



State of Louisiana
Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of Public Health

February 17, 2014

The Honorable Sharon Weston Broome
President Pro Tempore, Louisiana Senate
P.O. Box 94183
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution 41 of the 2013 Regular Session

Dear Senator Broome:

Senate Concurrent Resolution 41 (SCR 41) of the 2013 Regular Session charged the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) to examine the benefits of routine nutritional screening and therapeutic nutrition treatment for those who are malnourished or at risk for malnutrition, as well as examine the benefits of such actions as part of the standard for evidenced-based hospital care. This correspondence serves as DHH's response to SCR 41.

DHH recognizes the benefit of routine nutritional screening and therapeutic nutrition treatment for those who are malnourished or at risk for malnutrition and the benefit of these services as part of the standard for evidenced-based hospital care. DHH operates a program which provides these services. It is the statewide Louisiana Women, Infants & Children (LA WIC) Program which provides nutrition assessment and education according to federal policy. Further, there are the DHH Hospital Licensing Standards which provides for the development, establishment and enforcement of standards for the care of individuals in hospitals to promote safe and adequate treatment of these individuals.

Louisiana Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children (LA WIC)

- LA WIC is a Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants and children up to 5 years of age.
- Provides nutrition education, healthy foods and referrals to other health and social services.
- LA WIC Policy requires a nutrition assessment to assess the participant's nutritional status and risk(s), tailoring the food package to address nutritional needs, determine appropriate nutrition education and provide referrals to a registered dietitian nutritionist for high risk nutrition counseling/medical nutrition therapy.

Louisiana DHH Hospital Licensing Standards

- Requires an organized dietary service that provides nutritional care to patients.
- The food and dietetic services are to be under the supervision of a registered dietitian (RD) who is licensed by the Louisiana Board of Examiners in Dietetics and Nutrition to

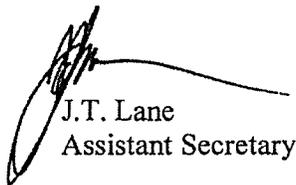
practice in Louisiana. This RD may be employed full time, part time, or on a consulting basis. If the RD is not full time, then a dietary manager is also required.

- Registered Dietitians are food and nutrition experts, translating the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living.
- The RD is responsible for assuring that quality nutritional care is provided to patients.
- The quality nutritional care includes medical nutrition therapy including nutritional screening, nutritional assessments of patients at nutritional risk (such as malnutrition), patient education related to nutritional intake and diet therapy, and recording information in the medical record regarding the nutritional status and care of the patient and the patient's response to the therapeutic diet.

DHH supports the inclusion of preventive and wellness services, such as medical nutrition therapy by a registered dietitian nutritionist for obesity and chronic disease prevention and management as a part of the Essential Health Benefits package included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. DHH further encourages improved disease management and health outcomes, through an increased emphasis on nutrition and reimbursement for medical nutrition therapy by a registered dietitian nutritionist, through the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, as well as for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries.

Thank you for this opportunity to promote the mission of the DHH to protect and promote health and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all citizens of the State of Louisiana. Should you have any questions regarding the information contained in this correspondence, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



J.T. Lane
Assistant Secretary



Cecile Castello
Director of Health Standards