

Why Do Practitioners Need to Read the Revised 2017 Scope/Standards Documents?



THE REVISED 2017 SCOPE OF Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) and for the Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered (NDTR) and Revised 2017 Standards of Practice (SOP) in Nutrition Care and Standards of Professional Performance (SOPP) for RDNs and for NDTRs explain the roles performed and responsibilities associated with RDN and NDTR accountabilities as credentialed practitioners. All four articles can be found at jandonline.org/content/core.

WHAT IS MY SCOPE OF PRACTICE?

A credentialed practitioner's individual scope of practice in nutrition and dietetics has flexible boundaries to capture the breadth of the practitioner's professional practice, which is informed by the RDN's or NDTR's education, training, credentialing, experience, and demonstrated competence. To identify the parameters of individual scope of practice and the services that form the nutrition and dietetics profession, the RDN or NDTR must review the Academy Scope of Practice, along with statutory scope of practice and state laws; state and federal regulations—Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) conditions of participation/coverage; accreditation standards, work setting(s) policies, and procedures; and additional training, credential, and certification.^{1,2}

WHAT IS NEW IN THE 2017 REVISED SCOPE OF PRACTICE DOCUMENTS?

There are several noteworthy changes from the 2012 Scope and Standards

documents that are essential for every RDN and NDTR to know. These include regulation updates in CMS Conditions of Participation for Hospitals, Critical Access Hospitals, and Long-Term Care Facilities, which allow a hospital or long-term care facility the option of granting RDNs ordering privileges and/or delegated orders for therapeutic diets and nutrition-related services; the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation (IMPACT) Act of 2014; and the national efforts to address malnutrition and development of electronic clinical quality measures.^{3,4}

BURNING QUESTIONS

Can RDNs measure blood pressure; conduct waived point-of-care laboratory testing (eg, blood glucose or cholesterol); initiate pharmacotherapy plans (eg, insulin management); or perform nutrition-focused physical exams?

The Revised 2017 Scope of Practice for the RDN contains a list of tasks that can be performed by RDNs who have demonstrated and documented competence and the required knowledge, skills, and training.¹ Once verified competent, an RDN can measure blood pressure, conduct waived point-of-care tests, initiate pharmacotherapy plans, and perform a nutrition-focused physical exam.

Can NDTRs provide nutrition education using telehealth technology?

Yes, the Revised 2017 Scope of Practice for the NDTR specifies telehealth is a practice area²; however, it is incumbent upon the NDTR to review applicable state regulations governing telehealth. The NDTR must understand requirements when a client lives in another state, as well as recognize when a client must be referred to an RDN or another health care practitioner. Additional resources include the Practice Tips: NDTRs and Autonomy⁵ and <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/practice/practice-resources/telehealth>.

Does the Revised 2017 Scope of Practice apply to the nonpracticing RDN or NDTR?

Yes, RDNs and NDTRs who are not working in nutrition and dietetics, but are maintaining their credential, are

ethically obligated to maintain the minimum competent level of practice as outlined in the SOP in Nutrition Care and/or SOPP for RDNs and for NDTRs.^{3,4}

Do these documents apply to dietetics graduates without registration?

Yes, RDNs working with dietetics graduates without registration must understand their professional responsibility for assuring competence of these individuals.

SUMMARY

All credentialed practitioners are obligated to remain competent. The Revised 2017 Scope and Standards documents are dynamic and evolve with changes in practice environments. They support ethical and competent practice, guide career advancement, and challenge RDNs and NDTRs to perform at the full extent of their individual scope of practice.

SCOPE/STANDARDS RESOURCES

- Academy Scope of Practice webpage: www.eatrightpro.org/scope
- Academy Standards of Practice webpage: www.eatrightpro.org/sop

References

1. The Academy Quality Management Committee. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2017 Scope of Practice for the registered dietitian nutritionist. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2018;118(1):141-165.
2. The Academy Quality Management Committee. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2017 Scope of Practice for the nutrition and dietetics technician, registered. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2018;118(2):327-342.
3. The Academy Quality Management Committee. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2017 Standards of Practice in nutrition care and Standards of Professional Performance for registered dietitian nutritionists. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2018;118(1):132-140.e15.
4. The Academy Quality Management Committee. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2017 Standards of Practice in nutrition care and Standards of Professional Performance for nutrition and dietetics technicians, registered. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2018;118(2):317-326.e13.
5. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Practice tips: NDTR and autonomy. <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/practice/quality-management/scope-of-practice/scope-of-practice-terms-studies-and-tips>. Accessed March 26, 2018.

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