

MAHCP Career Profile

Registered Dietitians

Are you concerned about how the food you eat affects your health? Are you confused about all the conflicting information regarding nutrition? Registered dietitians are the most qualified nutrition professionals that provide expert, ethical and evidenced-based nutrition advice for healthy eating. Dietitians translate complex scientific evidence into practical solutions to manage special health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, gastrointestinal disorders, allergies, intolerances and obesity. The information and nutrition care plans dietitians provide are individualized to meet the unique needs of the patient.

Becoming an RD

To become a dietitian, you need to complete a four year Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Nutrition from an accredited university program. Graduates then apply and get accepted into a dietetic internship program, which involves 40 weeks of supervised, hands-on training in clinical nutrition, food service management, diabetes management, population health, project management, and counseling. Following the internship program, a graduate dietitian must complete and pass the Canadian Dietetic Registration Exam to become a registered dietitian.



Practice Setting

Dietitians work in a variety of settings such as hospitals, health clinics, long term care centres, public health, grocery stores, food industries, private practice, and in education and research. At St. Boniface Hospital, Dietitians specialize in several areas such as cardiology, endocrinology, nephrology, geriatrics, oncology, pediatrics and more. Dietitians in health care identify nutrition problems and assess the nutritional status of patients. They develop care plans, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of nutrition interventions and counsel patients on making special modifications to their diet.



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Consult a Registered Dietitian!



Dietitians bring a unique set of skills and expertise that contribute to the health and well-being of patients at St. Boniface Hospital in both an inpatient and outpatient setting. They can help a patient cope with diabetes, cancer or heart disease, or assist with recovery from surgery, or ensure food served in the hospital is safe and healthy. There are several reasons to consult an RD in hospitals:

- Provide nutrition education and interventions for management of numerous chronic diseases such as Diabetes Mellitus, Cardiovascular Disease, Coronary Heart Failure, Chronic Kidney Disease, Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Celiac Disease, Obesity and more.
- Help manage unintentional weight loss, muscle wasting or loss of subcutaneous fat.
- Help manage persistent diarrhea, constipation, nausea or vomiting.
- Deliver tube feeding or parenteral nutrition regimes.
- Provide comfortable solutions during chewing or swallowing difficulty.
- Help with impaired wound healing.
- Address nutritional concerns with patients on NPO or clear fluids > 5 days.
- Assess the need for education/counselling to apply proven behavior change techniques and tailor nutrition advice to optimize resources and help streamline care.

Regulation & Professional Organizations

Did you know that the profession of dietetics is the only regulated nutrition profession in Manitoba? Only members of the College of Dietitians of Manitoba can call themselves Dietetic Interns, Graduate Dietitians or Registered Dietitians. While the title “nutritionist” is protected in some provinces for dietitians, it is not regulated in Manitoba. Which means anyone, even without formalized nutrition education, can call themselves a “nutritionist”. All Dietitians who work in Manitoba are required to register with the College of Registered Dietitians, and are responsible for life-long learning to ensure competence in their area of practice.

Dietitians, like other health care professionals such as physicians and pharmacists, are accountable to provincial regulatory bodies for their professional conduct and the services they provide. These provincial regulatory bodies are in place to protect the public. This way the public can be assured that the nutritional advice and information they are receiving is sound. Isn't it nice to know that there are standards in place for your benefit?