International Confederation of Dietetic Associations

Dietetics and Nutrition Around the World

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Table of Contents

Feature Article 2
National Dietetic Association Reports 2
News from the Asian Federation of Dietetic Associations (AFDA) 3
News from the Hungarian Dietetic Association 3
News from the Italian Scientific Association of Nutrition and Dietetics (ASAND) 5
News from The Spanish Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and The General Council of Dietitians-Nutritionists 6
News from Dietitians Association of Nigeria 8
Resources 10
Announcements 11
ICDA Social Media Pages 11

Feature Article

Empowering Nutrition Care: The Benefits of Prescribing Rights for Dietitians in New Zealand

It has now been 15 years since New Zealand took a progressive step in healthcare by granting prescribing rights to registered dietitians. We were one of the first countries in the world to do so.

It took another 5 years to solidify those prescribing rights in the New Zealand legislation (Medicines Regulations 2015) as Designated Prescriber—Dietitians. This has allowed qualified dietitians to prescribe a range of nutrition-related products, including Special Foods, vitamins, minerals, and select medications. This development was not only a recognition of the advanced training and expertise of dietitians, but also a strategic enhancement of patient care.

One of the most significant benefits of this policy has been improved access to timely and targeted nutritional interventions. Dietitians are often at the frontline of managing chronic conditions such as diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders, and malnutrition. With prescribing rights, they can directly provide essential supplements and therapeutic nutrition products reducing both demand on a stretched primary care workforce and avoiding delays to accessing this care, thus improving outcomes.

Prescribing rights have empowered dietitians to practice more autonomously and holistically. By integrating prescribing into their scope, dietitians are offering a more comprehensive service, aligning dietary advice with appropriate medical nutrition therapy. This is particularly valuable in rural or underserved areas, where access to multidisciplinary and specialist teams may be limited.

To ensure safety and quality, dietitians must complete a rigorous Dietitian Prescriber Course or graduate from an accredited postgraduate program that includes prescribing competencies. The regulatory authority, the Dietitians Board of New Zealand, also require all prescribing dietitians to undergo annual updates and maintain supervision, ensuring best practice.

Over the last 10 years, Dietitians NZ has provided professional development opportunities to prescribing dietitians. This has included the development of a Prescribing Supervision course specifically to support dietitians who are isolated in their practice or may not prescribe often.

Dietitians NZ continues to advocate for an expanded prescribing scope with the Dietitians Board. Through close working relationships with the Dietitians Board and Ministry of Health, we have enabled the voices of our dietitians and their patients to be heard. For example, last year, continuous glucose monitors and insulin pump consumables were added to the list of products dietitians can prescribe.

The addition of prescribing rights to our scope of practice has been transformational to the role of a dietitian in New Zealand. Dietitians NZ looks forward to supporting our dietitians to work at the top of their scope, ensuring more efficient use of health resources and better patient outcomes. Future advocacy work will also include seeking direct lab test ordering rights to further enhance dietetic scope of practice, thus closing the loop for monitoring the outcome of our prescribing.

Ngā manaakitanga

National Dietetic Association Reports

News from the Asian Federation of Dietetic Associations (AFDA)

The 2025 Asian Dietetic Forum: ADF2025 to be Held at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan Site

Asia is currently the hottest region in the world due to its vast land area, rapid economic development, and population growth. Traditional food habits are beginning to break down, and as economic disparities widen, the typical double burden of malnutrition, where hunger and obesity coexist, is expanding, with overnutrition among the wealthy and undernutrition remaining among the poor and rural areas.

In particular, diversity, equity, and inclusiveness have recently been discussed in response to post-sustainability. The traditional diets of Asian countries have values that continue to be influenced by the nature, culture, and ethnicity of each region. How do these values relate to the diversity, equity, and inclusiveness of nutrition and diet? It is important for each country and region to discuss this issue in the future.

For example, the internationally acclaimed traditional Japanese diet is low in calories, low in fat, and high in fiber, but prone to deficiencies of essential fatty acids, proteins, vitamins, and minerals. The classic Japanese diet can only become healthy through improved nutrition, and nutrition policy and nutrition education are essential.

In many countries, however, nutrition policies are inadequate, and the education, training, and certification systems for dietitians are incomplete, leaving nutrition problems unresolved. In all of these countries, if dietitians training programs are established at universities, national examinations are administered, and dietitians are recognized by society as an official qualification, they will become professionals who improve nutrition and will be deployed to all corners of society. The result would be a society in which all citizens have access to healthy food and nutrition.

The Asian Federation of Dietetic Association (AFDA) is a federation of dietitian associations in 12 countries, each of which aims to establish, develop, standardize, and elevate the status of dietitians in their respective countries. Every four years, we hold a general assembly and a dietetic forum. This year, ADF2025 will be held at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan site on August 5th. Dr. Giuseppe Russolillo Femenías, President of the ICDA, will also be attending this meeting. At the ICND Toronto meeting in 2024, it was decided that ICDA will actively collaborate with other federations of dietitians in Asia, Europe, and South America. ADF2025 is expected to be the forerunner of this collaboration.

Since ADF2025 will be located within the Expo site, which is the focus of the world's attention, it will have a great ability to communicate to the world. The Expo's unifying theme is “Designing Future Society for Our Lives,” so ADF2025 will showcase the food and nutrition of the future of humankind. During the week before and after ADF2025, the Japan Dietetic Association is going to organize an exhibition, lectures, and symposiums on nutrition and diet for the future. We hope that ICDA and AFDA will work closely together.

On August 5th, ADF2025 will be held at the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan site, with invitations extended to the presidents of AFDA countries and regions. (Image Provided by: Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition)

Teiji Nakamura, PhD. RD
President, The Japan Dietetics Association (JDA)
President, Asian Federation of Dietetic Associations (AFDA)
Chairperson, the 2025 Asian Dietetic Forum Executive Committee

News from the Hungarian Dietetic Association

The 1st Hungarian ONCA Multi-stakeholder Workshop was held on 31 March 2025. The event served as a prominent professional forum for discussing the issue of disease associated malnutrition. The event was organised by the Hungarian members of the ONCA Hungarian Working Group: the Hungarian Society for Clinical Nutrition, the Hungarian Dietetic Association, the Hungarian Association of Patient Organisations and the Hungarian Society of Nutrition Sciences.

Hungary joined the ONCA campaign in October 2023 and the first national workshop has now taken place in March 2025. During the presentations and roundtable discussions of the scientific programme, renowned national and international experts shared their experiences on the health, economic and social impacts of malnutrition.

One of the highlights of the event was the presentation of Dr. Péter Sahin, President of the Hungarian Society for Clinical Nutrition, in which he presented the concept, clinical significance and prevalence of malnutrition. Dr. Andrea Molnár, member of the Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Dietetic Association, spoke about the national economic aspects of malnutrition. Dr. Péter Tamási, Member of the Board of the Hungarian Society of Clinical Nutrition, analysed current practices and future possibilities of screening for malnutrition, while Dr. Erzsébet Pálfi, Chair of the Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Dietetic Association, explained the role of the various stakeholders - doctors, dietitians and patients - in the management of malnutrition.

International experiences were presented by Antonella Lezzo (Italy) and Joost Wesseling, Executive Director of the ONCA International Network, who detailed the objectives of the Optimal Nutritional Care initiative and the importance of international cooperation.

The day concluded with a multidisciplinary round table discussion with doctors, dieticians and patient organisations sharing their views on ways to fight malnutrition.

The workshop clearly showed that effective action against malnutrition requires close cooperation between health professionals, researchers, patient organisations and policy makers.

The decision makers were represented by an expert from the State Secretariat for Health of the Federal Ministry of Health.

The organisers are confident that the event is a good first step towards the development of a coherent national nutrition strategy, which could have a significant impact on the long-term health care and health of the population in the country.

Press campaign of the event reached out to nearly 700.000 people and generated 4,8 million HUF PR value.

Zsuzsanna Szűcs

News from the Italian Scientific Association of Nutrition and Dietetics (ASAND)

THE ROLE AND COMMITMENT OF ITALIAN DIETITIANS SPECIALISED IN INHERITED METABOLIC DISEASES

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Inherited metabolic disorders (IMDs) are a large group of rare genetic diseases, over 1,600 identified, often involving enzyme deficiencies. These metabolic alterations can severely affect organs such as liver, brain, heart, muscles, and kidneys. Nutritional management is a key component of care, involving strict dietary restrictions, specialized foods, nutrient supplementation, and tailored protocols during illness to prevent metabolic crises. Thanks to early diagnosis and improved treatments, life expectancy for patients with IMDs has increased, making long-term nutritional outcomes an area of growing clinical interest. Dietitians, as qualified healthcare professionals (HCPs), play a crucial role in managing IMDs through Medical Nutrition Therapy, offering personalized care plans and patients' education. The role of metabolic dietitians has expanded with emerging new therapies and the growing use of telemedicine, now recognized as an essential and well-established tool for providing nutritional support to these patients.

Since 2016, Italian law has greatly expanded newborn screening including over 50 IMDs (1), positioning our country among those with the highest number of genetic diseases screened at birth and allowing many newborns to benefit from early, life-saving dietary therapies that help prevent severe complications.

Two surveys were conducted among Italian dietitians working with IMDs, the first in 2014 and the second in 2024 (2). These surveys aimed to assess the status of Italian dietitians in the IMDs field, identify critical gaps in workforce distribution, training, and service accessibility, and provide insights and strategies to improve care and promote equity within the national healthcare system.

The 2014 survey included 17 questions across four thematic areas: general information, clinical activities, team composition, and training. The 2024 survey, updated to reflect current challenges, featured 27 questions and added sections on telemedicine and full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing. Both were submitted to the Nutrition and Dietetic working group of the Italian Society for the Study of Inherited Metabolic Diseases and Neonatal Screening (SIMMESN).

In 2014, 20 HCPs responded to the IMD survey; in 2024, responses increased to 37. 45% of the 2014 respondents were younger than 45 years, while in 2024 most (86%) were under 45. Both surveys showed a predominance from northern regions, with limited representation from southern regions and islands. In both years, most participants were registered dietitians. IMD-specific training was mainly acquired through congresses or short courses, with only a few reporting formal university education on IMDs (often gained abroad). Permanent employment increased from 60% in 2014 to 80% in 2024. Despite this, over half in 2024 had an FTE below 0.5, and 60% were responsible for more than 100 patients. Multidisciplinary collaboration

remained common, but workload and emergency management were perceived as significant challenges. Telehealth use increased substantially, often beyond contracted hours. Service facilities were the main setting for IMD care, while research and hospital ward time remained low represented. Respondents highlighted unmet needs including limited compensation for extra tasks like telehealth, and a lack of standardized national guidelines. They called for more formal education opportunities, dedicated roles for IMDs, and stronger research involvement. Participation in scientific work rose from 45% in 2014 to 80% in 2024, though time spent on research remained low. Many expressed interests in contributing to guideline development and a national IMD dietitian network.

Despite improvements in job stability and professional qualifications, major disparities persist in geographic distribution, patient load, and FTE assignments. Over half of 2024 respondents dedicated less than 50% of their time to IMD care, with many managing over 100 patients with limited support. Telemedicine, essential in IMD care, is widely used but often unrewarded and untracked. Dietitians reported limited time for inpatient care and research, despite growing interest in scientific work. The complexity of IMDs demands specialized roles, yet formal education programs, recognition, and adequate compensation are lacking. Participants stressed the need for national nutritional guidelines, better training access, and collaborative networks. SIMMESN, SSIEM (Society for the Study of Inborn Errors of Metabolism), GMDI (Genetic Metabolic Dietitians International) and European networks like MetabERN could promote research and clinical standardization. Expanding the dietitian's role in policy-making, clinical and research protocols, and patient-centered digital tools would enhance their impact. Recognition of IMD nutritional care activities and full core competences is crucial to ensure care quality and professional development of metabolic dietitians.

References:

1. LEGGE 19 agosto 2016, n. 167 Disposizioni in materia di accertamenti diagnostici neonatali obbligatori per la prevenzione e la cura delle malattie metaboliche ereditarie. (16G00180) (GU Serie Generale n.203 del 31-08-2016). Gazzetta Ufficiale Available online: https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2016/08/31/16G00180/sg (accessed on 27 June 2025).

2. Gugelmo G et al. Investigating the current state of the Italian workforce in the context of inherited metabolic diseases: an in-depth survey of dietitians across the country JIM 2024; 1 (3): e588 DOI: 10.61012_20248_588

News from The Spanish Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and The General Council of Dietitians-Nutritionists

NUTRITIONAL CARE PROCESS STANDARDIZATION IN SPAIN

From left to right: A. Palau, manager of the CGCODN; A. Bayarri, training director of the Spanish Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; R. Cruz, director of IIDENUT; M. Moñino, Chairman of the CGCODN and MJ. Ibáñez, CGCODN Secretary.

The Nutritional Care Process (NCP) and the Standardized Terminology (SL) provide a protocol of practice that allows dietitians-nutritionists to structure and document their scientific evidence based nutritional care practice, measure and register outcomes, assess quality of nutrition and dietetic pathways, enhance critical-thinking and facilitate research.

Nutritional health outcomes are diverse, complex and multifactorial. In hospital settings, malnourished patients are an issue many times overlooked, while diet related non communicable diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, etc., have already become a serious public health concern.

In this context, dietitians-nutritionists must develop and update specific competences and skills that allow them dealing these problems effectively and efficiently. To do this, nutritional care process standardization is revealed as a fundamental strategy. NCP provides a systematic approach to assess, diagnose, intervene and monitor the nutritional patient's needs in a holistic and effective way.

Through investing in NCP standardization, the General Council seeks to achieve the highest employment rates among registered dietitians-nutritionists in Spain by providing them updated lifelong learning training.

International Certification

The international certification on the Nutritional Care Process Standardization for Spanish Dietitians-Nutritionists, is a project in which the General Council of Dietitians-Nutritionists, The Spanish Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the IIDENUT institute have invested time and resources.

The international certification is taught by experienced dietitians-nutritionists and is exclusively aimed to Spanish registered Dietitians-Nutritionists, although a small percentage of futured dietitians-nutritionist who have covered at least 180 ECTs of their Degree on Human Nutrition and Dietetics will be able to access the course.

It consists of 4 10 week-courses each, equivalent to 400h of eLearning accessible through the IIDENUT's Virtual Classroom.

The first promotion of certified dietitians-nutritionists came out in 2023, and the third one is currently underway.

Outcomes management, standardized language, PREM and PROM

Dietary and nutritional advice should follow a "step-by-step" model with a clear process, leading to measurable results. Therefore, the recording and evaluation of the effectiveness of nutritional care is fundamental for the future of health and nutrition practice. To this end, the CGCODN has created a website to raise awareness and keep informed dietitians-nutritionists in the field of Outcomes Management, Standardized Language and Evaluation of Experiences and Outcomes Reported by Patients.

Manuel Moñino Gómez

General Council of Dietitians-Nutritionists of SPAIN

News from Dietitians Association of Nigeria

Elevating Nutrition Advocacy and Professional Excellence in Nigeria

The Dietitians Association of Nigeria (DAN) continues to advance the profession of nutrition and dietetics across the country through strategic public health initiatives and adherence to international standards. With a

strong presence nationwide, DAN's regional chapters have remained committed to reaching underserved communities with nutrition counselling, health education, and targeted interventions.

Over the past year, DAN has celebrated major global health awareness campaigns including World Sickle Cell Day, World Cancer Day, World Obesity Day, World Health Day, and World Hypertension Day. These observances were marked by the release and wide circulation of practical nutrition guides tailored for the public. Each guide emphasized actionable strategies for disease prevention and healthy living, complemented by monthly newsletters that highlighted nutritional insights relevant to each campaign. Much of this work took place in areas with limited access to healthcare, reinforcing DAN's commitment to health equity.

DAN's outreach activities extended to schools and community centers, where dietitians-nutritionists conducted free health talks and engaged the public through radio, television, and print media. These advocacy efforts focused on demystifying nutrition practices, encouraging healthier eating patterns, and promoting awareness of non-communicable diseases. Community-based engagements were crucial in narrowing the knowledge gap and empowering individuals to take ownership of their dietary choices.

The high point of the year was the 16th National Conference and Scientific Workshop held in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The conference welcomed dietitians-nutritionists, researchers, and public health professionals from across the country. It featured inspiring workshops, evidence-based presentations, and vibrant networking sessions that fostered collaboration and continued learning within the profession. During the opening ceremony, a visually striking gathering of passionate professionals underscored the strength and unity within DAN.

A memorable moment of the conference was the induction ceremony for newly qualified dietitians, who took their Oath of Practice, affirming their professional responsibilities and ethical standards. The event also honored distinguished members who have played pivotal roles in advancing the association's mission. Awards were presented to individuals who have contributed significantly to the governance and development of dietetics in Nigeria—recognizing their leadership, dedication, and service.

Through its ongoing efforts, DAN continues to embody a vision where every Nigerian—regardless of background or location—has access to evidence-based nutrition education and services. By integrating global standards with locally driven initiatives, the association remains a beacon of professional integrity and public health leadership in Africa.

Charles Oguikpe

For: Prof. Olivia Afam-Anene

National President, Dietitians Association of Nigeria /ICDA Rep (Nigeria)

Resources

The ICDA SFS Toolkit has compiled what we can find, including the guides that your fellow ICDA members have written to help you with Sustainability:

https://icdasustainability.org/resources/nda-sfs-position-papers .

👩🏽‍💻 If you or someone you know is missing from the list,

or if you've used the toolkit and it has been helpful to you, please contact:

Stacia Nordin, ICDA SFS Toolkit Coordinator on

ICDAsfs.Coordinator@acadiau.ca

Thank you!

Your input assists fellow NDAs & can have an impact on Sustainability in Nutrition around the globe.

Announcements

The Pakistan Nutrition and Dietetic Society (PNDS) is pleased to announce the **3rd PNDS International Conference - Nutri-Connect 2025**, **"Nutri-Connect 2025: Bridging the Gap between Clinical and Public Health Nutrition,"**scheduled for **October 17-19, 2025** at **NUST, Islamabad, Pakistan**.

To honor our partnerships and promote mutual learning, PNDS would like NDA's to support PNDS in the upcoming conference!

🔗 **Conference link** [Call for Abstracts – Pakistan Nutrition and Dietetic Society]

Fayza Khan, Rabia Anwar

Organizing Committee Chair

Nutri-Connect 2025

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www.pnds.org

Important Notice from the ICDA Secretariat

The ICDA Secretariat requests that all National Dietetic Associations kindly update their email address(es) on file with the Secretariat, including the recently added "Administrative Contact." The email address could be for a member of the NDA, who serves as the link between previous and newly elected representatives. Regardless, please ensure that the Secretariat always has the most current information.

ICDA Social Media Pages

ICDA LinkedIn page

NDAs are requested to encourage its members to follow and promote the ICDA LinkedIn page: ICDA – International Confederation of Dietetic Associations,
at https://www.linkedin.com/company/internationaldietetics/

If you have not already done so, please send a short description of your NDA (about 150-200 words in your language but also in English) that includes your organization's name, mission, and contact information, your logo (with your approval to post that the logo). You can also include a written quote from your organization's President or a designated leader. We will be featuring NDAs on the LinkedIn page. Please send the information to ICDAsocialmedia@gmail.com
Share your news on social media. Send information to: ICDAsocialmedia@gmail.com

Please allow approximately one week for posting.

ICDA Instagram page

Don’t forget to follow the ICDA on LinkedIn and Instagram for more updates. www.linkedin.com/company/internationaldietetics and ICDA_internationaldietetics. Do not forget to share with all your professional contacts.

Sustainability https://icdasustainability.org - Don't forget to check out the sustainable food systems project - https://icdasustainability.org . Check to see if your region or country has a sustainable food systems regional contact SFS Toolkit Regional Contacts – Sustainability (icdasustainability.org). If not ask us how your NDA can get involved.

ICDA Strategy: The strategic priorities for the ICDA for 2025-2029-was shared in March this year https://internationaldietetics.org/icda-strategic-plan/ We look forward to sharing some of the implementation details at the AGM in September.