



# *New Zealand Dietitians Board*

## Te Mana Tohunga Matai Kai

# *Statement of* Registration Competency Requirements

## *Role of the New Zealand Registered Dietitian*

**The registered dietitian is the dietetic professional, who is registered to practise dietetics and whom assumes accountability and responsibility for her/his own actions.**

Dietetics is the discipline of applying nutritional science to individuals and groups in states of disease and health. Evaluation of group and individual needs is undertaken within the social, economic and cultural context of the community and the prevailing health issues. The registered dietitian acts as a clinician, health promoter, food service manager, advocate, researcher, knowledge broker, resource manager, policy maker, adviser, educator, nutrition counsellor, accreditor and quality manager.

The aim of dietetic practice is to promote positive health outcomes through optimal nutrition. The dietitian is a reflective practitioner and lifelong learner, continually critiquing her/his own performance and improving their standards of practice.

Pre registration programmes are designed to prepare a practitioner to provide safe, competent and responsible dietetic care in a variety of health settings. The overriding aim of these educational programmes is the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable the practitioner to provide quality dietetic care to individuals and groups. Dietetic care includes the provision of safe, enjoyable, nutritionally adequate and appropriate food and fluids to meet people's nutritional needs.

Educational programmes aim to develop competence in three domains of practice: the principles and application of clinical nutrition; public health nutrition; and food service management; as well as these skills and abilities: communication and education; research; lifelong

learning; quality systems; management; cultural competency; and professionalism.

The registered dietitian recognises and practises within the limits of her/his education and competence. She/he is an independent and interdependent practitioner.

## *Supervision of Entry Level Dietitians*

**The Dietitians Board of New Zealand requires all entry level dietitians to be supervised in their first year of practice.**

## *What is Dietetic Competence?*

Dietetic competence is the ability of a person to fulfil the dietetic role safely and effectively. It encompasses the entire spectrum of knowledge, skills and abilities described previously, but given the complexity of the role acknowledges that full expertise will develop with experience.

Continuing Competency assists dietitians to maintain their professional standards and enhance their practice by commitment to quality improvement in their work and commitment to lifelong learning. Ensuring dietitian's competence and fitness to practise also protects the health and safety of members of the public.

## *Continuing Competency Programme*

The Continuing Competency Programme is compulsory for all registered dietitians under Section 40 (1) of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act) to maintain, examine or improve the competence of dietitians to practise their profession.

**The entry level dietitian will actively engage in the Dietitians Board's Continuing Competency Programme using an experienced dietitian as their mentor. The mentor will identify with the entry level dietitian's developmental requirements.**

Transition  
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Full Implementation  
January 2011

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## Entry Level Dietitian's Domains of Practice

Domain of Practice Competency	A. Applied Nutrition	B. Public Health Nutrition	C. Food Service Management	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<i>A.1 Clinical Dietetics: Applies nutrition science to the care of individuals and groups in states of health and disease</i>	<i>A.2 Clinical Process: Manages the nutrition care process for individuals and groups in all settings</i>	<i>B.1 Assesses, plans, monitors and evaluates public health nutrition programmes</i> <i>B.2 Assesses and applies New Zealand food and nutrition policies and legislation</i> <i>C.1 Applies nutrition and management principles to food service systems to enhance nutrition outcomes</i>	
<b>Performance Criteria</b>	<p><b>A.1.1</b> Promotes and supports optimal nutrition status of individuals and groups with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) life course specific needs;</li> <li>(b) lifestyle specific needs; and</li> <li>(c) nutrition related disorders</li> </ul> <p><b>A.1.2</b> Promotes nutritional well being and assists self management for the prevention of non-communicable diseases</p> <p><b>A.1.3</b> Applies understanding of pathophysiology to the <u>management</u> of adult nutrition care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Recognises the potential clinical signs and symptoms of major nutrition related diseases</li> <li>– Recognises biochemical indicators specific to the disease or process</li> <li>– Understands the effects of diet, fluids, electrolytes and nutritional status on the development and progress of the disease or process</li> <li>– Understands the effects of disease, clinical condition and treatment on nutrition and health status</li> </ul> <p><b>A.1.4</b> Demonstrates <u>understanding of the pathophysiology and the principles</u> of adult nutrition care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understands the disease process and/or specific nutrition implications of these conditions in adults</li> <li>– Entry level dietitians are not expected to manage these patients without direct supervision</li> </ul> <p><b>A.1.5</b> Applies understanding of pathophysiology to the <u>management</u> of paediatric nutrition care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Recognises the potential clinical signs and symptoms of major nutrition related diseases in infants, children and adolescents</li> <li>– Recognises biochemical indicators specific to the disease or process</li> <li>– Understands the effects of diet, fluids, electrolytes and nutritional status on the development and progress of the disease or process</li> <li>– Understands the effects of disease, clinical condition and treatment on nutrition and health status</li> </ul> <p><b>A.1.6</b> Demonstrates <u>understanding of the pathophysiology and the principles</u> of paediatric nutrition care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understands the disease process and/or specific nutrition implications of these conditions in infants, children and adolescents</li> <li>– Entry level dietitians are not expected to manage these patients without direct supervision</li> </ul> <p><b>A.1.7</b> (a) Applies an understanding of the principles and manages nutrition support: oral and enteral feeding for infants, children and adults (b) Applies an understanding of the principles and manages simple parenteral feeding for adults (c) Recognises the principles of parenteral feeding for infants and children</p>	<p><b>A.2.1</b> Uses appropriate nutrition screening tools</p> <p><b>A.2.2</b> Evaluates and prioritises referrals appropriately</p> <p><b>A.2.3</b> Conducts nutrition assessments for infants, children, adolescents, adults and older people</p> <p><b>A.2.4</b> Analyses and interprets nutrition assessment data</p> <p><b>A.2.5</b> Demonstrates an evidence informed approach to practice</p> <p><b>A.2.6</b> Selects, plans and implements patient/client-centred nutrition care</p> <p><b>A.2.7</b> Prescribes and evaluates the use of special purpose foods including vitamin and mineral supplements for infants, children and adults</p> <p><b>A.2.8</b> Identifies potential nutritional implications of alternative and complementary therapies</p> <p><b>A.2.9</b> Uses an interdisciplinary approach to the delivery of nutrition care</p> <p><b>A.2.10</b> Complies with the legal requirements and procedures for clinical documentation</p> <p><b>A.2.11</b> Manages a continuum of nutrition care for individuals</p>	<p><b>B.1.1</b> Evaluates public health nutrition programmes in New Zealand</p> <p><b>B.1.2</b> Applies health promotion concepts and programme planning models to planning a public health nutrition programme</p> <p><b>B.1.3</b> Recognises a settings approach for health promotion and models of community organisation</p> <p><b>B.1.4</b> Plans a community-centred, theory-informed public health nutrition intervention to reduce inequalities in health and improve Maori health</p> <p><b>B.2.1</b> Evaluates New Zealand food and nutrition policies</p> <p><b>B.2.2</b> Demonstrates an understanding of the scope and application of health protection legislation and food regulation in New Zealand</p>	<p><b>C.1.1</b> Plans and evaluates a menu for an institutional setting, ensuring it meets client-specific nutritional and cultural needs</p> <p><b>C.1.2</b> Evaluates current food production systems</p> <p><b>C.1.3</b> Evaluates food distribution and service systems</p> <p><b>C.1.4</b> Applies knowledge of food safety legislation and principles to manage and evaluate the service of safe food</p>

The following competencies are applicable to all Domains of Practice

## Entry Level Dietitian's Skills and Abilities

Skills and Abilities Competency	Learning Outcome	Performance Criteria
<b>1. Communication</b>	<i>1.1 Conducts effective communication</i>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> Uses oral, written and listening skills to establish and maintain effective relationships with individuals and groups</p> <p><b>1.1.2</b> Uses written and oral English with ease</p> <p><b>1.1.3</b> Communicates with people in a manner, which is appropriate to their level of understanding, culture, background and preferred ways of communicating</p> <p><b>1.1.4</b> Uses assertiveness techniques appropriately</p> <p><b>1.1.5</b> Uses effective negotiation skills to resolve issues and ensure best outcomes</p> <p><b>1.1.6</b> Uses advocacy to promote the role of the dietitian and ensure best nutrition outcomes values</p> <p><b>1.1.7</b> Facilitates learning by applying appropriate learning theory</p>
	<i>1.2 Facilitates effective nutrition counselling</i>	<b>1.2.1</b> Demonstrates understanding of nutrition counselling techniques
<b>2. Research</b>	<i>2.1 Applies research design and methodologies for evidence-informed practice</i>	<p><b>1.2.2</b> Demonstrates ability to provide nutrition counselling appropriate to patient/client need</p> <p><b>2.1.1</b> Conducts an evaluative literature search</p> <p><b>2.1.2</b> Designs, undertakes and evaluates a simple project</p> <p><b>2.1.3</b> Uses and interprets statistics</p> <p><b>2.1.4</b> Evaluates and reports the research</p>
<b>3. Management</b>	<i>3.1 Applies management skills</i>	<b>3.1.1</b> Demonstrates an understanding of the principles of service management
	<i>3.2 Applies quality management principles to all aspects of practice</i>	<b>3.1.2</b> Develops a market needs based plan for a small dietetic project
<b>4. Cultural Competency</b>	<i>4.1 Demonstrates culturally appropriate practice and an understanding of Tikanga</i>	<p><b>3.2.1</b> Demonstrates understanding of different approaches to quality management and a commitment to quality improvement</p> <p><b>4.1.1</b> Has a working knowledge of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, Tikanga and their application to dietetic practice</p> <p><b>4.1.2</b> Conducts her/his practice acknowledging their own limits of cultural safety</p> <p><b>4.1.3</b> Demonstrates ability to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds and practises in a way which respects and values other cultures</p>
<b>5. Professionalism</b>	<i>5.1 Demonstrates professionalism</i>	<p><b>5.1.1</b> Demonstrates an understanding of the legal, professional, ethical and social framework for dietetic practice</p> <p><b>5.1.2</b> Applies principles of critical thinking, decision making, problem solving and collaboration to all aspects of practice</p> <p><b>5.1.3</b> Recognises the limitations of her/his knowledge and professional competence and seeks assistance as appropriate</p> <p><b>5.1.4</b> Demonstrates knowledge of emerging technology and trends</p> <p><b>5.1.5</b> Establishes, enhances and maintains effective relationships in the provision of dietetic services</p> <p><b>5.1.6</b> Conducts her/himself as an effective team member and understands team leadership</p> <p><b>5.1.7</b> Uses reflective practice to enhance her/his practice and the practice of others</p> <p><b>5.1.8</b> Understands the role of professional supervision</p> <p><b>5.1.9</b> Demonstrates knowledge of the dietetic profession's Continuing Competency Programme</p>

Entry level practitioners are required to demonstrate the learning outcomes in each competency area with acceptable minimum levels of competence, without assistance. Achievement of all the performance criteria to this standard will be regarded as evidence each learning outcome has been achieved.



## What are the New Zealand Dietitians Board's Registration Competency Requirements (RCR)?

These are statements, which describe the combination of learning outcomes: knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes required for successful performance as a dietitian. The standards describe the minimum level of acceptable performance for an entry level practitioner. The entry level dietitian is required to demonstrate achievement of the required standard in all competency areas to be eligible to apply for registration.

The learning outcomes have been grouped to reflect the domains of practice and the associated skills and abilities of New Zealand dietitians. It is the combination of these aspects, which define the role of the dietitian.

## What purpose does the Statement of Registration Competency Requirements (RCR) Serve?

The Statement of Registration Competency Requirements has a number of positive attributes, particularly in the maintenance of professional standards, and can be used to serve the following purposes:

### 1. Consumers

Provide a national public document on dietetics and the role of the dietitian.

### 2. Registration

Provide a basis for the assessment of:

- New Zealand trained dietitians seeking registration;
- Overseas trained dietitians seeking registration in New Zealand.

### 3. Self Assessment and Continuing Competency

Can be used by the dietitian for self assessment in order to:

- Identify self development and continuing education needs;
- Review competence prior to changing an area of practice.

### 4. Educators

Used by educators of dietitians to develop and refine curricula.

### 5. Dietitian Managers

Provide guidelines and an environment, where dietitians are able to meet the Registration Competency Requirements.

### 6. Other Health Professionals

Provides information for other health professionals on the scope of dietetic practice and the minimum standards required of dietitians.

## Scope of Practice For Dietitians And Restricted Activities

Under the HPCA Act, the Dietitians Board describes the profession of dietetics in one Scope of Practice:

**“Dietitians apply scientific knowledge about food and nutrition to individuals and groups in states of health and disease to promote optimal health outcomes within the social, economic, and cultural context of the New Zealand population.”**

The Dietitians Board has one ‘Restricted Activity’:

**Prescribing of enteral or parenteral nutrition where the feed is administered through a tube into the gut or central venous catheter.**