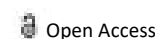




PERSPECTIVE



Advancing Nutrition Education and its Variants

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Description

Good nutrition prolongs independence by supporting physical strength, mobility, endurance, hearing, vision and cognitive abilities. Eighty-seven percent of older Americans have one or more chronic conditions that can be improved with diet therapy, including cancer, chronic lung disease, heart disease, dementia, diabetes, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, obesity, and being overweight. And failure to thrive (Draft Policy Statement on the Nutrition Screening Initiative: Nutrition: Evidence for Chronic Disease in Older Americans).

Nutrition education can be defined as any set of learning activities designed to promote the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviors that promote health and well-being. It is an integral part of the provision of nutrition services for the elderly.

Nutrition service providers must conduct nutrition education activities in accordance with the objectives and content described below at least twice per calendar year at each location. Providers are encouraged to use existing nutrition education resources from the Basic Nutrition Education Program, Washington State University Cooperative Extension, the Senior Farmer Nutrition Program, or the Department of Health's 5 Days a Day program.

Nutrition education should include information about physical activity in addition to nutrition. Recognizing the importance of physical activity for health and disease prevention, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend being physically active every day. Regular physical activity supports older adults' ability to live independently and benefits people with arthritis and depression and anxiety. It can reduce the risk of cognitive decline in the elderly and is effective in treating many

chronic diseases.

Types

Objectives of education in the field of nutrition:

To create positive attitudes towards good nutrition and physical activity and to provide motivation for improved nutrition and lifestyle practices that promote and maintain the best attainable level of human well-being.

Provide adequate knowledge and skills necessary for critical thinking about diet and health to enable individuals to make healthy food choices from an increasingly complex food supply. Help a person identify resources for ongoing access to accurate food and nutrition information.

Educational activities on nutrition: Nutrition education consists of activities that provide visual and verbal information and instructions to participants or participants and caregivers in a group or individual setting. Presentations or events may be conducted under the direction of an RD or ICE, or by someone else under the supervision of an RD or person with similar experience (ICE; see definition in Title VIIB State). The minimum duration of one nutrition education presentation is five minutes.

Examples of nutrition education activities include:

Presentations, cooking classes, cooking demonstrations, tours, performances, panel discussions, menu planning and/or evaluation, food tastings, question and answer sessions, gardening, physical fitness programs, videos, etc. For home delivery participants, activities may include distribution of educational materials.

When nutrition education is provided by a nutrition program service provider, all costs associated with the provision of nutrition education services must be

budgeted for and charged to the service accordingly.

Content of nutrition education: Dietary guidelines that include maintaining a healthy weight, daily physical activity, food safety, and moderate alcohol consumption should form the basis of all nutrition education activities. Dietary guidelines can be found here.

The Nutrition Education Program provides information and guidance relating to:

- a. Food, including the types and amounts of food needed to meet daily nutritional needs.
- b. Nutrition, including the combination of processes by which the body obtains the substances necessary for the maintenance of its functions and for the growth and

renewal of its components, ie. Ingestion, digestion, absorption, metabolism and excretion.

- c. Behavioral practices, including factors influencing eating and food preparation habits.
- d. Consumer issues, including managing food purchasing power to obtain maximum food value for money spent.
- e. Information about physical activity.
- f. Information about the role of nutrition and physical activity in maintaining health and independence, and in preventing or treating chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, and arthritis.