

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
From Readiness to Results:
Practical Strategies to Implementing the Malnutrition Care
Score July 29, 2026
Presenter Biographies

Moderator and Main Presenters

Angela Lago, MS, RD, LDN, FAND



Angela 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.

Natali Jouzi, MSHM, RDN, LD



Natali Jouzi, MSHM, RDN, LD, is an Advanced Inpatient Dietitian at Mayo Clinic. She previously served as Clinical Nutrition Supervisor at MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center, part of the Trinity Health System, where she led telenutrition initiatives that introduced innovative care delivery models in response to workforce challenges. She also spearheaded a regional project implementing the Malnutrition Care Score. Natali has presented her work nationally, including at the Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo (FNCE) and the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). Natali earned her Bachelor of Science in Nutritional Science & Dietetics and completed her dietetic internship at Iowa State University. She later completed a Master of Science in Healthcare Management at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business. Natali is a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the American College of Healthcare Executives. Natali is passionate about quality improvement, leadership development and advancing the role of dietitians in health systems.

Stacy Pelekhaty, MS, RDN, LDN, CNSC, FAND, FASPEN



Stacy Pelekhaty has over 15 years of experience in high acuity care. Stacy is currently the Senior Clinical Nutrition Specialist at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, within the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland and specializes in integrating complex nutrition research into bedside clinical workflows. As a fellow of both the Academy and ASPEN, Stacy is a recognized leader in malnutrition advocacy and healthcare innovation. Her research focuses on malnutrition assessment and precision nutrition for trauma and ECMO patients, including the advancement of indirect calorimetry and imaging technology. Stacy is currently completing her Doctor of

Clinical Nutrition, where her work centers on interprofessional care models and the clinical outcome effects of technology-guided nutrition support. She is a frequent speaker at national and international conferences and serves as an Associate Editor for Nutrition in Clinical Practice.

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.

Additional Presenters During Q&A

Dr. Constantina (Tina) Papoutsakis, PhD, RD



Dr. Papoutsakis, is the Senior Director of the Data Science Center at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. She has overseen the Academy's Nutrition Care Process and terminology (NCP/T), related practitioners' engagement, and leads the Academy's prospective nutrition and dietetics outcomes research agenda. Tina chaired the Professional Practice Committee of EFAD (European Federation of Associations of Dietitians) and was member of EFAD's Executive Committee for over a decade. She is Chair of the SNOMED CT Nutrition and Dietetics Clinical Reference Group and has led the release of the first NCPT implementation guide for SNOMED CT. Dr. Papoutsakis is part the Core team of the International NCP

Implementation Survey (also known as INIS) and a member of the Coding4Food external advisory committee tasked to codify food-based interventions. She has lectured and organized workshops in several countries in Europe, Asia, and the US with emphasis on the NCP. Dr. Papoutsakis is Adjunct Professor for the University of Maryland. As a clinician and researcher, Tina has coordinated NIH government funded cancer randomized cancer clinical trials and has conducted RDN-led Food As Medicine (FAM) interventions. The emphasis of her research is on the impact of nutrition interventions in chronic disease outcomes.

Michelle Ashafa, RD, LDN, PMP, CSM



Michelle is the Director of Quality Measurement and Interoperability at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. She brings a unique blend of clinical and technical expertise, holding credentials as a Project Management Professional (PMP)® and Certified Scrum Master (CSM). Prior to her current role, she served as an IT Project Coordinator at a large health system.

Michelle leverages her dual background in dietetics and information technology to drive initiatives that advance the technological integration of the dietetics profession. Her work supports national efforts in quality measurement and health data interoperability, including the Global Malnutrition Composite Score (GMCS), Health Level Seven (HL7) standards, SNOMED CT authoring, and staff leadership within the Interoperability and Standards Committee of CDR.

Rebecca Niitzel, MS, RDN, CDN, LD



Rebecca is the Senior Manager of Quality and Terminology at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Her expertise as a registered dietitian is in clinical nutrition and quality improvement. She earned a Master of Science in Clinical Nutrition from Rutgers University and has held several advanced clinical roles, including as a senior dietitian in an acute care hospital, where she led quality improvement initiatives aimed at enhancing patient outcomes. She also worked as lead dietitian at a rehabilitation facility supporting individuals in recovery from substance use disorders. Rebecca previously served as Vice Chair of the Commission on Dietetic

Registration's (CDR) Quality Management Committee and now advances professional standards in her current role.

Tammy (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 Outpatient Clinical Dietitian at a Veterans Health Administration facility. She has also made significant contributions to clinical nutrition in areas such as 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 in service delivery. Her passion for quality and innovation continues to drive meaningful improvements across the nutrition and dietetics profession.