

Appendix A: What do Dietitians do?

Dietitians are essential members of the health care team and practice in a wide range of diverse workplaces. Dietitians work in health care, industry, community health, and government and policy development.

- In health, Dietitians may work in hospitals, long term care homes, home care, and community health centre to identify nutrition problems and assess the nutritional status of patients; develop care plans and monitor the effectiveness of nutrition interventions; and counsel patients on special diet modifications.
- Dietitians in community health centers assess the nutritional needs of populations; identify community nutrition problems; and develop health promotion strategies, nutrition education programs and healthy eating resources. They work with individuals and groups to improve their nutritional well-being; prevent nutrition-related disease; increase access to food and enhance personal control of health.
- Dietitians manage food production, distribution and service of high-quality meals/snacks, ensuring adherence to sanitation and safety standards and a cost-effective operation. They manage food service departments in hospitals and other health care facilities, schools, universities, and businesses and may be employed by contract food companies.
- Dietitians can operate their own private consulting practices or businesses and work with individuals, groups, workplaces, and media.
- Dietitians in business and industry assist the private sector with research, product development, marketing, and consumer education. Working with food and pharmaceutical companies, marketing associations and food service providers, dietitians are able to develop, promote and market better food and nutritional products.
- Dietitians in Government develop nutrition and food policy based on scientific evidence in consultation with stakeholder groups. They also direct and administer nutrition programs and services and may work at the Federal, Provincial, Territorial or local level.
- Dietitians in Education teach nutrition, food chemistry or food service administration to students in dietetics, nursing, medicine, pharmacy, or dentistry programs, or the food and hospitality industry. These courses are taught at all levels – elementary and secondary school, college, university, professional schools and hospitals.
- Research Dietitians plan and direct research projects which will ultimately enhance patient care and improve the cost-effectiveness of food service. Universities, health care facilities and industry all support research by Dietitians.

