Dietetic Grad Survey Report

APPENDIX 1
ONTARIO HIGHLIGHTS

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In partnership with Dietitians of Canada
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Executive Summary

Dietetic educators across Canada have been calling for workforce reporting on recent graduates to identify trends and emerging practice areas and inform optimal education and advocacy opportunities. In response, Dietitians of Canada commissioned researchers at the University of Waterloo and the University of Saskatchewan to work with an advisory team to develop, administer, and analyze a workforce survey of Ontario and Saskatchewan dietetic program graduates. The goal was to provide an overview of employment paths of those who have met the educational and professional qualifications to write the Canadian Dietetic Registration Exam since 2014.

An online survey, mounted on Survey Monkey®, was available from June to September 2019 and advertised to potential respondents using a range of approaches. There were 314 qualifying respondents: 261 from Ontario and 53 from Saskatchewan.

Survey results indicate a positive outlook for new graduates: 78% of respondents obtained paid employment as a dietitian within the first 12 months of completion of dietetic training, with many obtaining a position before completing their training.

The average length of the first primary dietitian position was 15 months and 47% of respondents were employed full-time (19% permanent, 28% temporary). In addition, 33% of respondents also had a secondary paid dietitian position with a different employer and 41% of respondents held non-dietitian positions in their first year after completing their dietetic training. Over three quarters of respondents were currently employed as a dietitian at the time of surveillance. The average length of time in their current primary dietitian position at the time of competing the survey was 14 months. In addition, 23% of respondents held a secondary dietitian position with a different employer and 26% held non-dietitian positions.
At the time of survey completion, 47% of respondents were employed 36 or more hours per week as a dietitian. Of all respondents, 51% earned between $55-$75,000 per year and 30% were actively seeking dietitian employment in addition to their current position.

When asked if they felt they had the knowledge and skills required to advance their dietetics career, 91% indicated ‘Yes’. When asked if they felt they had the ability and opportunity to advance their dietetics career, 80% indicated ‘Yes’. Overall, 83% were Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the preparation provided by their academic coursework and practicum and NO respondents were Very Dissatisfied.

While graduates expressed overall satisfaction with their dietetic education and training, cultural competence and private practice and business knowledge were areas respondents indicated more in-depth education and training would be of value.

Finally, demographic data collected indicates 96% of respondents identified as female, 81% identified as white, and less than 15% indicated language fluency in a language other than English.

The data from this 2019 survey may serve as a baseline for future surveys or comparison with other provinces.
Research Team & Advisory Committee

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Introduction

Data on the early career paths and dietetic training experience of recent graduates has not been collected since 2009 and would be of value on program, provincial, and national levels. Dietetic educators across Canada have been calling for workforce planning and reporting to be completed to identify trends and emerging practice areas and inform optimal education and advocacy opportunities.

Questions regularly posed by educators include:
- Where are graduates finding employment?
- How long is it taking them to find employment?
- Are graduates taking on multiple positions before finding secure full-time employment?
- Does our current education and training system meet the needs of new graduates once they enter the workforce?
- Are there gaps identified by graduates in their preparation for the positions they assume or would like to assume post-graduation?

Dietitians of Canada commissioned a survey of recent Ontario and Saskatchewan graduates to collect feedback and provide an overview of practice experience. The purpose of the survey was to: 1) describe the employment paths of Ontario and Saskatchewan graduates who met the educational and professional qualifications to write the Canadian Dietetic Registration Exam between 2014 and 2019; 2) examine the nature of work and practice areas; 3) inform dietetics students about career opportunities; 4) inform education and training programs; and 5) to inform professional development and advocacy opportunities.

Researchers from the University of Waterloo and the University of Saskatchewan developed and administered the survey in consultation with the advisory committee.
Survey Methods

The web-based survey was drafted based on the 2009 survey and advisory committee input. The draft survey was pre-tested using cognitive testing (n=5), revised as indicated, and then pilot tested (n=17). Following minor changes indicated, the survey was mounted on Survey Monkey®. Recruitment took place via email invitations from dietetic training programs in Ontario and Saskatchewan, Dietitians of Canada newsletters and Dietitians of Canada social media outlets. The survey was open between June and September 2019.

*Overall survey results are summarized in Sections A through G in the full survey report.*

*Province specific highlights are summarized in Appendices 1 and 2.*
Survey Sample

Qualified Respondents 314

Ontario 261

Saskatchewan 53

Respondents completed the training in Ontario and Saskatchewan to meet educational and professional qualification requirements to write the CDRE from 2014-2019

Respondent Breakdown by Graduation Year

- 2014: 9%
- 2015: 13%
- 2016: 15%
- 2017: 19%
- 2018: 23%
- 2019: 21%

1 Eligible Ontario and Saskatchewan graduates totaled 1232 for graduation years 2014 to 2019.
Concluding Comments

The employment outlook for new dietetic graduates is positive. Of recent graduates, 79% are currently employed as a dietitian with 56% of respondents working full-time (combined permanent and temporary). Over 50% of graduates indicated they were earning between $55,000 and $75,000 annually.

Although most graduates are working within the healthcare sector, a range of practice areas was represented, including those that are less traditional for the profession.

While many graduates are finding full-time employment, temporary or contract positions, job/employer changes and/or multiple part-time or contract positions are common. Graduates also indicated that private practice/consulting routes were developed to expand employment opportunities.

Graduates expressed overall satisfaction with their dietetic education and training, while highlighting some areas where additional background would have been valuable. These areas included cultural competence, with a particular focus on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis; private practice; and business skills, with a focus on private practice.

One final consideration worth noting, is the demographic make-up of recent dietetic graduates in Ontario and Saskatchewan responding to the survey: 96% identified as female, 81% identified as white, and 8% indicated language fluency in a language other than English or French. This suggests that dietetic graduates in Ontario and Saskatchewan are less diverse than the general population within their age range.

This was the first workforce study of recent dietetic graduates in a decade. The findings have importance for recent graduates, students considering entering the

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This includes current employment for both those whose current position is the same as described for their first position and those whose current position is different than the first position described.
profession, educators and employers. The survey will serve as a comparator for anticipated studies in other provinces and a baseline for future studies.
Appendices

Appendix 1: Ontario Highlights

Appendix 2: Saskatchewan Highlights

Available in the full survey report and as a separate highlights report

Appendix 3: Response Breakdown by Program

Appendix 4: Copy Survey Instrument

Appendix 5: Respondent Data Set Information
Appendix 1: Ontario Highlights

Eligible Ontario graduates totaled 1099 for graduation years 2014 to 2019. Respondents completed training in Ontario to meet educational and professional qualification requirements to write the CDRE 2014-2019.

Ontario Respondents by Graduation Year

- 2019: 23% (261 graduates)
- 2018: 20% (220 graduates)
- 2017: 20% (218 graduates)
- 2016: 16% (176 graduates)
- 2015: 13% (147 graduates)
- 2014: 8% (88 graduates)

3 Eligible Ontario graduates totaled 1099 for graduation years 2014 to 2019.
Additional University Education

- 10% of respondents indicated they have completed or are working towards completion of an additional university degree since completing their dietetic training
  - Top areas of study indicated were nutrition and public health

- Top 3 reasons for pursuing an additional degree
  1. Enhance professional knowledge and skills
  2. To conduct nutrition or dietetic research
  3. Satisfy job/career requirements or goals

Additional Certifications or Diplomas

- 30% of respondents indicated they have completed or are working towards completion of additional certifications or diplomas since completing their dietetic training
  - The top certification listed was Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) at 65%

- The top 4 reasons indicated for pursuing additional certifications or diplomas were
  1. Enhance professional knowledge or skills
  2. Satisfy job/career requirements or goals
  3. Support general interest or self-improvement
  4. Qualify for a new dietetics position
1st Year Dietitian Employment Profile of Ontario Educated Dietitians

*Primary Position as defined for the survey: Position worked the greatest number of hours*

**Obtaining Employment**

- 78% of respondents obtained paid employment as a dietitian within the first 12 months of completion of dietetic training
  - 89% of those respondents who obtained employment as a dietitian within the first 12 months did so within the first 6 months of completing their dietetic training

- Of the 22% of respondents who did not obtain employment as a dietitian within the first 12 months, top reasons for not obtaining employment indicated
  - Unable to obtain a position
  - Pursued a position not requiring dietetic credentials

**Applying for Dietitian Positions**

- 41% of respondents who obtained employment as a dietitian within the first 12 months, applied for 5 positions or fewer and 23% of respondents applied for 6 to 15 positions before obtaining employment

- The 3 most successful strategies indicated for obtaining a position as a dietitian were
  1. Job search websites (e.g., Indeed)
  2. Employment opportunities at practicum site
  3. Past training or employment contacts
Time in 1st Primary Dietitian Position

- Average length of first primary dietitian position → 15 months

Employment Category

- 26% of respondents were employed ‘temporary full-time’
- 19% of respondents were employed ‘permanent full-time’

Language Fluency

- 93% of first positions held did not require or prefer language fluency other than English or French. Of positions preferring other language fluency, the top language indicated was Punjabi.

Relocation for First Primary Position

- 29% of respondents relocated for their first position as a dietitian
  - 26% of those respondents to the remote north
Employer & Roles: 1st Primary Dietitian Position

Principal Role: 1st Primary Dietitian Position

- Top 4 principal roles of first primary positions
  1. Health care team
  2. Acute care hospital/in-patient
  3. Long-term care
  4. Hospital clinic (e.g., Out-patient diabetes clinic)

- 26% of respondents indicated they also had secondary roles with the same employer. The top 3 secondary roles indicated were
  1. Community health
  2. Acute care hospital/in-patient
  3. Hospital clinic (e.g., Out-patient Diabetes clinic)

Employer: 1st Primary Position

Top employers indicated
  1. Hospital
  2. Health facility within a medical clinic: Publicly funded
  3. Private health care facility or organization
  3. Other company (e.g., retail, pharmaceutical)

4 Private health care facility or organization and Other company were equally represented
Position Changes: 1st Year

- 35% of respondents changed primary positions within the first 12 months
  - The top 3 reasons identified were
    - Move from a temporary or contract position to a permanent position with a different employer
    - Move to a different employer
    - Move to a different area of practice

Secondary Dietitian Position: 1st Year

- 36% of respondents also had a secondary paid dietitian position with a different employer at the same time as their primary position
  - The top 3 roles indicated for secondary dietitian employment were
    - Private practice/consulting
    - Long-term care
    - Home and/or community care

Other Employment: 1st Year

- 41% of respondents also held non-dietitian positions in their first year of practice
Current Employment Profile if *Different from First Year*

*This section profiles current positions held, if they differ from dietitian employment the 1st year following training*

- Of those respondents currently employed as a dietitian, 47% of respondents were employed in a position different from the 1st primary position described for their 1st year of training

**Application Strategies**

- The top successful strategies used to obtain current dietitian position
  - Job search websites (e.g., Indeed)
  - Personal networks
  - Past training and employment networks

**Time in Current Dietitian Position**

- Average length of time current primary dietitian position → 13 months

**Current Employment Category**

- 26% of respondents were employed ‘temporary full-time’
- 34% of respondents were employed ‘permanent full-time’
Language Fluency

- 89% of current positions held did not require or prefer language fluency other than English or French. Of the positions preferring other language fluency, languages indicated include Chinese (Cantonese and/or Mandarin) and Punjabi, Urdu & Hindi.

Relocation for Current Dietitian Position

- 29% of respondents relocated for their current dietitian position

- Relocation costs were paid or partially by employers for only 20% of the Ontario educated respondents moving to their current position

5 Note: Respondents had the option to ‘check all that apply’ to allow for responses fitting more than one category
Principal Role: Current Dietitian Position

The top 4 roles indicated were
1. Health care team
2. Long-term care
3. Public health
4. Hospital clinic (e.g., Out-patient diabetes clinic)

- 18% of respondents indicated they also had current secondary roles with the same employer. Top secondary roles included
  1. Acute care hospital/in-patient
  2. Hospital clinic (e.g., Out-patient diabetes clinic)

Employer: Current Dietitian Position

Top 3 employers indicated
1. Hospital
2. Public Health Unit
3. Health facility within a medical clinic: publicly funded

Secondary Positions

- 25% of respondents also had a secondary paid dietitian position with a different employer (at the same time as their current primary position)

Other Employment

- 26% of respondents also currently held non-dietitian positions
Employment Status

Weekly Hours Currently Employed as a Dietitian

Number of Hours Worked Per Week (% respondents)

- 46% worked more than 36 hours per week
- 27.2% worked between 26-35 hours per week
- 6.7% worked between 16-25 hours per week
- 20.1% worked less than 15 hours per week

Income

- Annual income earned as a dietitian
  - 23% of respondents earned $55-65,000 per year
  - 29% of respondents earned $65-75,000 per year

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6 Encompasses self-reported earnings of those working full-time, part-time and in multiple positions.
7 Respondents were asked for both annual earnings and an hourly wage calculation (even if earnings were salary based)
Benefits

- 51% of employers provided a benefits package
Training Satisfaction

➢ When asked if they felt they had the knowledge and skills to advance their dietetics career
  ▪ 92% of respondents indicated ‘Yes’

➢ When asked if they felt they had the ability and opportunity to advance their dietetics career
  ▪ 82% of respondents indicated ‘Yes’

➢ Overall satisfaction with academic coursework and practicum
  ▪ 86% of respondents were Satisfied or Very Satisfied
  ▪ Only 4% of respondents were Dissatisfied
  ▪ NO respondents were Very Dissatisfied
Satisfaction with dietetics training in supporting development of specified skill sets

![Bar chart showing satisfaction with various skill sets](chart.png)
Demographics: Ontario Educated Respondents

Age
➢ 79% of respondents were between 20 and 29 years old

Gender
➢ 96% identified as female

Cultural Identity
➢ 81% identified as white
➢ 7% identified as Chinese
➢ 4% identified as South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)

Language Fluency
➢ English 99%
➢ French 17%
➢ Other 6%
   ➢ Cantonese and/or Mandarin 4%

Current place of residence
➢ Ontario 89%
➢ Another province 9%
# Appendix 3: Response breakdown by program

Response Breakdown by Program (n=314 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accredited Program</th>
<th>Participants (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-degree practicum</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aramark Canada Ltd.</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brescia University College (DDEPT)</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand River Hospital</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Health Sciences</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ontario School of Medicine</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Health Sciences Centre</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryerson, St. Mikes (PMDip)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryerson, North York General (PMDip)</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunnybrook &amp; Women’s College HSC</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital for Sick Children</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undergraduate degree with integrated practicum</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Université d’Ottawa</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Saskatchewan</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Master’s program with accredited practicum</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brescia University College (MScFN)</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital for Sick Children</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryerson University (MHSc)</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Guelph (MAN)</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Toronto</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent practicum (Ontario only)</strong></td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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8 i.e., St. Michael’s Hospital stand-alone internship
Appendix 4: Survey Instrument

A copy of the survey is appended to the full survey report.
Appendix 5: Respondent Data Set Information

Aggregate has been provided to Dietitians of Canada and is being securely maintained in encrypted password-protected files, stored with a project specific folder on a secure server for a period of 10 years as per clearance provided by the University of Waterloo Office of Research Ethics Committee (ORE#40910) and a letter of acknowledgement in lieu of a certificate of approval from the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BEH#1225).

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