

8. POSITION TITLE: CLINICAL DIETETIC TECHNICIAN – HOSPITAL/ACUTE CARE

DEPARTMENT/SECTION:

REPORTS TO:

DATE PREPARED:

POSITION SUMMARY

The Clinical Dietetic Technician Hospital/Acute Care provides food and nutrition services to patients under the supervision of a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). Primary responsibilities include nutrition screening and participation in the Nutrition Care Process (NCP) as determined by the RDN for nutrition assessment, developing and implementing nutrition intervention/plan of care such as following up on nutrition screening completed by nursing, documenting medical, food, and nutrition-related data, reviewing patient menus for conformance to diet order, providing individualized or group nutrition education, monitoring meal, snack and/or medical food intake to contribute to evaluating of the patient's progress and revision of intervention/plan of care, if indicated; monitoring the quality and accuracy of food served to patients; and maintaining professional competency and skills required for professional practice. The Dietetic Technician maintains productivity standards and practices, effective time management to prioritize tasks, and uses department nutrition resources prudently.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Patient Care

Nutrition Assessment – the RDN solicits input as the dietetic technician:

- Completes and documents nutrition screening within 24 hours of inpatient admission according to facility/state/accreditation requirements.
- Using medical record and interview with patient/family collects food and nutrition intake information (e.g., current and previous diets, nutrition support, meal and snack patterns, medical food/nutritional supplements, typical foods and beverages, cultural and religious preferences, and food allergies and intolerances), and reviews for factors that affect health conditions and nutritional risk.
- Obtains medical, anthropometric, biochemical, and medical test data and compares to standards provided by the RDN.
- Documents nutrition-related data, patient/family interactions in electronic medical record, and food and nutrition documentation system according to procedure.
- Communicates results of nutrition screening, diet order, and data collection for nutrition assessment to RDN; and meal service-related data of immediate concern to diet office staff.
- Communicates with nursing or other staff as needed to obtain or clarify information to inform nutrition assessment to report to RDN.

Nutrition Intervention/Plan of Care

- Communicates with RDN about discussions with patient/family and observed changes in patient's status that may influence the nutrition intervention/plan of care.
- Contributes to and implements nutrition intervention/plan of care developed by the RDN.
- Participates in interprofessional team rounds/meetings with or representing the RDN to contribute food and nutrition related data for a patient's plan of care and transitions of care planning, when applicable.
- Reviews plan of care with resident/family, nursing staff, addressing or referring any concerns to the RDN as need.
- Adjusts menus as needed to comply with diet order and resident preferences consistent with facility diet manual and RDN instructions.
- Provides nutrition education per plan of care to help patient voluntarily manage or modify food choices and eating behavior to maintain or improve health.
- Plans between-meal nourishments according to patient's diet and food preferences.
- Plans and corrects menus for patients on specialized diets based on established guidelines, and individualizes menus.
- Identifies resources and/or referrals as needed to report to RDN.

Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation – the RDN solicits input as the dietetic technician

- Utilizes techniques that consider the varied needs of age-specific populations as well as cultural, religious, and ethnic concerns.
- Evaluates food and intake from all sources.
- Monitors progress through checking patient/family understanding of learned skills and follow through with plan.
- Monitors whether the intervention(s) is being implemented as prescribed, identifying data and information impacting effectiveness of intervention/plan of care.
- Compares current data findings with previous status, intervention goals, and/or reference standards for evaluation of outcomes
- Documents progress toward nutrition goals, factors/barriers impacting progress, change in patient's/family's level of understand and food-related behaviors, and relevant biochemical, anthropometric, meal intake data.
- Communicates with RDN regarding monitoring and evaluation activities, and with the RDN, modifies the plan of care as needed.

Communications

- Works cooperatively with patient food service staff to ensure conformance with diet order, patient preferences, and other applicable components of the nutrition prescription.

- Cooperates with ambulatory and outpatient clinic dietetic technician and RDNs.
- Participates in supervised practice experiences for nutrition and dietetics students/interns, other disciplines when requested, and helps orient new patient food service employees.

Meals Services

- Conducts patient round to assess adequacy of nutrition intake and patient satisfaction with meals and meal service.
- Monitors and verifies changes in diet orders.
- Coordinates and conducts periodic meal tray assessments according to quality standards and diet prescription.

Compliance

- Demonstrates accountability for the proper use of patients' protected health information by following regulatory requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1966.
- Assists in achieving compliance with the Joint Commission, Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP), or other accrediting agency standards to continuously improve the safety and quality of care to the public and to the organization's performance improvement.
- Complies with federal requirements set forth under the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Conditions of Participation (COP) for Hospitals (Appendix A) in order to receive Medicare/Medicaid payment. Ensures state regulations and local certifications for health, safety, and quality standards are met.

Community Outreach

- Participates in community projects and group education as assigned.

Business Functions

- Maintains productivity standards and practices effective time management and prioritizing of tasks.
- Uses department resources prudently.

Performance Improvement

- Participates in department's and/or unit's quality assurance and performance improvement activities.
- Contributes to collecting specific information to track process, outcome, and structure measures using quantifiable indicators to identify actual results of a program, service, or activity.
- Provides in-services for department staff assigned.

- Participates in planning and developing nutrition-related policies, procedure, and goals.
- Assists the RDN in developing and revising patient education materials, clinical forms, and protocols.
- Supports and promotes the organization's infection control, safety, risk management, and customer/guest relation programs.

Professional Interface

- Acts as a mentor for staff, students/interns, using knowledge of nutrition, food service systems management, customer service, and hospital operations to promote personal and professional growth and development.
- Participates in supervised practice experiences for nutrition and dietetics students/interns as needed.
- Collaborates with nutrition office and patient food service staff, RDNs, and nursing staff as needed to promote effective communication and processes to ensure patients' nutritional needs are met.
- Participates in departmental and interprofessional meetings, task forces, and projects.

Professional Development

- Maintains status as a Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered (NDTR) by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) via professional workshops, conferences and continuing education credits. Advances knowledge of therapeutic nutrition, nutrition education and other topics within the field as needed while staying abreast of current technology, to include: Microsoft Word, Excel, E-mail and emerging products.
- Applies the Revised 2017 Scope of Practice for the NDTR, Revised 2017 Standards of Practice (SOP) in Nutrition Care and Standards of Professional Performance (SOPP) for NDTRs to evaluate competence, identify areas for continuing education, and advance practice; and Standards of Excellence in Nutrition and Dietetics for Organization Metric Tool to measure and evaluate an organization's programs, services, and initiatives.
- Develops and implements an individualized professional development portfolio plan for professional growth and development including participation in professional organizations and activities, workshops, seminars, and staff development programs.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

KEY COMPETENCIES

Communication

- Demonstrates strong interpersonal skills and abilities to communicate effectively in both written, verbal and electronic form.
- Successfully utilizes the most effective and meaningful form of communication to express ideas and information.

Problem Solving

- Analyzes and resolves difficult and sensitive challenges using professional, evidence-based approaches.
- Seeks involvement from diverse perspectives and areas of the department or hospital to solve problems.

Teamwork

- Promotes cooperation and commitment within a team to achieve goals and deliverables.
- Adapts approach, goals, and methods to achieve results in dynamic team situations.

Adaptability

- Adapts own attitudes and behaviors to work effectively with diverse populations and situations.
- Accepts and readily adapts to changing priorities, better ideas, strategies, procedures and methods.

Organization and Collaboration

- Organizes multiple tasks, establishes priorities, and meets deadlines for responsibilities and assignments.
- Cooperatively and effectively works with people from all organizational levels and builds consensus through negotiation and diplomacy.

Customer Focus

- Demonstrates service excellence to patients, families, coworkers, other departments and the community by showing respect, honesty, fairness and a positive attitude toward all.
- Meets customer service needs quickly and effectively; takes action to review and remedy concerns.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education/Experience

Associate or Bachelor's degree in nutrition, dietetics, food service systems management, or related area, granted by an accredited college or university. Completion of dietetic technician program, or completion of required nutrition and dietetics coursework through a Didactic Program in Dietetics accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to qualify for credentialing.

Experience as a dietetic technician in an acute hospital or long-term care facility or as a diet clerk preferred.

Certification/Licensure

Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered (NDTR) by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR).