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Secretary's Report

On September 13, 2007 the first annual meeting of ICDA member associations was held by teleconference. We were pleased that representatives of nine national dietetic association members joined the meeting. At the meeting, reports were received from the President and Secretary, the Auditor and audited financial statement, and members approved the ICDA Bylaw 2006-01 which accompanied our application for incorporation, appointed Directors from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Japan, United Kingdom, and United States until the Second Annual Meeting of Members, appointed the Auditors for another term, and approved Board Actions. Minutes of the Meeting have been posted to the Representatives Web pages on the ICDA web site and below are highlights of the President's Report for all our readers.

In 2000, when the International Committee of Dietetic Associations was reformed as the Confederation that we have today, a plan of activities was commenced. Our mission is:

To support national dietetic associations and their members, beyond national and regional boundaries, by achieving:
. . . An integrated communications system . . . An enhanced image for the profession . . . Increased awareness of standards of education, training and practice in dietetics

The President reported that the Board of Directors has made progress on a plan of action in keeping with our Mission. ICDA has been incorporated in Canada and representatives approved the new Bylaw at this First annual meeting. The ICDA web site has been upgraded to include an area specific to our studies on the work and education of dietitians around the world and information has been updated to reflect ICDA incorporation; an online newsletter has been published twice each year with news about work in progress at ICDA, the 2008 International Congress of Dietetics in Yokohama Japan and activities in member national dietetic associations.

The Board of Directors has developed a new form for data collection about the education/training and work of dietitians around the world which will be completed by national dietetic associations this fall. Results will be shared at the International Congress of Dietetics in 2008 and posted to the ICDA web site.

The ICDA Ethics and Standards document drafted with Representatives of national dietetic association members in 2004 has been validated through a feedback questionnaire. This is the first professional guidance document attempted by ICDA and we are excited by the prospect of further work related to

a Code of Ethics for the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations. Results will be discussed in Japan.

ICDA has continued representation on the International Standardised Language group started by the American Dietetic Association and promoting awareness of the benefits of a standardized language for nutrition and consideration of how best to support the development and implementation of the language as a tool to improve recognition and outcomes for dietitians.

The Board was delighted to meet with executive members of the Japan Dietetic Association in Yokohama earlier this year and to review the well developed and exciting plans for the 2008 Congress. Plans are underway for sharing ICDA news, engaging more dietitians in our work on the education and training of dietitians around the world and in hosting further dialogue on aspirational standards for dietetics at the 2008 Congress.

Over the coming year, the Board will build on the activities that we have commenced, to increase member input and to further enhance the standing of Dietitians, bringing member nations closer together. The Board is actively seeking ways to strengthen communication and we are looking to developing this further in the next 12 months.

Feature Article

Dietitians Association of Australia Signs Agreement with New Zealand to Mutually Recognize Dietetic Credentials

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) and the New Zealand Dietitians Board (NZDB) have been formally working together since September 2006 on a Mutual Recognition (MR) Project. The DAA was successful in winning a project grant in 2006 through the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) PDSP funding scheme to conduct this mutual recognition project with New Zealand.

This successful agreement will enable Australian trained dietitians with full Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) status to apply for registration in New Zealand and equally New Zealand Registered Dietitians will be able to apply for full APD status in Australia.

The DAA and the NZDB jointly produced a comprehensive document analysing their respective systems of dietetic training, competency based assessment and credentialing highlighting remarkable similarities.

This was a critical success factor in the project ensuring joint ownership of the project.

The agreement had to be made between the two credentialing bodies, but the New Zealand Dietetic Association, as the professional association in New Zealand, provided great support and member input to the project.

This agreement builds on the already close links and will open up opportunities for dietitians on both sides of the Tasman Sea and will help advance nutrition and dietetics in both countries through the sharing of knowledge and expertise. It may also help to address some critical workforce shortages.

The Launch!

The Mutual Recognition Agreement was formally launched at the New Zealand Dietetic Association Conference in Christchurch on 5th September, 2007. Barbara Ryan, Chairperson of the NZ Dietitians Board and Julie Hulcombe (DAA President), signed the agreement. The DAA are planning an official Australian launch in late September 2007.

Who is Eligible?

The Mutual Recognition Agreement applies to Australian dietitians with full APD status, and New Zealand registered dietitians who hold a current Annual Practising Certificate and have practised for at least one year.

Flow-on Benefits:

This project has developed capacity to engage successfully in future mutual recognition activities which will facilitate the export and import of qualified dietitians to meet national and international workforce needs. Due to the success of this project the DAA project team has been invited to present at the DEST Assessing Authorities Conference in October this year in Melbourne, Australia and have also been asked by DEST to develop a 'how to' guide to be used by other professional bodies considering mutual recognition activities – another example of dietetics 'leading the way'.

Claire Hewat APD
Executive Director (DAA)

Jan Milne NZRD
Executive Director (NZDA)

Congress Updates

International Congress of Dietetics 2008: Values of eating - How does our brain judge them?

Keynote Presentation to be given by:
Professor Masao Ito, M.D. Ph.D., The
University of Tokyo
RIKEN Brain Science Institute

Eating is an innate behavior built in the brain of any animal as a biological mechanism for growing and maintaining the body and its activity. However, in humans, eating also has social and cultural values attached to it. We eat to facilitate communication and enjoy the harmony of sensations that foods generate. These biological, social and cultural values of eating are certainly judged in the brain.

We may ask the following questions:

- By what mechanisms of the brain do we sense the values?
- What happens if one value is in conflict with another?
- What makes one overeat or refuse to eat?
- How does a brand name of a food product gain a high-prestige value and, once a reputation is gained, why does the popularity of the brand name perpetuate itself?

I would like to offer some answers to these questions on the basis of modern brain science.

Announcements

International Renal Dietitians Newsletter

The October issue of IRDN, written by Marianne Vennegoor, is available from mmavennegoor@aol.com. As always, this contains information which will be useful for Renal Dietitians, with reports from recent conferences, updated resources, including the new European Renal Association – European Dialysis and Transplant Association (ERA-EDTA) Guidelines for Haemodialysis Patients, and notification of forthcoming conferences.

National Association Reports

Launch of Australian Standards for Texture Modified Foods and Fluids a great success

The Australian Standardised Terminology and Definitions for Texture Modified Foods and Fluids were launched to more than 200 delegates over breakfast at the DAA 25th National Conference in Hobart, Tasmania, after more than 12 months of work. Members applauded the new standards which will improve patient safety, reduce confusion and aid communication between health professionals and food service personnel. Speech Pathologists also heard about the new Standards which were launched at their National Conference in Sydney.

In early 2006 the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) and Speech Pathology Australia (SPA) agreed to jointly undertake a project to standardise Australian terminology for texture

modified foods and fluids. The project has been the first collaboration between DAA and SPA and evolved from the strong interest from members of both associations for a common language to define modified foods and fluids across Australia.

Why is consistent terminology important?

Patient safety is the most important reason to adopt consistent terminology and definitions. By providing a common language, the efficiency and accuracy of communication between professionals will be enhanced. Standard language will also assist the commercial sector to produce a greater variety of products with consistent textures and thickness levels.

How were the Standards developed?

Significant consultation was undertaken with DAA members and other key stakeholders. Initial survey results showed that there is an incredibly wide variability in terminology throughout Australia. There were 39 different labels for three levels of fluid thickness and 95 different labels for three levels of food texture modification. 582 clinicians participated in the survey process either by on-line survey or targeted surveys. There was a 99.5% agreement level to standardise the labels and terminology of thickened fluids and texture modified foods. This survey then followed with a further targeted survey, focus groups and ratification by the DAA and SPA Boards.

What are the Standards?

Four levels of texture have been identified for fluids and foods; an unmodified level plus three modified levels.

- For food the modified levels are: Texture A – Soft; Texture B – Minced and Moist; and Texture C – Smooth Pureed.

- For fluids: Level 150- Mildly Thick; Level 400 Moderately thick and Level 900 Extremely Thick.

The fluid scale has 3 different colours to denote the 3 different modified levels. These colours may be used at the discretion of individual institutions or companies to help more clearly identify the different levels of fluid thickness.

What's next?

The production of these national standards is the first step with communication and implementation of the standards to be the next challenge. DAA members received a Supplement to their June edition of Nutrition & Dietetics which provides a full report on the standards and the development process. An educational poster has also been developed. The standards and all related information is now available at the DAA website, www.daa.asn.au under Info for Professionals>National Texture Modification Standards.

Further information: Novartis Medical Nutrition funded this collaborative project.

Nerida Bellis-Smith, APD
Professional Services Director

Canada demonstrates leadership in supporting dietetic research

In 1991, Dietitians of Canada (DC), the professional association for Canadian dietitians representing over 5600 members, demonstrated a commitment to dietetic research by founding the

Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research (CFDR). Sixteen years later, CFDR has provided nearly one million dollars in grants to support applied nutrition and dietetic research in Canada, to improve the health of Canadians.

Before CFDR was created, DC identified building research capacity as a need for the profession in Canada, to show leadership for developing our unique body of professional knowledge. About the same time the Association was presented with an unexpected bequest of \$226,000 from a person in Canada who had valued the services provided by a dietitian, which presented the opportunity and initial funding to address research capacity as a strategic priority for the Association. The Association augmented the bequest and CFDR was incorporated in 1991 as a charitable public foundation with a mandate to raise funds and provide grants for dietetic practice research in Canada.

CFDR is governed by a Board of Directors representing DC, corporate supporters and practicing dietitians. Over its fifteen year history, CFDR has been successful in attracting leaders from each of these sectors to provide stewardship and to form operating committees who focus on fundraising programs, design grant programs, mentor novice applicants, encourage dissemination of information about projects in progress and research results, and appoint experts to review and evaluate grant proposals. In 2006 the Foundation Board employed its first full time Executive Director to work with the Board of Directors on the design and implementation of its strategic plan and oversee administrative matters. From the

inception, Dietitians of Canada has provided Secretariat services to CFDR and appointed DC's CEO and successive DC Board Chairs to key CFDR Executive and Board roles to ensure a strong link between the Association and Foundation and to the purpose of CFDR as envisioned by the founders.

Research achievements

To date, CFDR has funded 78 research projects, providing dietitians with science-based guidance relevant to the practice of dietetics. To read more about the difference CFDR has made, from the perspective of practicing dietitians, see *Our Legitimacy – As Evidenced by CFDR Funded Practice-based Research* found at

www.dietitians.ca/cfdr/pdf/CI_Aug07_research_eng.pdf.

CFDR uses a professional peer review process to evaluate research grant proposals. Applicants must meet the tests of scientific methodology and relevance to dietetic practice to be considered. All applicants receive constructive feedback on their proposals to assist in their development.

CFDR has four Practice-based Research Priorities:

- Outcomes of intervention – objective measures of the effect of nutrition intervention
- New roles for dietitians in meeting health needs of Canadians – implementation and evaluation of novel service delivery in new environments
- Identification of vulnerable groups and their needs, with means to address these needs
- Determinants of food choice - factors and attitudes that influence food choices made by consumers

In 1997, CFDR created a web-based database, the Canadian Inventory of Nutrition and Dietetic Associated Research (CINDAR). CINDAR is a valuable resource for researchers, practitioners, educators, policy makers and industry leaders, who can browse the site for nutrition resources or upload research abstracts to be shared with others. [CINDAR](#) is accessible from the CFDR web site and from the web sites of the Canadian Society for Nutritional Sciences and the Canadian Society of Clinical Nutrition.

To promote research activity, CFDR hosts a Research Day at the Annual DC Conference where dietitians and other health professionals are invited to submit abstracts and to present their research. This provides researchers with a forum to share their knowledge with colleagues and is a valuable networking opportunity.

CFDR is always seeking new opportunities to expand its research base and is consulting with other organizations and partners to undertake collaborative research projects. One such collaborative project was launched in 2006 in partnership with DC to examine vitamin and mineral use across Canada.

In 2006, CFDR created the Morgan Medal awards program to recognize dietetic students and interns for their initiative and excellence in a practice-based research project. The award is in honour and memory of Susan Morgan, a former manager of CFDR who believed strongly in encouraging the profession's researchers of the future. The first awards were presented in June 2007; four students received regional awards and one student was presented with the

national Morgan Medal.

Fundraising activities

CFDR relies on the support of Dietitians of Canada and corporate supporters, individual donations and revenue from special events to finance its operations and research grants. Over 20 corporate partners from the food, foodservice and pharmaceutical industries have signed multi-year pledges to support the long-term goals of the Foundation. These partners also help to identify the type of research that is needed through a special consumer-focused grant program.

The dietetic profession in Canada supports CFDR each year as members of DC make personal donations, illustrating their support of advancing their profession through investing in practice research to strengthen the evidence-base.

Annual fundraising events have proven to be a successful means of providing additional funds. The CFDR Corporate Golf Challenge, a CFDR Fun Run hosted at the DC Conference and local fundraising events, like golf tournaments, raffles and silent auctions organized by Association members have provided noteworthy contributions.

Looking to the future

CFDR has identified a number of areas where it hopes to continue to grow, including increasing the amount awarded for research grants, working collaboratively with partners, developing a CFDR “brand” and improving awareness of CFDR, and expanding the fundraising base to support its mandate.

Research potential of the DIETS Thematic Network

The DIETS (Dietitians Improving Education and Training Standards in Europe) Thematic Network was established in September 2006 and has already achieved many of its stated outcomes. One of these was the establishment of exchange visits and already delegates from 26 Higher Education Institutes have taken part in a visit. As well as being enjoyable events these visits have generated important data about the current situation in dietetic practice-based education and assessment. The 1st DIETS conference will take this work further by considering various aspects of practice-based education, including identifying best practice and quality indicators for practical education, developing the skills of practice placement trainers and establishing the evidence upon which training and assessment is based.

One of the spin-offs of the DIETS network will be the generation of large amounts of data. This data will be made available to DIETS partners who wish to use it to support research projects.

One such project already planned is to “Evaluate European dietetic practice education standards through the use of practice education benchmark standards and competency measures”. This research aims to:

- Map current practice-based education standards within the dietetic profession in Europe and compare them to the European Benchmark Statement for Dietetics
- Describe a generic and a profession-specific range of competency outcomes characterising the dietitian at the point of

graduation from their qualifying programme

- Characterise the understanding of practice placement standards, competency outcomes and their assessment by practising dietitians and campus-based dietetic educators.
- Identify the evidence-base used by dietitians working in Europe in the development of tools for the assessment of practice placement learning

The planned outcome is to develop a schema which could be used across Europe to provide valid and reliable assessment of practice standards and competences.

Recognition of French Dietitians

French dietitians have finally been recognized as true healthcare professionals with the enactment of the law 2007-127 on January 30, 2007.

This law has also established a French National Diploma for Dietitians whose curriculum and registration organisation will be determined in the near future. French ministries have initiated changes to the curricula of healthcare professionals; the French government and dietitians have been in collaboration in order to change the initial dietetic curriculum.

This new curriculum will be integrated into the process of European University programs and the French National Diploma for Dietitians will be established at a license level.

Association of French Speaking Dietitians (ADLF)

ADAF Healthy Weight for Kids Initiative

One key initiative of the American Dietetic Association Foundation is to promote Healthy Weight for Kids in the United States. Two current programs include partnerships with PE4Life and General Mills.

In the fall of 2007, the ADA Foundation in partnership with PE4Life and the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition Foundation will conduct a pilot school program in the greater Kansas City metro area. This program will implement a cross discipline “energy balance” approach focusing on both energy intake and energy expenditure. During this pilot program physical education teachers and ADA members, Registered Dietitians, will work side by side in schools to implement strategies to motivate students to be more active and eat a balanced, more nutritious diet. Lessons learned from this program will allow a blueprint to be created for student health and wellness that could be replicated in schools across the country.

This year the ADA Foundation and General Mills Foundation celebrated 5 years of funding the Champions for Healthy Kids Grant program. This program makes available \$500,000 annually to support innovative programs that will promote healthy lifestyles for children and their families through better nutrition and increased physical activity. A total of 50 grantees are selected each year, and a total of 250 projects have received funding totaling \$2.5 million to-date. Each grant project is required to have a Registered Dietitian as part of the project team. A summit to celebrate the program’s 5-year anniversary and to

share the results of an evaluation that was conducted by ADAF was held in May 2007. One of the key findings of the evaluation was that Registered Dietitians were highly valued by program participants.

New Organization Section at the American Dietetic Association

The American Dietetic Association has developed a new section within the organization, Member Interest Groups (MIGs). This section was created for ADA members with common interests, issues and backgrounds to connect in diverse ways that are not available in other parts of the organization. The first group to be accepted is Latinos and Hispanics in Dietetics and Nutrition (LAHIDAN).

LAHIDAN's purpose is to support member needs while fostering the development and improvement of food, nutrition and health care for Latinos and their families in the United States and related territories with outreach to Hispanic and Latino international members.

To contact LAHIDAN, visit www.lahidan.org

Awards

American Dietetic Association Foundation

The American Dietetic Association Foundation offers the following International Awards. All awards have an annual deadline of December 1st,

unless otherwise noted. For more information on these awards or an application, please contact Beth Labrador at mblabrador@eatright.org or 1-800-877-1600 x4821.

1. Colgate Palmolive Fellowship in Nutrition, Oral Health/Dental Education
This grant is given to support research in nutrition and oral health or dental education by doctoral students seeking a doctorate in nutrition and oral health or dental education. Grant amount: \$15,000. Non-US residents may apply.

2. First International Nutritionist/Dietitian (FIND) Fellowship for Study in the USA
This award is given to assist foreign nationals who are pursuing postgraduate work in the USA and have a clearly articulated plan to return to their country. Award amount: \$2,000.

3. Wimpfheimer-Guggenheim Fund for International Exchange in Nutrition, Dietetics and Management
This award is given to provide for the international exchange of nutrition, dietetic and/or management information for the benefit of the nutritional health of the world community. Topic for the 2007 essay: Describe a new methodology and or technology used to transmit nutrition education or to alleviate food insecurity through sustainable agriculture. The author, a professional dietitian or nutritionist involved in the project should state an innovative yet feasible solution to a local problem that can be applied in a variety of settings preferably in developing countries. Award amount: \$1,000. Up to two awards may be given.

Calendar of Events

May 10 – 13, 2008, 65th ERA-EDTA Congress

Stockholm, Sweden.

Website: www.eraedta2008.org

August 16 – 20, 2008, World Congress of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition

Iguassu Falls, Brazil.

Website: www.wcpghan2008.com

September 6 – 9, 2008, 37th EDTNA-ERCA Conference

Prague, Czech Republic.

Website: www.edtna-erca.org

September 8 – 11, 2008, 15th International Congress of Dietetics Yokohama, Japan.

Website: www.dietitian.or.jp/icd2008

The second announcement, call for abstracts and more information relating to the congress can be found on the congress section of this website.

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