

Abstract Title

EatRight Ontario (ERO): A Dietitian Contact Centre and its impact on nutrition services

C. Mehling¹, H. Haresign¹, H. Bloomberg¹, E. Wu¹; ¹EatRight Ontario, Dietitians of Canada, Toronto, ON

Abstract

Introduction: ERO is a multi-modal government funded dietitian contact centre that offered free healthy eating advice based on PEN: Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition® and behavior change support to Ontarians.

Objectives: To determine ERO's impact on consumer outcomes, health intermediaries (HI) supports, and nutrition service delivery in Ontario.

Methods: An e-survey link was sent to consumers in the fall of 2017, two weeks after contacting ERO to assess perceived benefits and self-reported outcomes. Health intermediaries were e-surveyed to assess the impacts of ERO on their professional practice, organization and nutrition service delivery.

Results: 867 consumers and 337 HI completed the survey. Of consumers 90–97% indicated that they understood the information provided, felt better informed, got the advice they needed and were able to use the advice provided. 93% of consumer respondents made 2-4 desirable behaviour changes following their contact with the service or had their current behaviours confirmed. 95% of HI indicated that ERO had a positive impact on their service. ERO provided access to evidence-based resources and advice (80%), increased access to dietitians (79%), supported government policies (55-72%) decreased their need to develop additional resources, and answer client inquiries.

Conclusions: Consumers indicate ERO is a valued service impacting health knowledge and behavior change. HI, strongly valuing ERO's role in supporting their professional practice, have shifted functions and consumer supports to ERO, like resource development and client inquiries, so that they can focus on other priorities.

Significance to Dietetics: ERO provided a new model to access dietitians, which can serve as a prototype for others. Quantitative and qualitative data show that ERO plays a trusted role in providing nutrition knowledge and behavior change to consumers. HI, relying on this service, would find its absence creates strategic and operational gaps in Ontario's nutrition service delivery.