

The Public Face of Dietitians of Canada

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Introduction

DC is the voice of dietitians. Since its last recorded history in 1993[1], many initiatives have been carried out to enhance public awareness of the profession.

The objective was to gain an accurate history of undocumented DC initiatives since 1993.



Methodology

- A literature review was conducted to develop a draft timeline
- Key informants were recruited via email
- Interviews were conducted with 9 RDs in 3 provinces
- Ethics approval was obtained from University of Guelph

Branding of dietitians

"Positive evaluations from some of the products and services has sort of confirmed that consumers have a better appreciation of dietitians, what they do, what they can offer, how its value has been beneficial."

Decreased funding for public-facing tools/programs

"But grants typically are not providing you with resources to sustain some of those great web tools or any of the products and services. Another example of that would be EATracker."

Expanding dietetics in the social media space

Challenges: *"The challenges are how can dietitians continue to make themselves present in that discussion around food when so many people want in on it?"*

Opportunities: *"There's more and more of the public use using the internet and other communication technology that's been advancing over the years. So, it makes it easier for dietitians to reach a greater number of people with their messages, products or services"*

Public-facing to a member-facing organization

"Since 2019-2020, we've really pulled back on other public facing tools."

Creating enhanced access to dietitians

"(...) dietitians [are] being seen as the expert, but then accessing those people in a way that's going to be easy for them to do is the challenge (...) "

Conclusions

Accomplishments

- Increased visibility of DC
- Enhanced public perception of DC
- Availability of accessible tools/resources

Next Steps

- Further develop a social media voice
- Promote easy access to RDs
- Develop new strategies to help RDs helping the public

Relevance to Practice

- The timeline and perspectives of key informants are a resource for the public, current dietitians and students
- Celebrates DC's past achievements
- Having knowledge of DC history can be helpful in guiding future initiatives

Reference:

1. Brownridge E, Upton E. Canadian Dietitians: Making a Difference. Canadian Dietetic Association; 1993.

Transformed into Nutrition Month

EatRight Ontario

Launch of DC website

Unlock Food

1970s

1990s

1990

1997

2007

2007

2014

2018

Beginning of Nutrition Week

Publishes first cookbook "Eat Well Live Well"

Launch of EaTracker

Cookspiration