

Questions on Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework:

Does ADA have a specific scope of practice for dietetics?

- ADA does not define one specific scope of practice for dietetics. Rather, ADA has adopted a Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework that provides the flexibility to describe the full range of dietetics practice and will allow practice to evolve to reflect emerging trends and needs.

Why is it called “Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework”?

- A framework, by definition, is a structure or system that gives shape to something. The Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework is a structure or system that describes dietetics practice. The framework is made up of three blocks — Foundation Knowledge, Evaluation Resources, and Decision Aids — that describes our profession.

What common issues could be addressed using the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework?

- The Scope of Practice Framework can help address issues related to expanded practice. The Framework can assist dietetics practitioners whose roles and areas of responsibility are expanding to address a need (such as blood glucose monitoring, clinical privileges, writing orders, bedside swallowing evaluations, etc.).

How can I use the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework to expand my practice responsibilities?

- As you acquire competence and capability, the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework provides a systematic approach for you to fully consider whether a new activity is within your legitimate scope of practice.

How is the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework different for RDs and DTRs?

- The Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework includes resources that are specific only to the RD or only to the DTR. For example, the Standards of Practice for Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTR) in Nutrition Care applies only to credentialed DTRs.

How would clinicians use it? Educators? Employers? Managers? Administrators? HR?

- Clinicians — To make decisions about individual scopes of practice; to safely expand and advance practice; to provide accountability
- Educators — To teach professional accountability
- Employers — To make employment decisions
- Managers — To expand scope of care provided by department; to a competent level of practice for all staff; to develop performance plans
- Administrators — To reduce organizational risk and improve patient safety
- HR — To make employment decisions; to evaluate compensation practices

How do I use the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework in my practice?

- All dietetics professionals, regardless of practice setting or level of practice, use the foundation knowledge block.
- We also use the tools in the Evaluation block (the Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice in Nutrition Care and Standards of Professional Performance) to compare our conduct and practice to these standards to ensure we comply with professional expectations.
- As our skills and competence advance, we may begin to stretch the boundaries of what had been our usual individual practice. At this time, we may need to use the third block, the Decision Aids, to help us decide if the new activity or services are within our individual scope of practice.

Is there a list of services that are approved for dietetics practice? Does the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework provide a list of services that RDs can perform?

- There is no list of services that are approved as the scope of practice for all dietetics practice. Defining scope of practice as a list of allowed practices would, by necessity, limit the practice of dietetics to entry-level practice. Rather, the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework describes the breadth of the profession and allows growth as the profession evolves to meet needs and new developments in healthcare.
- Another important point to remember is that the Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework is used in conjunction with federal, state, and licensure laws.

Questions regarding individual scope of practice:

How do I determine if a new activity is within my individual scope of practice?

- Review federal regulations, accreditation standards, state licensure laws and state practice acts
- Review institutional policies and procedures
- If these regulations, accreditation standards, and policies and procedures do NOT explicitly prohibit the activity, review your personal training and education to ensure competency in performing the activity
- If you are competent and accept accountability and responsibility, then you may perform the activity

What tools are available to help determine if a service is within my scope of practice?

- The Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework has three blocks to help evaluate scope of practice questions. Block One is the Foundation Knowledge. Block Two are the Evaluation Resources and include the Code of Ethics, the Standards of Practice, and the Standards of Professional Performance. Block Three is made up of three decision aids — a Decision Tree, a Decision Analysis Tool and a complete Definition of Terms. These three decision aids will assist practitioners in determining if a new service is within their legitimate scope of practice. The Decision Analysis Tool and Decision Tree both provide an easy-to-use step-by-step approach to organizing and using all the available professional resources.

When should I use the decision tree/ decision analysis tool?

- Use the decision tree or decision analysis tool (Block Three- Decision Aids) when trying to determine whether a specific activity or service (such as assuming responsibility for instructing patients with diabetes on insulin pump usage or ordering nutrition related labs) falls within your individual scope of practice. This tool is particularly helpful when state, federal, organizational and educational guidelines have not yet expanded to address a need.

Can the Scope of Practice Framework help me get expanded privileges? Can RDs write orders? I want to get order writing privileges for my staff. Can I use the scope of dietetic practice framework to help me?

- The Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework can assist you to fully consider whether a new privilege is within your legitimate scope of practice. However, the Framework does not guarantee that you will be able to write orders (or perform other expanded practice skills).
- However, the Framework can guide you to the resources and options you can draw upon to safely and effectively advance your practice. Once you have acquired the needed education and demonstrated the needed skill and competence, the Framework can help you articulate your reasons to support advancing your scope of practice.

Questions on Standards of Practice and Standards of Professional Performance:

What is the difference between Standards of Practice and Standards of Professional Performance?

- The Standards of Practice in Nutrition Care (Block Two- Evaluation Resources) describe a competent level of *practice* related to direct client care. They are based on the Nutrition Care Process and CADE core competencies and describe the responsibilities for which registered dietitians are accountable.
- The Standards of Professional Performance (Block Two- Evaluation Resources) describe a competent level of *behaviors* that characterize dietetic professionals in their professional roles including activities related to provision of services; application of research; communication and application of knowledge; utilization and management of resources; quality in practice; continued competence and professional accountability.