

## An important message for all registered dietitians:

Wednesday, March 13, 2013

In celebration of Registered Dietitian Day 2013, it gives me great pleasure to make an exciting announcement!

The Academy's Board of Directors and the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) have taken a big step: Registered dietitians now have the option to use the credential "registered dietitian nutritionist (**RDN**)."

Why did we take this action? In short, because members asked for it. In 2010, the Academy began exploring the option of offering the registered dietitian nutritionist credential. It was supported by participants in the 2011 Future Connections Summit and most recently by the Council on Future Practice in its 2012 Visioning Report. The recommendation was shared and discussed in the House of Delegates at the Fall 2012 meeting. The 2013 joint meeting of the major organizational units (Commission on Dietetic Registration, Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics, Council on Future Practice, Education Committee, and Nutrition and Dietetics Educators and Preceptors DPG) supported moving forward.

We know that all registered dietitians are nutritionists but not all nutritionists are registered dietitians. The new **RDN** credential positions and promotes you front and center with consumers, increasing recognition and public understanding of both terms: "dietitian" and "nutritionist." This action will more accurately reflect who we are and what we do.

A branding program is under way that will strengthen and differentiate a respected brand. The plan will also help educate consumers and other health professionals, building further awareness of your unique capabilities and rigorous credentialing requirements.

Adding "nutritionist" to the registered dietitian credential is consistent with the inclusion of the word nutrition in the Academy's new name. It also communicates to everyone the broader concept of wellness and prevention that are part of practice for many **RDs**.

Legal counsel determined that adding the optional **RDN** credential will not affect state licensure or other regulations. Many state licensure/certification laws already reference the term nutritionist (e.g., LDN or CDN).

Let me be clear: **The RDN credential is offered as an option to RDs who want to convey the nutrition aspect of the credential to the public and to other health practitioners. Use of the RDN credential is optional and totally up to you.**

Your CDR 2013-2014 registration identification card will reflect both the **RD** and **RDN** credentials. If you choose, you can start using the **RDN** credential today!

More information about the new credential is available at [www.eatright.org/RDN](http://www.eatright.org/RDN).

This is an exciting time for our profession!

Sincerely,

Ethan A. Bergman, PhD, RDN, CD, FADA  
President, 2012-2013