

Better Skills, Best Care

Role: Dietetic Support Worker

Pilot setting

Latrobe Regional Hospital – Aged Care Ward

Role description

The role was piloted in the aged care ward where a high proportion of inpatients are at risk of malnutrition. The position provided assistance and support to the dietitians by monitoring, assisting, and educating inpatients to improve dietary compliance and nutritional status.

Tasks

The following tasks were performed as part of the pilot role:

- Monitor and encourage patient dietary preferences including monitoring nutritional supplement preferences and wastage. This excludes the monitoring of tolerance of supplements and dietary adequacy
- Screen nutrition risk of patients (and patient lists) to ensure all appropriate referrals are made to dietitians
- Maintain supply of stock to meet patient dietary needs in store and on wards
- Following dietitian assessment, order prescribed supplements and food services for individual patients
- Provide assistance for feeding and at meals as appropriate
- Monitor patients and staff processes to ensure nutrition needs are met and correct procedures are reinforced
- Administration
- Assistance with group work
- Provide assistance in Quality Assurance tasks

Education and training

HLT42507 Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance is the appropriate qualification for this role. Competency units from the *Certificate III in Nutrition and Dietetic Support* are pre-requisite for the mandatory Nutrition and Dietetics electives, and these must be included in the elective units of the qualification. See www.ntis.gov.au for full course details.

In addition to the mandated Nutrition and Dietetics electives in the Certificate IV, the following competencies are recommended:

- Provide support in dysphagia management (HLTAH411A)
- Assist with the screening of dietary requirements and special diets (HLT415A)
- Support special diet requirements (HLTAH416A)
- Implement and monitor compliance with legal and ethical requirements (HLTHIR506B)

- Provide specific information to clients (HLTCOM301B) or Communicate effectively with clients (HLTCOM404B)
- Maintain patient records (BSBMED303A)
- Undertake routine stock maintenance (HLTMS203B). This unit would need to be taken as an addition to the Certificate IV qualification as its AQF level is too low to qualify as a Certificate IV elective
- Secretarial skills

Many appropriate units can be found in the Business Services Training Package.

Depending on the level of skill required, units may be included as electives within the Certificate IV or may need to be taken in addition to the qualification

Given that the role is located in an aged care setting, the following elective units would also be useful.

- Provide support to an older person (CHCAC1C)
- Orientation to aged care work (CHCAC3C)
- Support continuous improvement systems and processes (BSBFLM309A)

Providers

Delivery of qualifications and units of competency from the new Health Training Package HLT07 requires TAFE institutes and private Registered Training Organisations to formally apply to the Office of Training and Tertiary Education for Registration to deliver training. It is anticipated delivery could commence by Semester 1, 2008. Information about VET providers can be accessed on www.ntis.gov.au

Costs associated with undertaking training

Until nominal hours for delivery of units are established, costs of delivery cannot be stated.

Training gaps and delivery options

Some skills may be developed through in-house training, where site-specific requirements can be addressed.

Technical knowledge of therapeutic products would be covered by the manufacturer or supplier, or through in-house training.

This qualification is suited to Australian Apprenticeship pathways.

Contact details for piloted role

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