

New Credential for Dietitians

Recently, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly the American Dietetic Association), the largest professional organization of registered dietitians (RD) along with the Commission of Dietetic Registration, the licensing body for RDs, introduced a new credential option: registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN). The option was established to more accurately reflect to consumers who registered dietitians are and what they do.

Individuals with both RD and RDN credentials have fulfilled specific requirements that include earning at least a bachelor's degree, completing a supervised practice program, and passing a registration examination, in addition to meeting continuing education requirements to maintain the credential. Those who use the title nutritionist do not necessarily have this extensive training and are not obligated to pursue continuous professional development and education. The RDN credential will differentiate the rigorous requirements and highlight that all registered dietitians are nutritionists but not all nutritionists are registered dietitians.

Also, inclusion of the word “nutritionist” in the credential communicates a broader concept of wellness, as well as an ability to treat conditions. The new credential accurately captures all aspects of what RDs do as food and nutrition experts in a variety of settings.

For this reason, the dietitians of the Nutrition Services Department will begin to use the RDN credential. In addition to meeting the high standards of the RD/RDN credential, many of the God's Love team hold advanced degrees in Nutrition and have obtained specialty board certification. Two are bilingual. Registered dietitian nutritionists at God's Love provide medical nutrition therapy (MNT) to our clients, work to increase offerings of fresh produce within our programs, analyze our menus to ensure that they meet nutrition standards, guide agency food safety initiatives, write nutrition education materials, and conduct hands-on workshops and teleconferences for program clients and for the community. We believe that the RDN credential will provide a fairer depiction of our role in promoting food as medicine.

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