



Careers in Quality for Nutrition & Dietetics Credentialed Practitioners

A Resource from the Quality Management Committee and Quality Education and Resources Task Force (2024-2025)



Quality for Nutrition & Dietetics Credentialed Practitioners (CP)



- CPs can be involved in quality improvement at the department level or can evolve into a career in a Quality Department.
- A career in quality includes a focus on improving and standardizing processes to meet or exceed standards, leading to predictable results and better care.
- Quality management leads to measurable improvements in services and patient outcomes.
- Quality activities include regulatory requirements set by entities like the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS), and The Joint Commission (TJC).
- Organizations set goals based on performance in certain areas (i.e., hospital acquired infections, pressure injuries, mortality).
- CPs can lead quality initiatives by becoming visible champions and earning relevant certifications and credentials, and can ultimately be a member of the Quality Department.
- Leaders enhance quality management by improving metrics, patient satisfaction, and clinical outcomes.

How to Get Started

- Volunteer to support or lead a process improvement project.
- Consider quality certifications and training to enhance your expertise.

RDNs and NDTRs can have careers in quality with roles such as Quality Specialist, Improvement Specialist, Quality Manager, Quality Improvement Coordinator, Quality and Patient Safety Director, etc.

CPs can begin by participating in and/or leading process improvement and quality management projects

Further education, skills, and training may be needed

Quality Improvement Project Examples:

- Timeliness/accuracy of screening
- Protocol compliance
- Improvement in patient outcomes with intervention
- Feeding tube placement success rate
- Supplement use compared with orders
- Improvement in patient satisfaction
- Tray accuracy and delivery time assessments
- Decreasing food waste and improving patient food acceptance
- Temperature and sanitation compliance

What credentialed practitioners are saying:

“Quality improvement is important because data collection supports change efforts by identifying opportunities for improvement and quantifying success. Data speaks to others and is proof of what is happening in the organization. RDs must speak the language of quality to highlight how interventions prevent and/or treat hospital-acquired conditions.”
 Joan Baca, MHL, RD, CPHQ
 Manager MNT, Sutter Medical Center

“You don’t have to come up with all the best ideas, and you probably won’t. Most will come from those actually doing the work, so involve them and let them have a voice in the process to build respect and deepen employee engagement and commitment.”
 Eric West, MBA, DTR
 Assistant Professor of Dietetics, Arkansas State University