

“THE ROLE OF DIETITIAN FOR CONSUMER PROTECTION AND HDA’s ACTION PLAN FOR CONSUMERS PROTECTION”

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Right to food

- 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises in **Article 25** that

"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, **including food**, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control."



Definitions

- Right to adequate food is a human right, inherent in all people, to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensures a physical and mental, individual and collective fulfilling and dignified life free of fear (UN Special Rapporteur , 2002).
- [...] the right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, have the physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement (General Comment 12 of the ICESCR).

Food Security – Definitions

- Food security exists when all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. (FAO)
- Food security for a household means access by all members at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum (1) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and (2) an assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (that is, without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies). (USDA)

Issues to be considered and challenges to be faced

- Obesity – anorexia nervosa ≠ malnutrition and hunger
- The relationship of diet with a number of diseases (cardiovascular diseases, obesity, diabetes mellitus and cancer)
- Organic food, functional food, genetically mutated food
- Climate change, food security and nutrition
- Nutrition and bioenergy
- Hunger crisis
- Nutritional scandals

Contradiction

More information and knowledge on nutritional
issues

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More nutritional mistakes and unhealthy nutritional
choices

So what is really going on?

The role of the dietitian

Dietitians are the main actors of food and nutrition policies.

“Food safety, quality and consumer protection affects all areas of the dietetic practice, from **public health** and **clinical nutrition**, to **foodservice management** and **private counseling**” (ADA)

Food safety is a prerequisite for good nutrition.

Definition (EFAD - ICDA)

- A dietitian is a person with a qualification in Nutrition & Dietetics recognized by national authority (s). The dietitian applies the science of nutrition to the feeding and education of groups of people and individuals in health and disease.
- The scope of dietetic practice is such that dietitians may work in a variety of settings and have a variety of work functions.

Specialization

- **Administrative Dietitian:** a dietitian who focuses and works primarily within food service management with responsibility for providing nutritionally adequate, quality food to individuals or groups in health and disease in an institution or a community setting.
- **Clinical Dietitian:** a dietitian who has responsibility for planning, education, supervision and evaluation of a clinically devised eating plan to restore the client/patient to functional nutritional health. Clinical dietitians can work in primary care as well as in institutions.
- **Public Health or Community Dietitian:** a dietitian directly involved in health promotion and policy formulation that leads to the promotion food choice amongst individuals and groups to improve or maintain their nutritional health and minimizes risk from nutritionally derived illness.

Foodborne disease

- Foodborne disease is caused by consuming contaminated foods or beverages. Many different disease-causing microbes, or pathogens, can contaminate foods, so there are many different foodborne infections. In addition, poisonous chemicals, or other harmful substances can cause foodborne diseases if they are present in food.
- The global incidence of foodborne disease is difficult to estimate, but it has been reported that in 2005 alone **1.8 million people** died from diarrhoeal diseases (WHO).
- In industrialized countries, the percentage of the population suffering from foodborne diseases each year has been reported to be up to **30%** (WHO). In the United States of America (USA), for example, around 76 million cases of foodborne diseases, resulting in 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths, are estimated to occur each year (CDC).

Educating the children

Consumer education

- Educating the children through special school courses on nutrition, food and food safety
- Better nutritional choices in school canteens
- Counseling the population (and especially the elderly and those with compromised immune system) about food choices and preparation.

Government activities

- Nutritional policy
- HACCP/ ISO 22000
- Effective government regulations
- Investment in research

Key role of dietitian

in making the connection between nutrition and food safety

- Dietitians in foodservice operations
- Educating the public and other health professionals
- Influencing food policy



Promote the public's access to a food supply that is not only nutritious, but safe as well.

HDA's action plan for consumers protection

- Brochures
- Articles
- Site
- Conferences
- Meetings
- Nutrition Week
- Propositions to the Health Ministry of Greece
- Collaboration with other Associations

Basic propositions

- Legal protection of the dietetic profession – legislating for the creation of an association for all dietitians/dietitian's license
- The work of dietitian in the private sector
- The work of dietitian in hospital
- The work of dietitian in education
- The work of dietitian in the Ministry of Health and other institutions
- Employing enough dietitians in all above sectors
- Nutritional Policy making



Thank You!