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RD Identification

Help Your Clients Know Who You Are

IMAGINE....

You are a patient in a busy hospital and you are being treated by several health care providers. You are receiving multiple daily medications; some intentionally make you drowsy because you can't sleep with all the noise on the unit. An RD comes into your room, introduces herself and proceeds to gather information for a nutrition assessment. You answer her questions and, as she leaves, you drift off to sleep. The next day, the RD returns for another visit. She says hello but does not introduce herself and you can't remember her name due to yesterday's drowsiness. The RD is wearing a name tag, but it is turned backwards. You are too embarrassed to ask who she is and are wondering, who you are speaking with.

SHOWING RESPECT FOR YOUR CLIENTS

This scenario illustrates how challenging it is for patients to remember the names of the various caregivers on their health care team, especially when they are recovering from procedures and are drowsy, or have difficulty remembering names. Some patients may even have issues with their vision or hearing.

Out of respect for clients, you should be motivated to clearly identify yourself. It is good dietetic practice to introduce yourself by name and profession at each visit and to ensure that your name tag is visible. A good client-centred technique is to show your name tag and pronounce your name clearly at the same time.

PATIENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE

The *Regulated Health Professions Act* (1991) gives the right to patients to raise issues or to make complaints against regulated health professionals. This right depends on patients being able to identify the health professionals treating them.

The law requires RDs to practice under the same name that they have listed on the College's Register of Dietitians. This applies to verbal and written communication as well as name tags. It is considered professional misconduct to use "a name other than the member's name, as set out in the Register of Dietitians in the course of providing services to a client" (*Professional Misconduct Regulation*, s21). The rationale behind this is to make sure that the public can easily find their dietitian listed in the Register to exercise their legal rights and verify that their dietitian is registered and in good standing with the College, raise issues about the services they have received, or make a formal complaint.

IDENTIFICATION SPECIFIC TO YOUR PRACTICE SETTING

Many organizations have existing requirements for staff identification in the workplace. RDs should abide by any organizational requirements. As a courtesy to clients, consider the following to adequately identify yourself in these practice settings.

One-To-One & Group Sessions

At each visit, introduce yourself by your full name and profession. Wear a clearly visible name tag that includes your RD designation. This applies to:

- Facilities (e.g., hospitals, long-term care homes)
- Group Practice Settings (e.g., Community Health Centres, Family Health Teams, Clinics, Health and Fitness Centres)
- Home Care Services
- Group and Public Events (e.g., health fairs)

Private Practice

In private practice, RDs may not need to wear a name tag as they already promote their identity for business purposes (through business cards, websites, pamphlets, etc.) and people knowingly make their appointment with a specific named RD.

Phone & Internet Services

Unless clients have call display that indicates the caller's name, visual identification is not possible by phone. When providing your services by phone, clearly state your name and your professional designation. When providing services on the Internet, make sure your name and professional designation appear clearly on all email correspondence and website postings.

Media & Print Material Dealing with Nutrition Information and Advice

RDs should clearly identify themselves verbally and/or in writing by name and professional designation when they provide the public with information about nutrition (e.g., media interviews, talks, educational print material, publications, etc.).

NEED TO KNOW

- Dietitians must identify themselves clearly to their clients, by name and professional designation (RD).
- Dietitians must use the name they have listed in the College's Register of Dietitians.

New Resources on the Website

Lab List Submission to the Ministry (see p. 4)

105 lab tests were proposed to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for inclusion in regulations that will give authority for RDs to order lab tests for nutrition assessments and monitoring nutritional progress and outcomes. View the submission and the list of lab tests at:
<http://www.cdo.on.ca/en/resources/publications.asp>

IPC Charter

The Interprofessional Care (IPC) Charter was developed to foster a shared vision of collaborative care and a common language to advance IPC competence and communication. It provides simple but powerful statements that commit

caregivers and leaders to transformative behaviours. To access the charter, see www.cdo.on.ca: Resources > Practice Standards & Resources > Client Relations

Consent and Capacity Training Manual (see p. 12)

This manual is designed to help health professionals enhance their competency in the evaluation of capacity. It covers the legislative framework for capacity evaluation, guidelines for completing the evaluation, and highlights ethical issues. See: www.cdo.on.ca: Resources > Practice Standards & Resources > Scope of Practice, Controlled Acts & Authority Mechanisms > Assessing Capacity for Admission into Long-Term Care Homes.