Brutal Fact: Preceptor Shortage and Lack of Supervised Practice Experience

- Despite efforts on the part of the Academy, NDEP, and ACEND, the number of supervised practice positions continue to lag significantly behind demand, leaving growing numbers of qualified graduates who are unable to complete their education to become an RDN. Annually approximately 2,000 baccalaureate degree graduates who have met DPD requirements and received a verification statement cannot obtain supervised practice required for registration eligibility. Although ACEND-accredited Individualized Supervised Practice Pathways (ISPPs) were implemented in January 2012 for those who were not matched to an internship, a shortage of preceptors and supervised practice positions to support the ISPP option remains a barrier.

- The number of students applying for dietetic internships exceeds the number of positions available and that proportion is growing. **The number of Dietetic Internship (DI) program openings has increased about 15% since 2004; however, the number of applicants, both first-time and returning applicants, has nearly doubled. The challenge remains that there are more DPD graduates and applicants than there are supervised experience openings.**

- Shortage of Preceptors: Preceptors are also in short supply. RDNs working in all aspects of health care today have increased demands on their daily professional responsibilities, and experience difficulty in allotting time for students and interns while meeting mandated productivity standards. These factors will greatly impact the future of education in our profession, particularly on the capacity for our educational system to meet the growing demand for nutrition and dietetics practitioners.

**Mega Issue Question:** What solutions can the House of Delegates offer to the Academy, ACEND and NDEP to help increase the number of supervised practice experience positions and the number of preceptors?

**Meeting Objectives:**
Participants will be able to:
1. Brainstorm solutions to increase supervised practice experience positions, especially in non-hospital settings.
2. Brainstorm solutions to increase the number of preceptors.

**What HOD Needs from You**
Talk with your delegate(s) about this issue in advance of the Fall 2014 HOD Meeting (October 17-18, 2014). Your delegate will discuss your feedback during the table dialogue at the Fall 2014 HOD Meeting.

Delegate contact information is available at www.eatright.org/leaderdirectory.