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Leading Health Organizations Call for Nutrition Education to Become a Core Part of Medical Training

Chicago – September 9, 2025 - The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, together with 14 national health organizations, supports United States medical schools increasing the number of hours devoted to nutrition education in medical training.

Chronic lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease and malnutrition continue to strain families and health care systems. Yet most physicians receive fewer than 20 hours of nutrition instruction across four years of medical school. This is far short of what is needed to prepare them to meet today's public health challenges.

Expanding nutrition education will ensure that physicians:

- **Understand the role of diet in chronic disease.** Nutrition knowledge is essential to prevention and treatment of the leading causes of death and disability.
- **Integrate nutrition into patient care.** Understanding and referral to evidence-based approaches such as medical nutrition therapy (MNT), offered by registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs), strengthen chronic and acute disease management and recovery.
- **Recognize when to involve nutrition professionals.** Referring to RDNs, nutrition and dietetics technicians, registered (NDTRs) and other qualified professionals improves coordination of care and patient outcomes.
- **Value professional expertise in curriculum design.** Embedding nutrition experts in medical education ensures students gain practical, clinically relevant training.
- **Promote interprofessional collaboration.** Team-based education where physicians, RDNs, NDTRs, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals learn and work together builds trust and integrated care delivery.

When nutrition professionals are part of care teams, they save lives and deliver measurable value for patients, providers and payers, while health systems see better outcomes, fewer complications and lower hospital readmissions.

The health organizations listed below call on medical schools, accrediting bodies and policymakers to make nutrition science a cornerstone of medical education. By expanding training and fostering collaboration across health disciplines, we can build a health care system that prioritizes prevention, manages disease more effectively and delivers stronger outcomes at lower cost.

Organizations joining this effort:

- Alliance of Wound Care Stakeholders
- American Association on Health and Disability
- American College of Lifestyle Medicine
- American Muslim Health Professionals
- American Society for Nutrition
- GW Institute for Food Safety and Nutrition Security
- Interfaith Public Health Network
- Lakeshore Foundation
- National Hispanic Health Foundation
- National Kidney Foundation
- Obesity Action Coalition
- Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine
- Teaching Kitchen Collaborative
- The Obesity Society

Supporting Statements

“We believe inclusion of nutrition education within medical school curricula is an important step toward closing the long-standing gap in physician training on nutrition, one of the most modifiable determinants of health. By leveraging the knowledge and experience of RDNs, medical schools will be better equipped to prepare future physicians to meet the complex nutritional needs of their patients. This aligns with the Academy’s broader goals of advancing public health, reducing chronic disease burden and promoting a more collaborative and effective health care system.”

-2025-2026 President Deanne Brandstetter, MBA, RDN, CDN, FAND
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

“The American Society for Nutrition has long supported the need for more nutrition education in medical schools and applauds this important initiative. Physicians and all health care professionals must have accurate nutrition knowledge to help Americans live healthier lives. ASN has advocated for the establishment of a coordinating center to align

stakeholders, centralize resources and strengthen training opportunities. Our organization is well positioned to provide the nutrition expertise and tools that medical schools and residency programs need to integrate meaningful nutrition education into their curricula."

-John E. Courtney, Ph.D., ASN Chief Executive Officer
American Society for Nutrition

"The National Hispanic Health Foundation recognizes that science-based nutrition training in medical education is key to decreasing chronic diseases in the U.S."

-National Hispanic Health Foundation

"At the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative, we believe that equipping future healthcare professionals with nutrition knowledge, practical skills and a referral pathway is essential to advancing health and combatting chronic disease. By integrating nutrition into medical education, we empower clinicians to not only treat disease but to prevent it—using food as a powerful tool for resilience and wellbeing."

-Teaching Kitchen Collaborative

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The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals, representing more than 112,000 registered dietitian nutritionists, nutrition and dietetics technicians, registered, and other dietetics professionals. The Academy is committed to improving health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy. For more information, visit www.eatright.org.