

2026 VIRTUAL QUALITY SYMPOSIUM

Elevating Nutrition
and Dietetics Practice
through Data
Collection and Quality
Improvement

Speaker Biographies

Day #1

[Moderator]

Emily J Pacetti, MS, RD, CSG, LDN



As a Clinical Nutrition Manager at South Shore Hospital in Weymouth, Massachusetts, a large community-based hospital, Emily leads a team of clinical dietitians focused on delivering high-quality, evidence-based care to diverse patient populations. Her work emphasizes personalized nutrition strategies and interdisciplinary collaboration to support optimal health outcomes.

Furthermore, Emily holds a Master's Degree in Nutrition a certificate in Gerontological Nutrition, which has allowed her to specialize in the nutritional needs of older adults while contributing to the wider field of healthcare

nutrition. Her expertise in gerontological care informs both clinical practice and program development, ensuring that dietary interventions are tailored to meet the evolving needs of patients.

Beyond her hospital role, she is actively engaged with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, where she currently serves as Chair of the Quality Management Committee. In this capacity, Emily advocates and promotes excellence in nutrition care through quality management pathways.

Throughout Emily's 15-year career, she has remained passionate about mentoring emerging dietitians, fostering innovation in clinical programs, and integrating research into everyday practice. Emily takes pride in building collaborative environments that enhance patient outcomes and empower healthcare colleagues.

[Opening Session] Driving Excellence: The Impact of Quality and Process Improvement in Nutrition and Dietetics

Angela Lago, MS, RD, LDN, FAND



Angela Lago is the Senior Director of Quality, Standards, and Interoperability at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Prior to her current role, she was the Regional Clinical Nutrition Manager for the Novant Health Coastal Region in Wilmington, North Carolina, where she worked from 2008-2025. She has served as both Chair-Elect and Professional Development Chair for the Clinical Nutrition Management Dietetics Practice Group. She has also served on the North Carolina Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Board on the Strategic Planning Committee. Angela obtained her BS in Nutrition from East Carolina University in 1999 and completed her dietetic internship at Winthrop University in 2001. She earned her MS in Nutrition from East Carolina University in 2006 and held the title of Certified Nutrition Support Clinician from 2009-2019. Her work has focused on Malnutrition Quality Improvement since 2017, with an emphasis on malnutrition throughout the continuum of care for the hospitalized patient. Angela is a Fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Tamaire (Tammy) Ojeda Avila, MHSA, RDN, LD



Tammy is the Director of Quality Initiatives and Improvement at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. In this role, she leverages nearly two decades of experience as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist to lead transformative quality improvement programs and contribute to the CMS986 Malnutrition Care Score Measure Development and Stewardship team. Her diverse career spans acute care, outpatient services, higher education, and community health. Prior to her current position, Tammy served as a Food Service Manager and Clinical Dietitian at a Veterans Health Administration facility, as well as rural hospitals. She has made significant contributions to clinical oncology, dialysis, weight management, and diabetes education.

Tammy holds a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification and focuses her work towards advancing patient care, improving patient outcomes, and enhancing the value of nutrition and dietetics credentialed practitioners. Her passion for quality and innovation continues to drive meaningful improvements across the nutrition and dietetics profession.

[General Session #1] From Documentation to Outcomes: Chart Smarter Not Harder

Carrina Burke, MS, RD, CDN, CNSC



Carrina is the Client Executive of Clinical Services for NYC Health + Hospitals system with Sodexo Healthcare. She oversees the clinical nutrition programs for the 11 Acute Care and 5 Post-Acute facilities for the largest public health system in the United States. She has over 15 years of clinical nutrition experience, with specialties in nutrition support, quality improvement, and nutrition informatics. She has designed and lead multiple quality improvement initiatives at both the site and system level, leading to improved patient outcomes in wound care and malnutrition. Carrina holds a B.S. in Biological Sciences

from Fordham University and a M.S. in Nutrition Sciences from Boston University. Carrina spends her free time cooking, reading, and traveling with her husband and son.

Patricia Davidson, DCN, RDN, CDCES, LDN, CHSE, FAND, FADCES



Dr. Patricia Davidson is a Professor in the Department of Nutrition at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. A registered dietitian and certified diabetes care and education specialist, she has held both inpatient and outpatient clinical positions in nutrition and diabetes education. Dr. Davidson is actively involved in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, contributing to several task forces including NCPPro and RD Standards of Practice. She also serves on the Board of the Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists and is a past chair of the Diabetes Dietetic Practice Group.

Her research focuses on the prevention and management of chronic disease, disease-specific quality of life, and the role of food heritage, culture, and foodways in tailoring medical nutrition therapy (MNT) recommendations. Additionally, she explores interprofessional education and collaborative care models for ways to expand and advocate for the role the RDN. Dr. Davidson is an experienced presenter and has authored or co-authored numerous publications in leading journals, including the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Nutrition in Clinical Practice, and the American Medical Association Informatics Journal.

[General Session #2] Data Collection: Methodology is key

Dr. Emily Heying, PhD, RD, LD



Dr. Emily Heying is an associate professor of nutrition and registered dietitian. She currently teaches courses on metabolism, global malnutrition, research methods, and native food sovereignty at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. Her research focuses on two different areas: food security in college students and satiety responses to carbonated beverages. She received her doctorate in Human Nutrition from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2014 and a Bachelor of Arts in Biochemistry from Wartburg College in 2010. She currently serves as the membership coordinator for the Research Dietetics Practice Group and is the Public Policy Co-Chair for the Minnesota Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics.

Kerri L. Knippen, PhD, MPH, CDCES, RDN



Dr. Kerri Lynn Knippen is an Associate Professor of Food and Nutrition and Graduate Program Coordinator at Bowling Green State University. She is a Registered Dietitian with expertise in medical nutrition therapy, diabetes education, and community nutrition. As a faculty member, Dr. Knippen teaches core courses including Medical Nutrition Therapy and Community & Public Health Nutrition. Her scholarship focuses on gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM), postpartum cardiometabolic risk reduction, and the application of implementation science and quality improvement frameworks

to nutrition care delivery. She has led and collaborated on multi-site projects examining postpartum care planning innovations, educator and patient experiences, and real-world implementation outcomes using frameworks such as CFIR, EPIS, and PDSA. Her work has been disseminated through peer-reviewed publications, professional conferences, and practice-focused resources for dietitians and diabetes educators.

Dr. Knippen is also highly engaged in experiential and simulation-based learning, integrating AI-supported counseling simulations into dietetics curricula. Her research explores how these approaches support clinical reasoning, counseling skills, and professional readiness. She is actively involved in professional service and leadership within the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, has completed the Academy's Leadership Institute, and is a Fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Dr. Knippen has been recognized as an Ohio Dietitian of the Year and received the Abbott Nutrition Award in Women's Health in 2025.

[General Session #3] When Your Project Takes You in a Different Direction

Amy E. Reed, MS, RD, CSP, LD



Amy E. Reed is a pediatric dietitian with over two decades of experience. Amy's extensive professional journey includes roles at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, where she currently serves as an Education Specialist. During her clinical career she has worked in multiple areas including pediatric critical care, feeding team and aerodigestive center, and complex care. In her current role she is responsible for overseeing the onboarding and training of new hire RDNs, collaborating with local universities for interns to complete clinical rotations, staff competency, and most recently is involved in a collaboration between Cincinnati Children's and

Sheikh Khalifa Medical Center in Abu Dhabi working toward excellence in nutrition care between the two medical centers.

Amy is actively involved in professional organizations, including the Pediatric Nutrition Practice Group, where she has held various leadership positions. Her contributions to the field are further highlighted by her numerous presentations and media work as a National Spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

[General Sessions #3 and #4] When Your Project Takes You in a Different Direction [AND] Data Analysis: Taking your Project to the Next Level

Judith (Judy) Beto PhD RDN FAND



Judith (Judy) Beto PhD RDN FAND is the Past-President of the International Affiliate of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (IAAND), Professor Emeritus Nutrition Sciences at Dominican University, River Forest IL, and Clinical Research Consultant, Division of Nephrology and Hypertension, Loyola University Healthcare System, Maywood, IL. Judy earned a PhD in Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistical Analysis from the University of Chicago. She was the founding editor of the *Journal of Renal Nutrition* as well as presently serving both on the editorial board and on the statistics team of the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Her most recent

Academy publications include co-editor of *Research: Successful Approaches (4th ed)*, *Nutrition Counseling and Educational Skills (8th ed)*, and several recent publications in survey development and electronic survey methodology (2024-2025). She has a long-standing international interest in professional collaboration, mentoring, and networking.

Day #2

Moderator

Casey Colin DCN, RDN, LDN, FAND



Dr. Casey Colin serves as Director of Nutrition and Dietetic Undergraduate Programs and is an associate professor at the University of North Florida, bringing more than 17 years of experience in dietetics practice. She is a member of the Nutrition Care Process Terminology Board of Editors, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Council on Future Practice, and the International Commission of Dietitians Education and Accreditation (I-CDEA) Steering Council. Her research centers on demonstrating the impact of medical nutrition therapy through rigorous use of the Nutrition Care Process and Terminology. Dr. Colin believes

that advancing the dietetics profession requires objective data linking registered dietitian nutritionists' care to meaningful outcomes. She is a strong advocate for registry study participation among practicing RDNs and for building the evidence base needed to secure recognition, reimbursement, and influence across healthcare. Her vision is for RDNs to stand alongside physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals as essential contributors to patient care. Her ongoing mission is to inspire RDNs at all levels to lead with research proficiency, ethical clinical practice, peer education, professional advocacy, and community engagement at the forefront.

[General Session #5] AI in Quality: Ethical Use to Enhance Credentialed Practitioner's Value

Keiy Murofushi, MS, RDN, LDN



Keiy Murofushi, MS, RDN, LDN, is the Director of Clinical Nutrition at Inova Fairfax Medical Campus, where he leads clinical nutrition strategy, workforce development, and quality improvement initiatives within one of the largest and most complex tertiary care hospitals in the Mid-Atlantic region. He brings more than a decade of executive and regional leadership experience across academic medical centers and large health systems, including senior leadership roles at Johns Hopkins Health System, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, and Morrison Healthcare, overseeing multi-site operations, clinical programs, and budgets exceeding \$70 million.

Keiy is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Clinical Nutrition at Rutgers University. His scholarly and implementation work focuses on malnutrition identification, continuity of

nutrition care across care settings, and the responsible application of artificial intelligence and digital health infrastructure in nutrition practice. Keyi holds leadership and advisory roles within the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the American Society for Nutrition, including work on public policy, research strategy, and AI/ML task force initiatives.

Dr. Heyjun Park, PhD, MS, RD



Dr. Heyjun Park is an Assistant Professor in the Human Nutrition program within the Department of International Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She earned her PhD in Nutritional Sciences from Cornell University and completed a dietetic internship at the University of California, San Francisco Medical Center, and is a registered dietitian. She completed her postdoctoral training in the Department of Genetics at Stanford University, where she investigated how dietary patterns and timing are related to diabetes risk using multi-omics measures, wearable data, and machine

learning-based risk prediction.

Her current research focuses on early-life nutritional exposures, including pregnancy and the postpartum period, and their links to biological aging and cardiovascular health using a precision nutrition approach and multi-omics profiling. She also studies how diet, sleep, and physical activity relate to children's cognitive function, using wearable data. She is also interested in practical and responsible AI approaches that help dietitians interpret complex data and support individualized nutrition care.

Samitinjaya Dhakal, Ph.D.



Samitinjaya Dhakal is an Assistant Professor at the School of Health and Human Sciences at South Dakota State University. His research interest is to understand how nutritional metabolomics can help promote long-term health across the lifespan. Multiomics data, combined with dietary information and a multivariate machine learning technique, is more effective in detecting early changes in physiological processes than a limited set of individual biomarkers for chronic diseases. It is especially critical in the early detection and prevention of neurocognitive diseases, where

visible symptoms manifest decades after their initiation, such as Alzheimer's disease. His long-term academic goal is to utilize multiomics-based tools to help identify the optimal diet(s) for a prolonged health span, using epidemiological, interventional, and mechanistic data, and to address the present challenges in translating large multiomics data into meaningful, practical use, thereby accomplishing the goal of precision nutrition.

Catherine P. Ward, PhD, RD



Cate Ward, PhD, RD is the Clinical Lead in Nutrition Science at Google and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Stanford School of Medicine. She brings a unique blend of cutting-edge research, clinical practice, and academic expertise to the advisory committee. Her work at Google involves developing personalized AI-powered health products and driving clinical strategy grounded in scientific knowledge. Dr. Ward has led extensive interdisciplinary nutrition research and continues both her teaching and research efforts at Stanford, developing and teaching History of Nutrition Research.

[General Session #6] QI/PI in Action – Case Studies

Sanele Nkomani, MSc, RD-Zimbabwe



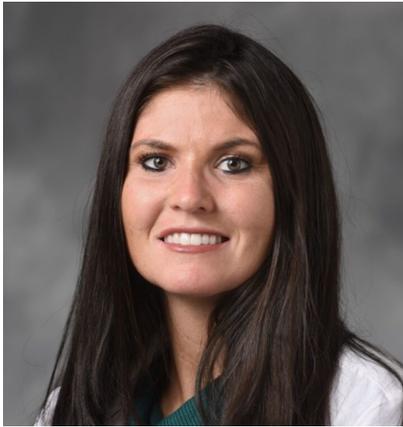
Sanele Nkomani is an RD in Zimbabwe, with experience across clinical practice, education, and regional and global nutrition programming in low and middle-income country contexts. She trained in South Africa and began her career in Zimbabwe, working in hospital settings where nutrition services were limited and not well integrated into routine care. Her early work focused on strengthening basic nutrition service delivery, including improving referral practices, clarifying the role of dietitians within clinical teams, and advocating for the inclusion of nutrition in patient management. During this period, she was

also a founding member of the Dietetics Association of Zimbabwe, contributing to the formalization of dietetics as a profession through professional organization, standards development, and engagement with health sector stakeholders.

She later moved to Malawi, where she played a leading role in establishing and heading the country's first dietetics training program. As an educator and program lead, she has developed a curriculum responsive to local health needs, strengthening practical training, and preparing graduates for the realities of service delivery within the health system.

Sanele currently works in regional and global nutrition programming with the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office. Her work focuses on strengthening nutrition systems through policy development, guideline formulation, and competency-based preservice education for frontline health workers. Across these roles, her experience reflects how incremental improvements in practice, education, and systems can strengthen the quality and effectiveness of nutrition services, particularly in settings where resources are limited and systems are still evolving.

Ashlee Carnahan, MS, RD, CLC, CPT



Ashlee Carnahan is the Manager of Nutrition and Education Services and Dietetic Internship Director at Henry Ford Hospital, where she leads a team of 21 dietitians supporting acute care clinical services and education. She provides over a decade of acute care clinical experience at Henry Ford Hospital, a Level 1 trauma, academic teaching institution. Ashlee's clinical expertise centers on the Nutrition Care Process for high-risk surgical patients, with a particular focus on enteral nutrition management and patient education. To complement and diversify her strong clinical foundation, she pursued additional professional certifications, including Certified Personal Trainer through

the American Council on Exercise and Certified Lactation Counselor through the Academy of Lactation Policy and Practice.

She currently serves on the Nutrition Care Process Terminology Board of Editors for ACEND and the Michigan Board of Athletic Trainers for the State of Michigan, contributing to the advancement of nutrition standards and professional practice. Prior to her leadership role, Ashlee served as a mid-term review preceptor at Henry Ford Hospital.

Ashlee is deeply committed to education and community outreach and has received awards including the Outstanding Dietitian of the Year Award by the Michigan Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Distinguished Service Award from Walled Lake Consolidated Schools in recognition of her leadership and service as Health and Wellness Chair.

Ashlee earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University and her Master of Science degree from Central Michigan University. She is a proud graduate of the Henry Ford Hospital Dietetic Internship Program and is passionate about advancing the field of dietetics by developing future practitioners through innovation, mentorship, and evidence-based education.

Leah Flores, RD, LD, CDCES



Leah Flores, RD, LD, CDCES, is a Regional Director of Clinical Nutrition with Morrison Healthcare, providing clinical and operational leadership across acute care and rehabilitation facilities. She has over eight years of experience in clinical nutrition with a strong focus on improving the identification, documentation, and treatment of malnutrition through quality improvement and data-driven practice. Leah earned her Bachelor of Science in Nutrition from the University of Central Arkansas in 2016 and completed her dietetic internship with Keith & Associates in 2018. She practiced as an acute care clinical

dietitian with a focus on malnutrition for three years before stepping into a Clinical Nutrition Manager role, followed by her current role in regional leadership.

In her current position, Leah leads system-level malnutrition initiatives, partnering closely with dietitians, physicians, nursing, CDI, and quality teams to strengthen screening processes, improve the timeliness of nutrition assessments, and ensure accurate provider documentation. Her work centers on aligning clinical practice with standardized malnutrition criteria and outcome tracking to support performance improvement, regulatory readiness, and patient safety.

Leah is actively involved in developing and monitoring malnutrition quality metrics, including consult response times, nutrition risk scores, and agreement rates between dietitians and providers. She uses data to identify gaps in care, guide education, and implement practical workflow improvements that enhance consistency and accountability across hospitals.

Her passion is helping nutrition teams clearly demonstrate their impact on patient outcomes by translating daily clinical practice into meaningful quality and performance data. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, auditing, and education, Leah is committed to advancing malnutrition care and elevating the role of the registered dietitian within hospital quality programs.

[Closing Session] Putting it All Together: Top Research and QI Tools that Support PI

Amit Sood, MS, RD, CSSD, PMP, LSSBB, CPOSP, CSCM, DACP



Amit Sood is a seasoned leader in healthcare and continuous improvement with over 21 years of experience optimizing systems and leading diverse teams. He currently serves as a Continuous Improvement Lead and Executive Dietitian for Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, VA, where he applies his expertise in enhancing operational efficiency and quality of care. Mr. Sood's qualifications are backed by a strong academic and professional foundation. He holds a Master of Science in Dietetics from Kansas State University

and a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition from The University of Texas at Austin. He is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP®), a certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, and a Board-Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics.

Throughout his career, Mr. Sood has demonstrated a consistent ability to lead impactful, large-scale initiatives. As the senior leader for the U.S. Navy's dietetics community and its Nutrition Program Manager, he spearheaded a landmark project that fundamentally reformed the delivery of nutrition education and counseling for over 933,000 personnel. His leadership portfolio also includes serving as a subject matter expert for financial audit readiness for 17 medical food service operations.

A testament to his expertise in quality management, Mr. Sood was hand-selected to deliver a keynote address on High Reliability and Lean Six Sigma in a healthcare setting at the 2017 Tri-lateral Medical Cooperation Conference in South Korea. He presented his insights to an audience of senior medical leaders from the United States, Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

His career includes extensive international experience, having managed nutritional services in various countries, supported a major humanitarian mission in Southeast Asia, and held key leadership roles at hospitals and medical centers in across the globe. Mr. Sood enjoys time with his wife of 21 years and 4 children

Anne Coltman, MSHA, MS, RDN, FAND, FACHE



Anne Coltman is an accomplished healthcare leader and Registered Dietitian Nutritionist with extensive experience advancing quality, operations, and professional practice across healthcare and nutrition sectors. A Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, she currently serves as Senior Director of Practice Excellence at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, where she leads strategic initiatives to strengthen member engagement, elevate specialty practice, and enhance

professional visibility within the field.

Previously, Anne directed quality, standards, and interoperability initiatives for the Commission on Dietetic Registration and held senior operational leadership roles at UChicago Medicine and Trinity Health. Her work has focused on driving operational excellence, optimizing systems, and advancing evidence-based nutrition care.

A Fellow of both the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the American College of Healthcare Executives, Anne is a nationally recognized author, educator, and speaker on topics including malnutrition quality measures, healthcare improvement, and professional leadership.