

# Dietitian Ordering Guideline

## Site Applicability

All VCH & PHC sites – Acute and Long-Term Care

## Practice Level

Profession	Setting	Basic Competency	Additional Competency (requiring registration with restricted activity)
RD	Acute Care and Long Term Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diet orders</li> <li>Oral nutrition supplements</li> <li>Nutrition monitoring activities (e.g. Weights, calorie counts)</li> <li>Consults/referrals to other health care providers (e.g. SLP)</li> <li>Following orders for ongoing dietitian care (Cerner only)</li> <li><a href="#">Multivitamin &amp; Mineral Supplementation</a></li> </ul>	<b>Registration with Restricted Activity A</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Enteral Feeding Orders</a></li> </ul>

## Requirements

In Acute Care, the initial diet orders and/or the enteral feeding initiation orders must be placed by the physician/nurse practitioner (NP).

In Long Term Care (LTC), dietitians can independently place the initial diet order.

Dietitians can independently modify an oral diet once an initial diet is ordered by the physician/NP.

A physician's/NP's order for multivitamins or enteral feeds cannot be changed by dietitians unless a discussion with physician/NP has occurred to confirm approval of the plan or if the following are ordered by the physician/NP:

- Enteral feeding orders: "Tube feed as per dietitian" or "Dietitian May Adjust Feeds"

If the dietitian is off site, recommendations and adjustments to the diet order/tube feed order by the weekend on-call dietitian may be communicated to the RN/RPN for documentation in the health record (non-Cerner sites only).

The following **cannot be done as an independent practice**. These require a discussion with physician/NP and an order:

- Diet orders if a patient is NPO
- Enteral Feeding discontinuation
- Orders for non-formulary enteral or oral formulas. See:
  - [Standard Operating Procedures for non-formulary nutrition products Approved for Use in Canada](#) and
  - [Standard Operating Procedures for Non-Formulary nutrition products Not Approved for Use in Canada](#) and

Dietitians **may not** place orders or write “Dietitian recommends” or “Dietitian suggests” in prescriber’s orders for the following:

- Balloon retention tube volume checks
- Bloodwork
- Diagnostic tests
- Enteral feeding initiation
- Insertion/removal of feeding tubes
- IV fluids
- Medications (including electrolyte repletion)
- NPO orders
- Parenteral nutrition

Dietetics students cannot independently place orders for diets, enteral feeding and multivitamins and minerals.

## Need to Know

Dietitians may place orders to facilitate nutrition interventions as part of nutrition care plans. To competently place orders as part of nutrition care plans, a dietitian must have comprehensive understanding of the [VCH/PHC Diet Writing Guidelines](#) and be aware of their site specific enteral formulary. (See: [VCH/PHC Master Enteral Formulary](#) and [VCH/PHC Enteral Formulary-Selection Guide](#)). Dietitians must also be informed about their site-specific pharmacy formulary for vitamin and mineral supplement preparations. (See: [Coastal Pharmacy Formulary](#), [Richmond Pharmacy Formulary](#), [VA Pharmacy Formulary](#), and [PHC Pharmacy Formulary](#))

Dietitians may place communications in prescriber’s orders to physician/NP requesting an order to facilitate a nutrition intervention or review of dietitian’s note when the dietitian is unable to reach the provider directly.

## Practice Guideline

- When placing a diet order, dietitians will:
  - Confirm initial diet order
  - Use the nutrition care process to determine the most appropriate therapeutic diet as outlined in the [VCH/PHC Diet Writing Guidelines](#).
  - Place new diet order and at non-Cerner sites, discontinue previous diet order, if indicated.
- When placing an enteral feeding order, dietitians will:
  - Confirm order to start enteral feeding has been placed
  - Confirm “Dietitian to Order Enteral Feeds” or “Tube Feed as per Dietitian” has been ordered by physician/NP.
  - If “Dietitian to Order Enteral Feeds” or “Tube Feed as Per Dietitian” order has not been placed by physician/NP, discuss and obtain order.
- When placing all other dietitian orders (e.g., calorie counts or weights), dietitians will:
  - Use the nutrition care process to identify nutrition interventions that require a dietitian order.
  - Determine and place diet-related orders for required nutrition interventions or monitoring.
- All dietitian orders will be placed electronically or written by dietitians as follows:

Date/Time:

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Dietitian's Order: "Diet or other order details"

Printed Name, Signature, RD, CDBC Registration Number, or electronic equivalent in Cerner

- Dietitians will communicate the diet or diet-related order with appropriate staff (e.g., health care team, food services, etc.) as per site specific processes.

### **Expected Patient/Client/Resident Outcomes**

Patients, clients and residents will receive appropriate nutrition interventions to meet their medical, personal and functional needs that are aligned with their goals of care.

### **Patient/Client/Resident Education**

Patients, clients and residents will be offered education on nutrition interventions as needed.

### **Documentation**

Dietitians will document in the patient/client/resident health record and orders will be written in the prescriber's orders or entered electronically using the electronic order-entry system.

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