

**Operationalizing  
New Integrated  
Population/Public Health  
Nutrition Competencies  
into Dietetic Curriculum,  
Education and Practice  
Final Report: 2013-2015**

**Project Number  
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On behalf of Dietitians of Canada**

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## National Advisory Committee

- *Academic Setting:* Charna Gord replaced Anne Fox, Shawna Berenbaum replaced Doreen Walker, Melissa (Misty) Rossiter, Sheila Tyminiski replaced Noreen Willows
- *Internship/Practicum Setting:* Diane Candiotto, Connie Foote, Denise Raftis, Louise St-Denis
- *Public/Population Health Practice:* Renée Murphy, Vanessa Perrodou, Jessica Rutherford
- *Ex-Officio:* Corinne Eisenbraun, Karen MacDougall, Marlene Wyatt

## Reference Groups

- *Educators:* Laura Cullen, Alison Cummins, Paul Fieldhouse, Veronique Provencher, Linda Smith, Karol Traviss, Roula Tzianetas
- *Practitioners:* Kaitlyn Comeau, Kim Curtis, Lisa Dooley, Suzanne Galeslout, Meghan Molnar, Nasim Saberi, Tracy Sanden, Fabienne Tougas
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# Executive Summary

This final report summarizes the development process and outcomes of the project *Operationalizing New Integrated Population and Public Health Nutrition Competencies into Dietetic Education and Practice*. The initiative was led by Dietitians of Canada with a grant from the Public Health Agency of Canada – Public Health Workforce Development Products and Tools Program. The resulting online course and support materials, focusing on conducting a community needs assessment and setting priorities, makes an important contribution to supporting dietetic students, interns and new public health practitioners to achieve entry-level competencies for dietetic practice in population and public health.

## Background

The overall goal of this initiative was to develop bilingual, nationally accessible & validated web-based tools & resources that would support the attainment of entry-level dietetic competencies in population and public health nutrition.

## Project Objectives

- Identify and address gaps in educational learning resources and tools
- Identify existing population and public health nutrition content, learning tools and experiential learning opportunities in undergraduate and practicum dietetic education programs across Canada that could be shared with other programs or used to develop new resources
- Consult with educators & students/interns to determine the range and types of tools that are needed to fill identified gaps and enhance population/public health nutrition education (didactic & practical)
- Develop, test and release a series of bilingual nationally accessible web-based tools & resources for use in dietetics and nutrition education programs across Canada.

## Project Description

A National Advisory Committee was established to provide leadership for the project. The committee was comprised of dietetic educators at the academic and internship/practicum levels, students and public health practitioners. Three Reference Groups were also established with a similar composition to provide content expertise as well as provide feedback on the development of project resources. A curriculum design expert developed the learning materials which include:

- A case-focused, self-pacing, interactive, evidence based, bilingual online course designed to support students' and practitioners' learning about community nutrition needs assessment and setting priorities for program planning. Also included are an embedded glossary, links to additional reading and reference materials, an end of course quiz and a printable certificate of achievement.
- A downloadable PowerPoint version of the course and a Student Workbook covering the same concepts as the online version
- A Facilitator Guide for educators
- An optional feedback survey on the course content, format and learning experience.

A Project Logic Model and evaluation framework was developed that identified the project outcomes, indicators and data collection tools for the evaluation. The course was launched on the Dietitians of Canada online learning platform in September of 2014.

## Findings

Feedback from all participants involved in the development of the project – National Advisory Committee and Reference Groups – indicated high satisfaction with the development process, communication strategies and learning products produced.

Since the launch, 607 DC members and 38 nonmembers have registered for the English online course. There have been two group subscriptions (UBC – 74 students and McGill University - 68 students). Sixty-five (65) users have registered for the French version of the course.

Early feedback from course registrants has also been very positive with 90% of respondents that completed the feedback survey indicating that they would recommend the course to their colleagues. These positive results suggest that the engagement of end users in the development of learning materials has been a best practice process for producing learning resources that meet the needs for students and practicing professions. The findings have implications for professional development course developers generally. They also have implications for potential future work by Dietitians of Canada in developing other resources to support competency development in other aspects of population and public health as well as additional practice areas.

## Recommendations

- Continued promotion of the online course and evaluation results is needed to ensure students, educators and practitioners are aware of the course and the positive outcomes.
- Continue to monitor feedback on the course and utilize results in a variety of communication channels to share evaluation results and promote the course more broadly.
- Determine the potential for funding additional resource materials to support competencies in other areas of Population and Public Health and to keep the existing materials current.