

# FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

## COLLEGE UPDATE

College proclamation took place in January 2023. The New Act establishes the Nova Scotia College of Dietitians and Nutritionists (NSCDN) as the regulatory body for the profession of dietetics in Nova Scotia. The NSCDN will replace the Nova Scotia Dietetic Association (NSDA) as the regulator for dietetic practice in Nova Scotia.

In contrast to the legislation associated with NSDA, the new Act defines and protects the practice of dietetics. The New Act enables dietitians to practice to their full capacity: in other words, dietitians will be authorized to do what they are trained and qualified to do. The defined, protected scope of practice for dietitians will enhance access to care in our province.

The New Act also ensures the public interest is the central and guiding priority, by providing updated regulatory processes.

Under the Nova Scotia College of Dietitians and Nutritionists, the professional designation for dietitians is Registered Dietitian (RD), consistent with other Canadian provinces.

## COLLEGE Q&A

### LIABILITY INSURANCE

#### WHAT AM I REQUIRED TO SUBMIT FOR PROOF OF INSURANCE?

Formal proof of liability insurance is a letter or certificate that contains the policy number, effective dates of the policy, the name of the insured, the insurance provider, and clearly indicates that the policy meets the requirement of \$5,000,000 aggregate and single-occurrence insurance. This is to be uploaded with your renewal application on the 'Supporting Documents' section of your NSCDN profile.

#### I HAVE MORE THAN ONE EMPLOYER, AM I REQUIRED TO SUBMIT PROOF OF INSURANCE FOR EACH EMPLOYMENT SETTING?

Yes, proof of insurance for each employment setting is required. However, if you have an individual professional liability insurance policy, proof of this policy is sufficient.

## IS A GROUP RATE AVAILABLE THROUGH NSCDN?

Yes, [Trisura](#) offers a group rate to NSCDN dietitians. Coverage that meets the College's requirement is approximately \$250. Dietitians of Canada members can also access insurance at a group rate through their membership.

## NON-PRACTICING ROSTER

### I'M ON A LEAVE OF ABSENCE UNTIL LATER IN 2023. DO I NEED TO COMPLETE A CONTINUING COMPETENCY PROGRAM (CCP) SUBMISSION AND DO THE JURISPRUDENCE E-LEARNING MODULE BY THE 2023 RENEWAL DEADLINE?

You have two options:

1. To move to a non-practicing roster, notify the registration coordinator ([info@nsdassoc.ca](mailto:info@nsdassoc.ca)) that you are on a leave of absence. On your online profile, indicate that you are on a leave of absence. This means you won't be required to complete a CCP learning log for 2022-23 or complete the Jurisprudence e-Learning Module. Apply for reinstatement a few weeks before your license is required. The registration fee of \$400 will apply. If you apply after September 30, the fee will be \$200. Depending on when you last practiced as a dietitian, there may be a reinstatement fee.

2. Maintain an active-practice license by renewing your license by March 31. This means you will be required to complete a CCP learning log for 2022-23, complete the Jurisprudence e-Learning Module, and provide proof of insurance. The renewal fee is \$400.

### I WOULD LIKE TO MOVE TO THE NON-PRACTICING ROSTER, BUT I PLAN TO RETURN TO DIETETICS IN NOVA SCOTIA IN THE FUTURE. WHAT WILL THE PROCESS BE?

To move to a non-practicing roster, notify the registration coordinator. On your online profile, indicate that you are either on a leave of absence or retired. Apply for reinstatement a few weeks before your license is required. Depending upon when you last practiced as a dietitian, there may be a reinstatement fee. If you do not meet active practice hour requirements, the Registration Committee will assess your application.

## ACTIVE PRACTICE

### AM I ELIGIBLE FOR AN ACTIVE PRACTICE LICENSE?

For the 2023 renewal, dietitians who have practiced dietetics in the 24 months prior to College proclamation (January 24, 2023) are eligible for an active practice license. Registrants who passed the CDRE in the past three years are eligible for an active practice license.

For renewal in 2024, dietitians must have practiced 500 hours in the past three years to maintain an active practice license. Following successful completion of the CDRE, a dietitian has three years to accumulate the required active practice hours.

## I WORK IN A NON-TRADITIONAL ROLE. CAN I MAINTAIN MY DIETETIC LICENSE?

To qualify for an active practice license, it is not necessary to have the job title of dietitian or nutritionist.

The registrar will review all positions where questions arise to determine whether the position falls within the legislated definition of the 'practice of dietetics.' Factors to consider include one or more of the following:

- required to be a dietitian or a regulated health professional for their role,
- role impacts the nutritional health of the public,
- role impacts the practice of dietetics,
- role requires the knowledge of the health care system or influences the health care system,
- role requires the education, competencies, and similar experience to that acquired through dietetics education and practice.

## NUTRITION PRESCRIPTION

UNDER THE COLLEGE ACT, DIETITIANS HAVE THE AUTHORIZATION TO PRESCRIBE DRUGS AND AGENTS THAT RELATE TO NUTRITION DIAGNOSES. WHEN CAN DIETITIANS START PRESCRIBING?

The College Board is planning to review and approve the Nutrition Prescription Standards in the spring. Soon afterwards, the College will launch the Nutrition Prescription Standards via a live webinar and communication strategy. College staff are currently coordinating how dietitians can be issued a prescribing number.

UNDER THE COLLEGE ACT, DIETITIANS HAVE THE AUTHORIZATION TO ORDER MONITORING PARAMETERS. WHEN CAN DIETITIANS PERFORM THIS ACTIVITY?

This activity will not be authorized until after nutrition prescription standards have been launched. An authorization statement will be drafted and there will be broad consultation.

## RELATED RESOURCES:

[2023 Renewal Instructions](#)

[College Proclamation Announcement](#)

For more information, please contact [info@nsdassoc.ca](mailto:info@nsdassoc.ca)

## VACANCIES ON THE FIRST BOARD OF THE COLLEGE

There will be a vacancy for president-elect and member at large on the first Board of the College. For more information about these positions, please contact Jennifer Hemeon at [jhemeon@nsdassoc.ca](mailto:jhemeon@nsdassoc.ca)

# NEW ACCREDITING BODY FOR DIETETIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CANADA

In 2022, all dietetic regulatory bodies across Canada approved **EQual** as the accreditor of dietetic education programs. This is for the purpose of program approval leading to licensure. EQual is experienced in the accreditation of health education programs, and is positioned to provide an objective and sustainable model that provides assurance of quality, credibility, and confidence in accreditation survey results.

The Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice (PDEP) was the accreditor and Dietitians of Canada (DC) held the contract with PDEP to be the service provider. When DC provided notice to end their contract, a new service provider was required. The context behind the decision to change accreditors is complex, however a brief Q&A is below to support an understanding of the decision.

## WHAT IS ACCREDITATION AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

In the context of dietetic regulation, the purpose of accreditation is to assess program compliance with national standards and demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of programs. Accreditation helps to ensure that those who enter the profession have the knowledge and abilities to practice safely and effectively. Accreditation is also a quality improvement process that supports education programs.

## DOES EQUAL ACCREDIT OTHER ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS? I HEARD THAT THEIR EXPERTISE IS ONLY WITH TECHNICAL PROGRAMS.

[EQual](#) is a subsidiary of Accreditation Canada and conducts accreditation for 22 health professions. Academic programs are accredited by EQual, including physician assistants, respiratory therapy, and nuclear medicine. EQual's accreditation standards are generic and relevant to technical and academic professions. The accreditation survey also confirms meeting dietetic-specific standards and dietitians participate on survey teams.

## WHY DOESN'T NSCDN DIRECTLY APPROVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

NSCDN does not have the capacity or expertise to directly approve dietetic education programs. If NSCDN were to directly approve programs, dietitians' license fees would need to increase to support the development of a robust and reliable process. The process must be sustainable, objective and effective. Secondly, a nationally recognized accreditor satisfies and supports labour mobility. Graduates from Nova Scotia programs may apply to any dietetic regulatory body in Canada. A graduate from any EQual-accredited dietetic program in Canada is eligible to be licensed with any dietetic regulatory body in Canada.

## HOW WILL STUDENTS BE IMPACTED IF A PROGRAM DOES NOT CHOOSE TO BE ACCREDITED BY EQUAL?

Dietetic education programs in Canada that do not register with EQual by August 31, 2023 will not be recognized by regulatory bodies as being approved programs for the purpose of registration. Graduates from

programs not accredited by EQual will go through a separate assessment process for entry to practice. Repercussions to graduates include cost, a delay to become licensed and uncertainty of the outcome of that assessment. If further education or training is needed, a program will be developed to enable the applicant to acquire and demonstrate their competence.

#### **I HEARD THAT PROGRAMS MAY CLOSE IF THEY CAN NOT AFFORD TO PAY THE INCREASED ACCREDITATION FEE. HOW DO COSTS COMPARE?**

Under PDEP, most integrated dietetic education programs paid accreditation fees of ~\$2,655 per year. The fee is determined by the size of the program. The Alliance of Canadian Dietetic Regulatory Bodies negotiated fees with EQual so that there will be a gradual increase in fees.

While not diminishing the impact any additional cost may have, it should be recognized that the PDEP accreditation program ran a deficit for years. One reason why DC discontinued their service to PDEP was that the income from their contract was insufficient to cover their expenses. EQual's accreditation fees reflect the true cost of accreditation whereas the cost of running PDEP accreditation was partially funded by dietetic regulatory bodies and DC. For health professions, accreditation is predominantly funded by education programs rather than the profession.

#### **I HEARD THAT A POSSIBLE OUTCOME WOULD BE THAT GRADUATES WILL CHOOSE NOT TO BECOME DIETITIANS IF THEIR PROGRAM IS NOT ACCREDITED. WOULDN'T THIS IMPACT THE PROFESSION?**

The public will seek regulated nutrition practitioners for assurance of their credentials and competency. Employers will continue to recognize the importance of having properly credentialed regulated professionals on staff.