

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Program for Dietetics Interns (PDI). This manual is designed to provide you with information about our internship program and will outline and define the program's goals, policies and procedures.

The internship program has been specially designed to provide the dietetic intern with public health nutrition, clinical and management experiences in a variety of settings including: Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), other state agencies, local health agencies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, schools, and others.

The dietitians on staff in the DHSS and affiliate sites will help facilitate the interns' learning experiences to enhance and foster their professional growth and development. Public health nutrition is a unique and rewarding experience that awaits them.

### **The Program for Dietetic Interns (PDI)**

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' Program for Dietetic Interns (PDI) Program in Dietetics is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics,  
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000,  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995, 312.899.0040, ext. 5400  
[Http://www.eatright.org/ACEND](http://www.eatright.org/ACEND)

Graduates will be eligible to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians upon successful completion of the program.

Supervised practice experiences may be provided at the following types of sites:

- Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
- Local Health Agencies
- Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Missouri Department of Corrections
- University of Missouri Extension Service
- School Food Services
- Hospitals
- Long-term Care Facilities
- Other Health Care Facilities

## **Program Mission**

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Program for Dietetic Interns (PDI) was established in 1999 to help meet the demand for skilled dietetic professionals in public health and community-based programs in Missouri. The **mission** of the PDI is

“To provide training in competency skills for entry-level dietitians in public and community health.” It was with this mission in mind that the PDI was designed to meet the needs of the non-traditional intern, especially those currently working in the Missouri WIC program.

### **Program Goals and Outcome Measures:**

**Goal 1:** The PDI graduates will be competent entry-level public health/community-oriented dietetics practitioners.

- Twelve to eighteen months after completing the PDI, employers will rate 90% of the graduates as “good” or “excellent” in “Nutrition care skills” and “overall work performance and potential as a dietitian”.
- The most recent graduates will pass the registration examination:
  - a) 80% on the first attempt in a 5-year period, and
  - b) 90% will pass in a one-year period
- 90% of interns enrolled in PDI will complete program requirements within 150% of the time planned for completion (i.e., 13½ months).
- 90% of graduates will respond they were able to advance their career, increase their salary or obtain a position due to completion of the PDI/obtaining RD.

**Goal 2:** The PDI graduates will provide dietetics services to the population of Missouri.

- 50% of PDI graduates will be employed in public health/community nutrition in Missouri within one year of graduation
- 25% of PDI graduates will work in areas of the state, such as southern Missouri and northern Missouri, with dietetic professional shortages within one year of graduation
- 50% of PDI graduates will continue working in the field of public health/community nutrition 5 years post-credentialing

**Goal 3:** The PDI Graduates will become leaders and lifelong learners in the profession of nutrition and dietetics.

- 50% of PDI graduates will come from one or more of the following categories when selected to the PDI: State and local public health nutrition positions; Missouri didactic program; Missouri residents
- 80% of PDI graduates will maintain membership with AND or other nutrition-related organizations such as APHA, AHA, etc.
- 50% of PDI graduates are willing to become preceptors in the next 5 years

### **Program Completion Requirements**

Program completion requirements include:

1. Completion of a minimum of 1,200 supervised practice experience hours as specified.
2. Completion of all scheduled Supervised Practice Experiences with an Evaluation rating of 75% or above.

3. Completion of required competencies.
4. Successful completion of all assignments, presentations and projects.
5. Successful completion of all didactic classes and passing exams and assignments with a minimum grade of 75%.
6. Attendance at all Program for Dietetic Interns meetings and classes.

An Official Verification of Completion enabling the graduate to establish eligibility to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians will be provided by the program director after all requirements for program completion have been verified. Registration and State Licensure can be obtained upon completion of the program and successfully passing the Registration Examination for Dietitians. Information on dietetic registration, certification and state licensure may be obtained at <http://cdrnet.org/certifications/>.

### **The Credentialing Process**

The successful completion of a dietetic internship is an important step to becoming a Registered Dietitian. After successfully completing the MDHSS Program for Dietetic Interns and receiving a verification statement, the internship graduate will be qualified to take the Registration Exam to become a Registered Dietitian. Once the internship graduate passes the Registration Exam, he or she is qualified to work as a Registered Dietitian in a variety of settings, including Community Nutrition, Clinical Nutrition and Food Service Management. Licensure is required in the state of Missouri and must be obtained in order to work as a Registered Dietitian in Missouri. Continuing education participation is mandatory for maintenance of registration. Dietitians must accumulate 75 hours of approved continuing education every 5 years.

### **Program Concentration**

The program concentration for the PDI is public health/community nutrition. All PDI interns meet the required public health/community nutrition competencies by completing 1 week of community supervised practice that takes place during their community rotation block.

The competencies for the concentration are:

- Manage nutrition care for population groups across the lifespan.
- Participate in nutrition surveillance and monitoring of communities/program assessment and evaluation.