



PADA State Legislative Day 2012 Legislator Visit Talking Points

RDs are the Nutrition Experts

PADA:

- The PADA is a statewide organization comprised of over 3,400 nutrition professionals dedicated to providing expert food and nutrition services to the citizens of Pennsylvania.
- PADA promotes both the role of registered dietitians and dietetic technicians in Pennsylvania's health care system and the positive impact good nutrition has on overall health and wellness.
- PADA members are employed in hospitals, medical clinics, assisted living facilities, government agencies, universities, food industries and schools in every community throughout the state. The food and nutrition benefits offered by registered dietitians include weight loss plans, nutrition wellness programs and education, diabetes care and heart disease prevention – all of which help reduce morbidity and health care costs.

The RD (see MNT Works information)

- **RDs are the nutrition experts:** RDs have expertise in delivering nutrition counseling, cognitive behavioral strategies and MNT services for prevention, wellness and disease management. Beneficiaries with a variety of conditions and illnesses, including obesity, can improve their health and quality of life by receiving MNT.
- **RDs apply evidence based practice:** By using RDs expertise and extensive training, RDs deliver care that is coordinated and cost-effective in a variety of chronic diseases, such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes, disorders of lipid metabolism, HIV infection, unintended weight loss in older adults and chronic kidney disease.
- **RDs are highly trained** with over 50% of Registered Dietitians holding advanced degrees

Our Practice:

- Registered dietitians deliver Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) services using evidence based practice and the Nutrition Care Process of Assessment, Diagnosis, Intervention and Monitoring.
- MNT is an effective treatment for serious diseases and conditions such as obesity, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, hypertension, HIV/AIDs and kidney disease.
- As members of a multidisciplinary team, RDs can significantly help improve outcomes and reduce risk of chronic diseases.
- Not only does MNT provided by a Registered Dietitian improve patient outcomes, it also saves money (See MNT Works materials attached).



MNT as an Essential Benefit for Health Insurance Exchanges

Health Insurance Exchange Background:

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“ACA”) includes a provision by which millions of uninsured Americans can obtain health insurance through a state health insurance exchange. A state health exchange is a transparent and competitive insurance marketplace where consumers and small businesses can compare and purchase affordable and qualified health insurance plans that meet certain benefit and cost requirements. These exchanges will also work within state and federal programs, including Medicaid, to offer subsidies to qualifying individuals. States must comply with this mandate by January 1, 2013 or seek a State Innovation Waiver. The Pennsylvania Insurance Department is currently working on establishing a Health Insurance Exchange.

Ask your legislator to support the following:

Relative to nutrition professionals, the most important aspect of the exchanges is what is ultimately included in the “essential health benefits package.” These essential benefits provide insurance carriers with the minimum coverage for individuals who are enrollees in any given plan.

As a Licensed/Registered Dietitian I am asking you to support the following with regard to Medical Nutrition Therapy coverage in the PA State Health Insurance Exchange essential benefits package:

- **Coverage for children and adults for any condition for wellness, prevention, and chronic disease management**
- **Unlimited visits (or hours) annually**
 - Discuss **ONLY** if asked about other governmental coverage minimums: CMS Minimum requirement: 3 hours annually per condition with additional visits available with physician documentation of medical necessity for more MNT
- **RDs recognized providers**