

## **Food Security**

### **Dietitian advocacy issues over the past 25 years: survey results**

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**Introduction:** Dietitians have advocated in many areas to influence decisions of political, economic, and social systems and institutions. Review of the recent history of advocacy in the profession may inform the methods and potential success of current and future advocacy efforts.

**Objective:** The objectives were: 1) to identify which groups/interest groups in the profession have done most advocacy work and 2) on what topics, over the past 25 years.

**Methods:** Data on advocacy topics were analyzed from a larger project, involving a survey and interviews of dietitians, conducted in Summer 2018. The purpose of the larger project was to gauge overall interest, format preferences, possible topics and key informants, for a proposed history of the profession. The project was approved by the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board. The 2018 online bilingual survey (Qualtrics) consisted of questions on topics and subtopics of interest. Follow-up telephone interviews confirmed survey results and identified additional issues, topics, and possible key informants. Survey data were analyzed for frequencies, and additional comments and interviews were content analyzed.

**Results:** Of 359 survey responses, 319 were in English, and 40 in French and 51 interviews were completed. 50% of respondents were 38 years old or younger. Among the 8 topics of most interest, 50% identified Government advocacy and programs and 57% Branding and increasing public awareness of the profession needed review. Advocacy was mentioned in the work of Dietitians in public health and Dietitians in health promotion and community practice, with food security as a core interest endorsed by 26% and 31% of all respondents, respectively.

**Conclusion and Significance to Dietetics:** Food security has been a prominent ongoing advocacy issue over the past 25 years. It is relevant to current efforts to see what was done in the past, to improve the success of current efforts.

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