

IDEA Listening Lounge

Anonymous Member Feedback

FNCE® 2023

At FNCE® 2023, the Academy's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Committee hosted a listening lounge in which members were invited to share what the principles of inclusion, diversity, equity and access meant to them. Their anonymous responses were recorded and the IDEA Committee intends to reference these thoughts when developing new IDEA initiatives.

Inclusion

- What does inclusion mean to you in the dietetics profession?
 - a. Not just asked to be at the table, but to participate and provide input at table
 - b. Ideas accepted when offered and then acknowledged
 - c. Not feel excluded
 - d. Environment comfortable and welcoming, representative of all
 - e. Active listening with respect, understand that words matter
 - f. Authentic, not in one ear and out the other
 - g. Research needs to be inclusive and acknowledge different populations

- Can you share your experience with inclusion in dietetics?
 - a. Over the past twenty years, I have seen more diversity in men, race, ethnicity, etc.
 - b. Adapting to people with different characteristics (gender identity, age, etc.)
 - c. Awareness of not including people, but trying to
 - d. Experiencing the feeling of being in the minority

- What resources or programs have helped make the profession more inclusive for you?
 - a. MIGs
 - b. IDEA committee/IDEA Hub
 - c. ACEND resources
 - d. Academy being open
 - e. Open dialogue
 - f. Show more academy action statements, policies

- What barriers related to inclusion still exist in dietetics?
 - a. Lack of objective data on underrepresented groups
 - b. Gate keeper/barriers created by society/practitioners
 - c. Underrepresented groups have problems navigating the system
 - d. Transparency
 - e. Unconscious bias training should be part of ethics training

- f. Lack of access to an ombudsman particularly by students
- g. Individualized Education Plans - how are we supporting educators to address IEPs?
- What resources can the IDEA committee provide to help the profession be more inclusive?
 - a. Get out info on how to report ethics
 - b. How to navigate unethical situations - develop case studies
 - c. Preceptor database to include information on preceptors who misbehave with students and should not be used
 - d. Make IDEA visible in marketing and meetings with inclusive representation
 - e. Provide resources on all available scholarships

Diversity

- What does diversity mean to you in the dietetics profession?
 - a. Different viewpoints/perspectives
 - b. Profession is representative of local and national populations in race/ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, economics, etc.
 - c. Diversity in areas of practice, practice level, competency, skill set, education, credentials
 - d. Aspiring and successful RDNs/NDTRs from various backgrounds with a variety of diverse characteristics and the Academy championing their efforts

- Can you share your experience with diversity in dietetics?
 - a. Community struggling from lack of diverse workforce and cultural sensitivity
 - b. Negative, reactionary, and defensive responses when IDEA topics are introduced

- What resources or programs have helped make the profession more diverse for you?
 - a. Diversity training programs in schools and internships
 - b. Academy Groups and Committees (Member Interest Groups, NDEP, IDEA)
 - c. Reasonable college costs, open enrollment policies, and supportive professors
 - d. Conversation starter tools for students and practitioners

- What barriers related to diversity still exist in dietetics?
 - a. Socioeconomic
 - b. Mindset
 - c. Recruitment/selection
 - d. Educational requirements - MS Degree and financial cost
 - e. Preceptors - unconscious bias (perceived knowledge deficits, lack of speed in performing tasks, etc) against students whose primary language is not English
 - f. RDNs of all types and colors do not take IDEA efforts seriously - IDEA is perceived as an interest, not a necessity

- What resources can the IDEA committee provide to help the profession be more diverse?
 - a. Preceptor evaluation
 - b. Diversity training at work and school (continuing ed.)
 - c. How to have tough conversations with the student (when they are experiencing microaggressions or when preceptors are struggling)

Equity

- What does equity mean to you in the dietetics profession?
 - a. Acknowledging where people are and providing them the resources they need to be successful, better at their jobs, or become RDNs
 - b. Providing appropriate resources at individual levels so the playing field is level
 - c. Equity is dynamic and changes as life changes
 - d. Health equity - the attainment of the highest level of health for all people
- Can you share your experience with equity in dietetics?
 - a. Paid lower salary than peers and men, since I didn't have a family to support
- What resources or programs have helped make the profession more equitable for you?
 - a. Mentoring program
 - b. Different types of programs
 - c. Resources
 - d. Scholarships and opportunities for placement
- What barriers related to equity still exist in dietetics?
 - a. Equality mentoring
 - b. Location of facilities for internship at a great geographic distance
 - c. Lack of adequate preceptors
 - d. Financial and geographic - getting students to different locations
- What resources can the IDEA committee provide to help the profession be more equitable?
 - a. Training
 - b. Mentorship programs
 - c. Awareness
 - d. Salary
 - e. Collaborate with Foundation on scholarships

Access

- What does access mean to you in the dietetics profession?
 - a. Education, CPE, trainings/tools available to everyone
 - b. When you are at the table, do you have access to everything; are you given to get to everything
 - c. Matching all “qualified” students who want to enter the profession
 - d. Knowing about scholarships and resources early on

- Can you share your experience with access in dietetics?
 - a. Food insecurity in otherwise equitable organizations such as military
 - b. Introducing profession to secondary school students

- What resources or programs have helped make the profession more accessible for you?
 - a. State affiliates (helped with networking and connections)
 - b. Access to educational material for students/sharing textbooks
 - c. IDEA discussions by dietitians
 - d. Grants for dietetics services that help underserved communities
 - e. Supportive professors providing valuable information and encouragement

- What barriers related to access still exist in dietetics?
 - a. Lack of understanding (by policy makers) about nutrition thus not being included in discussions about nutrition and dietetics
 - b. Public needs access to dietitians and dietetics resources
 - c. PDP process is insurmountable and overwhelming for some
 - d. Students
 - i. Internship match
 - ii. Expensive textbooks and other required resources
 - iii. Application fees
 - iv. Different application cycles
 - v. Different expectations
 - vi. Lack of resources/financial aid for underrepresented groups; “They can’t afford to not work (during internship), they are supporting families”

- What resources can the IDEA committee provide to help the profession be more accessible?
 - a. The Academy should provide membership in a MIG at no additional cost with student membership
 - b. Evaluate the English reading level of the RDN/NDTR exams for ESL students
 - c. Talking points for professionals on IDEA topics

Additional Questions

- Brainstorm ways to identify and address a pressing barrier to diversity at your institution of learning or employment.
 - Organizational leadership
- Who or What can address the barrier you identified at your institution of learning or employment?
- What programs are you implementing in your own organization that have been shown to be effective in improving IDEA?
- What are you using to measure "improvement" in IDEA in your organizations?
- What are some best practices and lessons learned from implementing and evaluating these programs/initiatives?

General comments

- All aspects of IDEA loop into each other and if one is broken, it makes for a bad experience
- Get to know students as people
- "You are not the expert of someone's experience"