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**PRESIDENT'S REPORT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
OCTOBER 2, 2020**

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Following are activity highlights since our July meeting.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Throughout the past several months, we have received thoughtful and informative feedback from many members of our profession about diversity and inclusion. We continued the conversation via a series of listening sessions the weeks of September 21 and 28. The discussions were moderated by our external partner The Exeter Group. Volunteers were invited to discuss specifics about their experiences as members of our profession as they relate to diversity and inclusion. These conversations will provide an opportunity for the Academy to gain a deeper understanding of the strengths, areas of opportunity and potential action steps the Academy can address. Exeter will share a report of aggregate themes and recommendations. This report will be used by the Academy's D&I committee to develop a diversity and inclusion action plan.

### **Academy Appointments**

#### *NIH Seminar Series on Barriers to Advancement*

The Academy has appointed Academy members and RDNs Loneke Blackman Carr and Francoise Kazimierczuk as our representatives to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and NIH-funded [Nutrition Obesity Research Centers'](#) seminar series, taking place during September and October. The series focused on identifying and addressing barriers to advancement of people who are underrepresented in academia. The representatives will attend a breakout group for the NORC Initiative to Advance the Careers of Researchers from Groups Underrepresented in Academic taking place after each seminar. As a breakout group participant, they will participate in a one-hour discussion at the conclusion of each of the five workshops to discuss barriers, facilitators, and future directions for the topic addressed that day. This work will ultimately be published as Conference Proceedings for the Meeting in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

#### *ACLM Expert Consensus Statement*

Earlier this month, I appointed Academy member and RDN Lorraine Weatherspoon as our representative to participate on the American College of Lifestyle Medicine's panel to develop a new Expert Consensus Statement on dietary interventions for treatment of type 2 diabetes. The purpose of this ECS is to provide guidance on the most effective dietary intervention for the treatment of existing type 2 diabetes with the goal of partial or complete remission.

#### *AHRQ Malnutrition in Hospitalized Adults Report*

Chief Science Officer Alison Steiber accepted an invitation to join the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's Effective Health Care Program, which is conducting a systematic review on malnutrition in hospitalized adults. Congress has requested AHRQ convene a panel of experts to develop quality measures for malnutrition-related hospital readmissions. Alison's appointment complements the Academy's ongoing Evidence Analysis Project on malnutrition in older adults.

*Appointment to CMS Technical Expert Panel*

Academy member and RDN Pamela Kent has been named to a technical expert panel formed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to develop measures to assess the costs of care for chronic kidney disease and end-stage renal disease. Having an RDN on this panel will ensure visibility for the important role of cost-effective MNT services for this population and ideally will help develop a measure that could positively impact utilization of and payment for RDNs' services.

**Governance Update: ICD-10 Codes**

In June, I sent a letter to the ICD-10 Coordination and Maintenance Committee, supporting a proposal to create new ICD-10 CM codes for short bowel syndrome and intestinal failure. The current gap in specific ICD-10 CM codes for these diseases makes it difficult to quantify the incidence and prevalence of SBS and IF as well as the health care costs associated with managing these patients. It leads to misclassification of these diseases, resulting in potentially improper and suboptimal treatment of these vulnerable populations. It also prevents health care providers and researchers from effectively studying treatment options and outcomes to support quality and cost-effective evidence-based practice. This action was based on recommendations from the Clinical Nutrition Management, Dietitians in Medical Nutrition Therapy (GI and Digestive Diseases subunit), Dietitians in Nutrition Support and Pediatric Nutrition DPGs; the Nutrition Services Payment Committee and the Council on Research. The ICD-10 Coordination and Maintenance Committee will be vetted the proposal at its September virtual meeting. Their final decision is pending coordination of action with WHO and their ICD-11 code set. We anticipate further updates in June 2021.

**Addressing Food Security through Child Nutrition Programs**

Members of the Academy met recently with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to share first-hand their stories and challenges of feeding children as schools resume during the COVID-19 pandemic. Academy members urged officials to consider the needs of schools through the end of the school year to ensure access to food and sustainability of programs and services. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue earlier announced that USDA will extend several flexibilities through December 31, allowing summer meal program operators to continue serving free meals to all children into the fall months. Academy members have been asked to respond to an action alert asking for the waivers to be extended through June 30, 2021.

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/news-center/on-the-pulse-of-public-policy/from-the-hill/academy-applauds-usda-child-nutrition-waiver-extensions-calls-for-extensions>

**Recording Available: Second Annual Nutrition and Health Equity Summit**

More than 3,000 people attended [the Academy's second annual Nutrition and Health Equity Summit](#) online on August 25, hosted by the Academy and U.S. Rep. Robin L. Kelly (Ill.), chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust. The following topics were addressed at the Summit:

- Health Disparities and COVID-19: America's Report Card
- Structural Racism: Implications for Diet and Health
- Nutrition, Disparities and Chronic Disease: Finding Solutions After the Pandemic.

I provided remarks at the summit along with Sharon Cox, Reps. Robin L. Kelly (Ill.); Alma Adams (N.C.); and Danny K. Davis (Ill.).

A [recording](#) of the virtual event is now available. Next steps included a continuation of the dialogue on September 23 as part of the September Spotlight on Malnutrition. In addition, the Academy is exploring the potential for a similar event with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

### **September Spotlight on Malnutrition Month Resources**

The third annual [Spotlight on Malnutrition Month](#) once again brought awareness to malnutrition. We hosted a free weekly webinar series, a Twitter chat and resources on malnutrition including a communications toolkit. During September, the Academy called on Congress to advance the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act as an important component of addressing senior malnutrition. View the social media at <https://www.eatrightpro.org/media/multimedia-news-center/spotlight-on-malnutrition-media-materials>.

### **Member Policy Interest Survey**

Board members are asked to take the [Member Policy Interest Survey](#) so we can leverage your areas of expertise in our policy work. The survey will enable the Academy to develop a network of highly engaged, motivated and experienced policy leaders to advance our federal policy initiatives.

### **Licensure Update: September 2020**

On September 23, nutrition and dietetics practitioners received an update on the Academy's work on licensure, particularly in Florida. The Academy believes that medical nutrition therapy and other complex nutrition and dietetics services should only be provided by individuals who have at minimum the specialized education and training of RDNs or meet state licensure standards. Like physicians, pharmacists, nurses and other health care professionals, this means we will continually and effectively fight for state licensure laws to reduce the risk of harm to the public from incompetent or unqualified providers. The entire message is available at <https://www.eatrightpro.org/news-center/on-the-pulse-of-public-policy/state-matters/licensure-update-september-2020>.

### **International Confederation of Dietetics Associations Report**

On September 15, I attended the virtual all-member meeting of the International Confederation of Dietetics Associations, along with former Academy President Judy Rodriguez, the U.S. representative on the ICDA Board. Items presented during the virtual meeting included reports from the chairperson and secretary, an update regarding the financial statements, reports from auditors, appointment of the auditors for the coming year and a vote to approve clarifications and changes to bylaws. In addition, the membership held an election for the 2021 ICDA Directors and Judy was re-elected as the U.S. representative on the Board.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Linda T. Farr, RDN, CSOWM, LD, FAND