime in 2017) with the 2017 standards to maintain that program's status as an ACEND accredited program. ACEND anticipates that most programs will continue their currently accredited program. Some programs are expected to request to serve as pilot programs and voluntarily adopt the future education model standards.

The details about the application and selection process of pilot programs for the future education model have not yet been finalized, but ACEND expects to have them available in fall 2016. An institution with one or more currently accredited nutrition and dietetics programs that desires to pilot a future education model associate, bachelor, or master degree program likely would need to make a decision among the following options:

- **Reorganization of Current Program:** The institution could decide to reorganize its existing accredited program into one of the future education model programs. ACEND policies (P&P Manual p. 67-68) about reorganizing an existing ACEND accredited program into another program type describe the current steps that would be involved in such a reorganization.
- **Continuation of Current Program and Opening New Program:** The institution could decide to continue the accreditation of its current program under the 2017 Standards and apply for candidacy of a newly developed program under the future education model standards. ACEND policies for newly developed programs (P&P Manual p. 36-40) describe the current candidacy process.
- **Opening New Program and Closure of Current Program:** The institution could decide to apply for candidacy of a newly developed program under the future education model standards and close its existing accredited program. ACEND policies for newly developed programs (P&P Manual p. 36-40) describe the current candidacy process and policies for program changes (P&P Manual p. 66) describe the current steps that would be involved in a program closure.

ACEND anticipates that most of the currently accredited CP, DPD, DI and DT programs will continue their accreditation under the 2017 Standards and will continue to prepare future practitioners under those standards while the pilot testing of the future education model standards is done. At some future point, likely at least four to six years after the future education model standards begin pilot testing, ACEND will make a final decision about the standards that will be required of all programs in the future and the timeline for programs to come into compliance with those standards.