PRACTICE TIPS: Standards of Practice and Standards of Professional Performance

Standards of Practice (SOP) and Standards of Professional Performance (SOPP) are tools for credentialed dietetics practitioners to use in professional development. They serve as guides for self-evaluation and to determine the education and skills needed to advance an individual’s level of practice. Although not regulations, the standards may be used by regulatory agencies to determine competence for credentialed dietetics practitioners.

- The published Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Revised 2012 Standards of Practice in Nutrition Care and Standards of Professional Performance for RDs and Revised 2012 Standards of Practice in Nutrition Care and Standards of Professional Performance for DTRs are minimum competent levels of dietetics practice and professional performance that guide RDs or RDNs and DTRs in all practice settings. The standards apply to all credentialed dietetics practitioners.

- These Revised 2012 SOP in Nutrition Care and SOPP function as the “core” resource upon which focus area SOP and SOPP are based.

- Focus area SOP and SOPP are Competent, Proficient, and Expert levels of dietetics practice and professional performance for RDs or RDNs. Currently published focus area standards include diabetes care, oncology nutrition care, behavioral health care, nutrition support, management of food and nutrition systems, sports dietetics, education of dietetics practitioners, pediatric nutrition, nephrology care, clinical nutrition management, intellectual and developmental disabilities, disordered eating and eating disorders, integrative and functional medicine, and extended care settings.

- The SOP relate directly to patient/client care and are based on the 4 steps of the Nutrition Care Process (NCP):
  1. Nutrition Assessment
  2. Nutrition Diagnosis
  3. Nutrition Intervention
  4. Nutrition Monitoring & Evaluation

- The SOPP represent 6 domains of professionalism:
  1. Quality in Practice
  2. Competence and Accountability
  3. Provision of Services
  4. Application of Research
  5. Communication and Application of Knowledge
  6. Utilization and Management of Resources

- The SOP and SOPP are companion documents to be used for self-evaluation. They are to be used as part of the Commission on Dietetic Registration’s Professional Development Portfolio to develop goals and to focus continuing education efforts.
• The standards are not regulations. They are consensus standards. Consensus is group opinion based on expert knowledge and experience.

• To view the “core” SOP in Nutrition Care and SOPP, please visit the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* at [www.andjrn.org/supplements](http://www.andjrn.org/supplements) (June 2013 Supplement, Vol. 113, No.6). To view the focus area SOP SOPP, please visit [www.andjrn.org/content/sop](http://www.andjrn.org/content/sop).

• Access to the Revised 2012 SOP in Nutrition Care and SOPP for RDs and DTRs can also be obtained by purchasing the Scope of Practice Decision Tool at Academy Shop [www.eatright.org/shop](http://www.eatright.org/shop), under Quality Management.