

Nutrition Educator

Policy

Iowa Administrative Code:

Nutrition educators employed by a contract agency shall be supervised by a licensed dietitian.

Authority

Iowa Administrative Code: 641-73.5 (135)(3), excerpt

Procedure

A Nutrition Education functions as a Competent Professional Authority (CPA) for determination of participant eligibility and certification.

Qualifications

A Nutrition Educator includes the following:

- Registered Dietitians, but not licensed in Iowa
- Successful completion of an undergraduate degree in Dietetics from an accredited institution, but has not completed a dietetic internship
- Successful completion of an undergraduate degree in Dietetics and a dietetic internship from an accredited institution, but not completed or passed the dietetic registration exam
- Successful completion of an undergraduate or graduate degree in Nutrition, Nutritional Sciences, Community Nutrition, Clinical Nutrition, Public Health Nutrition, or Home Economics with emphasis in Nutrition from an accredited institution
- State or locally medically trained health official
 - Licensed Practical Nurses
 - Completion of an undergraduate or graduate degree in a health related field
 - WIC Nutrition Assistants (See Policy “WIC Nutrition Assistants)

The following skills are desirable:

- Professional work experience in public health services
- Computer skills including word processing and/or data entry
- Ability to overcome language/cultural barriers to connect with a diverse population of low-income populations
- Ability to work with community leaders and health professionals

Responsibilities

A Nutrition Educator's responsibilities may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Functions as the Competent Professional Authority (CPA) for determination of program eligibility and certification
 - Assess and document a participant's nutrition risk(s) including measuring length/height/weight, perform hematocrit or hemoglobin test, and complete the Nutrition Interview.
 - Prescribe food packages
 - Provide nutrition education, including breastfeeding promotion and support that is responsive to the participant's needs and interests
 - **Note:** High risk participants must be scheduled for at least one individual education contact by a licensed dietitian. If the initial contact was provided by a licensed dietitian, then the second contact can be provided by any CPA or a licensed dietitian as determined by the licensed dietitian that certified the participant. If the initial contact was provided by a non-licensed dietitian CPA, then the second contact must be provided by a licensed dietitian.
- Identifies and documents care plans
- Complete and follow-up on referrals to other health and social services
- Document screening and referrals for lead testing and immunizations
- Provide support to breastfeeding women and promotes breastfeeding efforts
- Serve as the staff person qualified to provide program nutrition information to interested professionals, outside agencies, organizations, and individuals
- Provides excellent customer service
- Participate in outreach activities
- Participant in quality assurance/improvement activities
- Assists the WIC Coordinator in developing needed program and personnel evaluation tools and plans
- Interacts with Various Programs
 - Participates in community needs assessment in the agency service area
 - Communicates or interacts with various programs including, but not limited to the following:
 - Iowa Department of Public Health
 - Department of Human Services
 - Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health
 - I-Smile
 - Early Head Start/Head Start
 - Public Health Nursing
 - Area physicians, HMOs, and hospital staff
 - Area Education Agency
 - Family Planning agencies
 - Lead Poisoning Prevention programs

- Child Health Specialty Clinics
- Child Care Resource and Referral agencies
- Staff of other WIC contract agencies
- Other community groups

Training

- Nutrition Educators must complete training requirements as outlined in the policies “Local Agency Personnel Training”, “Training and Education Record”, and “New Employee Training Checklist”.

Monitoring

Nutrition educators must be supervised by a licensed dietitian. A licensed dietitian must be available for consultation, but is not required to be onsite for all clinics.