Doctors and nurses on wards with greater access to clinical dietitians have better focus on clinical nutrition - DTU Orbit (05/03/2019)

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According to the Council of Europe, clinical dietitians should assume a more central role in nutritional support. The aim of this study was to assess the opinions among doctors, nurses and clinical dietitians regarding the use of clinical dietitians' expertise in the hospital units and, further, to assess whether the presence of clinical dietitians in hospital departments influenced doctors and nurses focus on clinical nutrition. A questionnaire about the use of clinical nutrition was mailed to 6000 doctors and 6000 nurses working in hospital units where undernutrition is documented to be common, as well as to 678 clinical dietitians working in Scandinavian hospitals. The response rate of clinical dietitians, nurses and doctors were 53%, 46% and 29%, respectively. Nurses and doctors who saw clinical dietitians often found it less difficult to identify undernourished patients and found that insight into the importance of adequate nutrition was better than those who saw clinical dietitians seldom. Clinical nutrition had a higher priority in units with frequent visits by clinical dietitians. The present study shows that doctors and nurses on wards with greater access to clinical dietitians had better focus on clinical nutrition. 

General information
State: Published
Organisations: Division of Nutrition, National Food Institute
Contributors: Thoresen, L., Rothenberg, E., Beck, A. M., Irtun, O.
Pages: 239-247
Publication date: 2008
Peer-reviewed: Yes

Publication information
Journal: Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics
Volume: 21
Issue number: 3
ISSN (Print): 0952-3871
Ratings:
BFI (2019): BFI-level 1
Web of Science (2019): Indexed yes
BFI (2018): BFI-level 1
Web of Science (2018): Indexed yes
BFI (2017): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2017): CiteScore 2.86 SJR 1.157 SNIP 1.099
Web of Science (2017): Impact factor 2.681
Web of Science (2017): Indexed yes
BFI (2016): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2016): CiteScore 2.51 SJR 1.157 SNIP 1.084
Web of Science (2016): Impact factor 2.638
Web of Science (2016): Indexed yes
BFI (2015): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2015): CiteScore 2.17 SJR 0.988 SNIP 0.998
Web of Science (2015): Impact factor 2.583
BFI (2014): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2014): CiteScore 1.9 SJR 0.676 SNIP 1.072
Web of Science (2014): Impact factor 1.987
Web of Science (2014): Indexed yes
BFI (2013): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2013): CiteScore 2.11 SJR 0.939 SNIP 1.188
Web of Science (2013): Impact factor 2.074
ISI indexed (2013): ISI indexed yes
BFI (2012): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2012): CiteScore 1.94 SJR 0.854 SNIP 1.003
Web of Science (2012): Impact factor 1.972
ISI indexed (2012): ISI indexed yes
BFI (2011): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2011): CiteScore 1.63 SJR 0.734 SNIP 0.78