

The following are activity highlights since our February meeting.

### **Advancing Relationships with Key Stakeholders**

For the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Academy collaborated with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to share a message to providers promoting the Medicare MNT benefit during National Nutrition Month<sup>®</sup>. The [message](#) was included in CMS' e-newsletter, encouraging physicians to help their Medicare patients make informed food choices and to develop healthy eating patterns that meet their individual, cultural and personal food preferences by encouraging use of Medicare-covered nutrition-related services, including medical nutrition therapy. The e-newsletter reaches over five million readers, including over 100,000 Twitter followers. We also had the opportunity to promote National Nutrition Month<sup>®</sup> through the CMS' Caregivers Workgroup. This group represents approximately 1,600 organizations that reach a broad segment of population caregivers, patient advocate groups, communities of faith and provider organizations.

### **Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative (MQii) Updates**

In March, the Academy published [Development and Evaluation of a Global Malnutrition Composite Score](#) in the *Journal*. Separately, *JPEN* published [How a Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative Furthers Malnutrition Measurement and Care: Results From a Hospital Learning Collaborative](#) which demonstrates the significance of malnutrition identification results from the Learning Collaborative's uptake of malnutrition measures and use of the MQii Toolkit. After a successful National Quality Forum (NQF) Prevention and Population Health Committee meeting on February 17-18, the Global Malnutrition Composite Score (GMCS) moved a step closer to measure endorsement as it passed overwhelmingly across all "must pass" criteria categories. Comments received from stakeholders during the April 1<sup>st</sup>-30 NQF endorsement comment period were extremely positive supporting the GCMS. Two submissions questioned the GMCS citing issues with the medical diagnosis for physician accountability and cost parameters to complete the composite measurement, a burden to hospitals. CMS released the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program proposed rule on April 27, 2021 and the GMCS was not included as a new quality measure. The Academy and MQii partners discussed the outcome and initiated next steps engaging CMS leaders to understand direction for future quality measures and a letter writing campaign to raise concerns about CMS's lack of discussion on malnutrition given the gap in reportable nutrition-focused endorsed measures and the public health emergency.

### **SNOMED Collaborator Request**

The Academy has been asked by SNOMED International, an organization which determines global standards for health terms, to enter a contract to be a [clinical collaborator](#), which would place the Academy in a prestigious group which includes the American Dental Association, American Medical Association and the World Health Organization. "The focus of partnerships is to enhance consistency in meaningful data capture and information exchange and to improve safety, while enhancing functionality and enabling interoperability for the growing number of healthcare professions that use and exchange electronic health records using SNOMED CT and related products." We are in the final stages of reviewing the collaboration agreement.

### **2019 Informatics Survey: Results and Future Directions**

The Academy recently published an article in the *Journal* entitled “2019 Nutrition Informatics Survey: Results and Future Directions.” This fourth informatics survey of nutrition and dietetics practitioners revealed increased use of, and comfort with, electronic nutrition orders, access to data, standards, and resources. The full text can be found at: [https://jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672\(20\)31536-7/pdf](https://jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672(20)31536-7/pdf).

### **Potential Cochrane Affiliation**

The Academy has submitted an application to become an [affiliate institution](#) of the Cochran US Network. “Cochrane produces systematic reviews of research and evidence in healthcare and health policy which are published in The Cochrane Library. All Cochrane member institutions and authors commit to the highest level of scientific rigor in their undertakings and must adhere to rigorous standards for membership and publication in the Cochrane Library.” If accepted, the Academy would join a short and prestigious list of US centers.

### **Positioning RDNs as Nutrition Experts**

In February, the Academy teamed with the Wellness Council of America for an [event](#) featuring Past President Lucille Beseler to share the importance of making RDNs available to employees in the workplace as a proven, cost-effective strategy to address chronic disease.

### **Urban Transformation Health Events**

I have been working with the CEO of the Urban Transformation Network (UTN) to explore collaboration opportunities related to nutrition education in urban communities. UTN works with under-represented and limited resource individuals, families, and youth to improve health issues, assist with making healthy food choices, and for a physically active lifestyle. Our Strategic Plan emphasizes the important role of nutrition in community-based outreach programs promoting health equity and reducing health disparities.

This partnership has resulted in the Academy co-sponsoring UTN’s June 19 health fair event in Chicago to assist with cooking demonstrations and sharing healthy eating information. We will provide a sports nutrition presentation to student athletes at UTN’s Sports & Nutrition Day this summer. I have asked the SCAN DPG, the Chicago district dietetic association, as well as the Illinois affiliate to identify RDNs to provide nutrition education and participate in other health-related activities.

### **Revised Nephrology Nutrition SOP/SOPP**

The joint publication by the Academy and National Kidney Foundation, “Revised 2020 Standards of Practice (SOP) and Standards of Professional Performance (SOPP) for RDNs (Competent, Proficient and Expert) in Nephrology Nutrition,” was published in March in both the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* and the *Journal of Renal Nutrition*. RDNs can look to this SOP/SOPP for tools to assist with self-evaluation, professional development and advancement of practice.

### **Preterm Infant Guidelines Accepted for Publication**

The Academy’s Preterm Infant Guidelines are now available on the Evidence Analysis Library and will be published in the *Journal*. This project was in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health.

### **Research Team Publishes COVID Nutrition Care Article**

The Academy’s Data Science Center staff recently published an article in the *Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition* entitled “Nutrition Care Practice Patterns for Patients with COVID-19 – A Preliminary Report.” This study is the first to report on nutrition diagnoses and interventions used by RDNs for patients with COVID-19. Inadequate oral/energy intake and malnutrition were the most common findings. The full text can be found at:

<https://aspenjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jpen.2106>.

### **World Health Organization**

In April, Alison Steiber, as the Academy’s Chief Science Officer, presented during a virtual meeting to the World Health Organization on WHO’s guideline “Management of infants and children at high risk (excessive adiposity) and children with obesity for improved health, functioning and reduced disability: a primary health care approach.” This invitation-only meeting included representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNICEF and the World Obesity Federation.

### **Focus Area Standards Highlights**

[Highlights](#) of overarching concepts from the Focus Area Standards of Practice and/or Standards of Professional Performance articles (Oncology Nutrition, Nephrology Nutrition and Sustainable Food Systems) are available online to review. They include what the standards represent, how the standards are revised, a brief overview of the Focus Area, a role example and links to resources.

### **Food as Medicine Added to Definition of Terms List**

The term “Food as Medicine” has been [added](#) to the Definition of Terms List. Food as Medicine is a philosophy that has been around since 400 BC, outlining how food and nutrition can support health and wellness. The definitions serve as standardized language for consistent application in practice settings and Academy documents.

### **New ‘Quickinars’ Added to Practice Tips**

Two new “quickinars” have been added to Quality Focused Practice Tips: [RDNs Pivot during the Pandemic for Change Management Success](#). Topics include “Occupational Pivoting During Challenging Times” and “Improving Regulatory Compliance of Pediatric Inpatient Admission Nutrition Screen Completion through use of K-cards.”

### **Supporting Practice via Telehealth**

The Academy continues to expand its menu of tools and resources supporting practice in telehealth. The latest addition is the new Telehealth [Discussion Board](#), providing a platform for Academy members in focused areas of practice and practice settings to network around delivering nutrition services via all telehealth modalities.

**PIA Internship Program**

The Academy's Policy Initiatives and Advocacy internship program provides a learning experience for interns where they are immersed in the policy and advocacy world of nutrition and dietetics. Working remotely during has enabled us to increase the reach of the PIA internship program. In 2019, the internship program had four interns, translating to 0.5 full time employees. In 2020, the program had 19 interns, which is equivalent to 1.3 full time employees. So far in 2021, there are seven interns, 0.4 full time employees. Interns have worked on a variety of Academy advocacy and policy initiatives, including the health equity research brief, a *Journal* article on medical nutrition therapy, appropriations forms and more.

**Social Media Toolkit**

The Academy's and Foundation's [Social Media Toolkit](#) for the second quarter of 2021, which includes Foundation messaging, is now available. This toolkit is part of larger social media plan that the Foundation has developed to work with volunteers to help promote its work; share opportunities for members; encourage members' donations; and increase the Foundation's visibility. This includes Board members who have offered to promote the Foundation via their social platforms.

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