

Consumer Protection: It's Our Priority

Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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Consumer Protection Coordinator

Objectives

- Identify the role of the Consumer Protection Coordinator
- Describe the process for collecting and reporting stories of harm in their state
- Share the Academy's messages related to Consumer Protection and Licensure

Position Purpose

An integral part of the affiliate public policy panel responsible for keeping the affiliate informed about consumer protection issues and monitoring the activities of state licensure, certification or regulatory boards

Consumer Protection Coordinator

Responsibilities

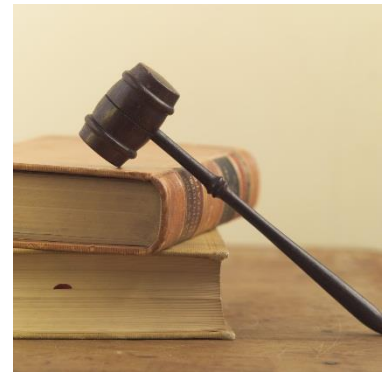
- Serve as a resource for the affiliate on the state dietetics licensure/certification statute and regulations
- Monitor consumer protection issues and their relationship to state licensure laws and state regulations, with SPR and SRS
- Monitor frequency of licensure board meetings, attend the licensure board meetings

Why is Dietetic Licensure Important?

- Consumers need ethical, high quality, evidence-based care provided by professionals who are trained consistently and whose practice has proven outcomes
 - Consumers are familiar with and count on state licensure of professionals to identify competent service providers
 - Licensure enables consumers, insurers, employers, and other health professionals to have confidence in the dietetics profession
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Licensure Supports Consumer Protection

- Consumer Protection is critical!
- Establishes a governing body that effectively oversees the practice of the profession, working in the best interest of consumers
- Empowers consumer by providing a place to report harm and provides a mechanism to remove unsafe or incompetent practitioners (this includes RDNs!)



Current Environment

- 46 states have some form of professional regulation
 - 37 states license dietitians
 - 7 states have certification for dietitians
 - 5 states have title protection for dietitian
 - 3 states have no regulation (AZ,NJ,MI)
- 20 states also license titles including nutritionist, nutrition counselor, medical nutrition therapist, and dietetic technician

Challenges to Current Environment

- Opposition to the general concept of licensing professions
- State budgets are tight – elimination of regulatory boards seen as option to save money
- Licensure sunset provision put licensure laws in jeopardy

Challenges to Current Environment

- Competing licensed professionals want to do more nutrition
- Competing unlicensed practitioners want to do full scope of nutrition services without oversight

Academy Position

- Does the challenging environment mean we should abandon licensure as a form of public protection?
- Immediate Past Academy President Sonja Conner thinks not!

“Since licensure is closely tied with the health of the public, enacting licensure laws in states without current regulations and supporting current licensure laws are high priorities for the Academy.”

Ethics – Everyone's Responsibility

- Academy is committed to public safety
- Upholding ethics and standards of the profession is everyone's responsibility
- RDNs agree to abide by the code of ethics during registration process

Affiliate Role



**Member
Observations**

**Recorded
incidents**

**Incident filed
with licensure
or certification
board or
added to
affiliate
database**



Accurate Specific Documentation

- Reports should be specific in nature and must be **observed directly** by the individual filing the report
- **All reports should include specific documentation:**
 - Name of individual who was impacted by the unsafe practice
 - Name, qualifications and credentials of individual who provided the nutrition services
 - Details of health status both before and after services provided

Three New Reporting Tools

- 1. Process For Reporting Unsafe Practice**
- 2. State Reporting Scenarios**
- 3. Collection of Successes and Unique Skills**

1. Process for reporting unsafe practice

Behind-the-scenes look at complaint process at the state licensing or credentialing agency

2. State Reporting Scenarios

- **Examples of possible complaints and what the member should do about it**
 - **Examples of possible licensure or certification violations**
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	IN STATES WITH TITLE & SCOPE OF PRACTICE PROTECTION REPORT THE FOLLOWING TO STATE LICENSING AGENCY/BOARD	IN STATES WITH TITLE ACT ONLY OR IN STATES WITH NO LICENSURE OR CERTIFICATION REPORT TO STATE AFFILIATE	IN STATES WITH TITLE PROTECTION ONLY REPORT THE FOLLOWING TO THE STATE AGENCY/ BOARD
<p>Using the title “dietitian” or “nutritionist” (in those states which license nutritionists) without a license</p> <p>EXAMPLE: A holistic health practitioner who advertises themselves as being a licensed or certified nutritionist in a state that has that title protected.</p>	<p>Yes Weblink, print ads, literature</p>	<p>Yes Weblink, print ads, literature</p>	<p>Yes Weblink, print ads, literature</p>
<p>Members of other licensed professions who provide MNT services outside scope of practice (e.g, acupuncturists, nurses, personal trainers, social workers chiropractors, pharmacists, etc)</p> <p>EXAMPLE: Social Worker who provides nutrition counseling to patient after bariatric surgery.</p>	<p>Yes Weblink, print ads, literature</p> <p>Note: Also report to licensing board/agency of the subject’s profession simultaneously</p>	<p>Yes Weblink, print ads, literature</p>	

3. Collection of successes and unique skills

Because RDNs do great things!...

Collection of successes and unique skills

- RDN provided a positive medical outcome
 - Medication errors or drug-nutrient interactions identified by the RDN and corrected
 - RDN saved a consumer money, or saved insurance company money by providing cost-effective services
 - Demonstrate how we are working with other professions, organizations and community members
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Contact Information for Reporting Harms and Successes

- Karen Schneider: Karen@badgerbay.co
- Department of Safety and Professional Services
 - <http://dsps.wi.gov/Complaints>

**Advocate for your profession!
Building effective relationships is key!**



- **Offer to participate in meetings with legislators**
- **Provide education about the value of RDNs**
- **Ensure the protection of the public**

- **Build trust and credibility**
 - **Focus on credibility and expertise**
 - **People trust the messenger before the message**
 - **Demonstrate your passion, values, principles**
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“The dietetics practitioner considers the health, safety and welfare of the public at all time.

The dietetics practitioner will report inappropriate behavior or treatment of a client by another dietetics practitioner or other professionals.”

ADA/CDR Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics and Process for Consideration of Ethics Issues; Journal of the American Dietetic Association; 2009; pg. 1461

**We all need to be ambassadors for
public safety!**

RDNs are the Experts

- The Institute of Medicine identifies registered dietitians as qualified professionals for nutrition therapy.
- According to IOM, “the registered dietitian is currently the single identifiable group of health-care professionals with standardized education, clinical training, continuing education and national credentialing requirements necessary to be directly reimbursed as a provider of nutrition therapy.”

MNT by RDNs is Cost Effective

- For every dollar invested in an RDN-led lifestyle modification program there was a return of \$14.58. [\[1\]](#)
- 8.6% reduction in hospital utilization and a 16.9% reduction in physician visits associated with RDN-provided MNT for patients with cardiovascular disease.
- 9.5% reduction in hospital utilization and a 23.5% reduction in physician visits when MNT was provided to persons with diabetes mellitus. [\[2\]](#)

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[1](#) Wolf AM, Crowther JQ, Nadler JL, Bovbjerg VE. The return on investment of a lifestyle intervention: The ICAN Program. Accepted for presentation at the American Diabetes Association 69th Scientific Sessions (169-OR), June 7, 2009, New Orleans, LA.

[2](#) Johnson R. The Lewin Group — What does it tell us, and why does it matter? *J Am Diet Assoc.* 1999;99:426–427.

Tell a Story

- Use stories, analogies and visuals to simplify the complexity of health information
- Stories stick like glue while the facts fade



Delivering Key Messages

- Successful when the story is creative, fun, interesting and valid to the audience
- Give stakeholders something to **BE FOR!**
- Package the information in a way that helps the issue come to life and become relevant
- Use statistics
- Real life examples of success stories



FINAL MESSAGES

- Nutrition and Dietetics licensure aims to ensure that everyone receives safe, effective and reliable nutrition services
- Licensure upholds the quality of nutrition and dietetics and is an essential aspect of the profession
- Professional licensure increases credibility, visibility and respect

Thank You!

If you have questions contact

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