

Abstract Title:

Cross-sectional study of the attitudes, skills and knowledge of Eastern Health dietitians in using the Nutrition Care Process (NCP)

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Objectives: Eastern Health Regional Authority Dietetics team (EH) has identified the adoption of the Nutrition Care Process(NCP) as a strategic direction. The leadership team has made several efforts to implement the NCP, but progress has remained inconsistent. This cross-sectional study explored the challenges of implementing NCP among EH dietitians (RDs). The objectives were to identify EH RD's 1) knowledge 2) familiarity 3) confidence 4) values and 5) perceived barriers.

Methods: An electronic survey adopted from the ASK NCP (Australian Dietetic Association survey) was distributed to all 50 RDs within EH. This survey uses multiple choice, the Likert Scale, and open-ended questions to collect descriptive data. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to summarize the data.

Results: Forty-four RD's (88%) participated in the study; 66% had more than 11 years of experience in the field of dietetics. The majority (76%) were familiar with the NCP process. Six (16%) scored 100% in the knowledge-related category, whereas 61% scored 70-90%. Overall, 47% did not feel confident to implement NCP and 67% did not value the importance of NCP in their practice. Several barriers for using NCP were identified by 79% of participants. Additional comments for not implementing NCP included 1) limited support and time 2) limited training and 3) unrecognizable language to other healthcare professionals.

Conclusion: The majority of participants were knowledgeable and familiar with the NCP, but not confident in its use. RD's did not value its importance in practice and identified several barriers for complete implementation.

Significance to the field of Dietetics: To move forward with the NCP adoption and implementation, the NCP leadership team may consider providing further support and training to EH RDs to meet their needs. This information also provides considerations for other RDs interested in adopting and implementing the NCP within their practice area.