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Getting Started

What was your first job as an RD?

- I worked as the sole RD at a facility that included a SNF, long-term vent unit, acute rehab unit, and a memory care unit. I enjoyed it immensely and had great mentorship.

How did you first get into Nutrition Informatics? What sparked your interest?

- My company decided to implement an EMR that all providers would use for documentation. At the time, we were using McKesson, and while the clinical team documented in the EMR, providers were still handwriting their orders and notes. I joined the super user team for clinical nutrition and realized how much I enjoyed integrating systems to improve both patient care and team productivity.

What education or training helped you most?

- On-the-job training and validating information were key. I learned that you don't fully understand the system until you use it daily and encounter real-world issues. I also discovered the importance of knowing your resources—it definitely helps to have a friend on the informatics build team!

What was your biggest challenge breaking in, and how did you overcome it?

- Being overconfident in my understanding of workflows. I overcame this by becoming more curious—shadowing others, observing workflows, and asking more questions.
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Day-to-Day & Key Skills

What is your current role?

- Regional Clinical Nutrition Manager for Northwestern Medicine's northwest region.
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What does a typical day look like for you?

- **4–6 AM:** Help my team check in and organize for the day. Although RDs have assigned floors, we ensure the workload is balanced across rounds, students, and patient care. Each RD typically has 9–10 patients on their list.
 - **6–7 AM:** Perform one chart audit and check emails.
 - **7–8 AM:** Commute to work onsite.
 - **8–9 AM:** Attend safety huddles and catch up on emails.
 - **9–11 AM:** Project work and high-priority meetings—this is when I do my best thinking.
 - **11–11:30 AM:** Lunch break.
 - **11:30 AM:** Operations huddle.
 - **2 PM:** Regional Teams virtual huddle (15 minutes).
 - **2:30–3 PM:** 1:1 meetings with team members.
 - **3–3:30 PM:** Wrap up emails and professional volunteer tasks.
 - **Evening:** Occasionally attend professional meetings.
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Must-have technical skills (software/tools):

- Microsoft Suite (Word, Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint, To-Do, Teams)
 - Canva
 - AI tools (CoPilot / ChatGPT)
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Beyond tech, what other skills are essential in this field?

- Presentation skills
 - Networking
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Has AI impacted your day-to-day work? If so, how?

- Absolutely! AI helps me write emails, communicate with different personality types, summarize thoughts, and brainstorm. I use it several times a day.
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Resources and Tips

What resources do you swear by for learning?

- **Canva** – Great for making information look professional.
 - **ChatGPT** – My go-to AI tool. If you haven't started using it, now's the time—it's here to stay.
 - **Podcasts** – I use Spotify to explore topics I'm interested in and follow groups I want to learn more about.
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What's one key tip for someone trying to get into Nutrition Informatics?

- Start volunteering! You'll be surprised how welcoming the community is, and you'll build a strong network of resources.
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How do you stay updated on the latest trends?

- Podcasts are my preferred method—I can listen while doing other tasks. My fave are: How to be a better Human, The Lazy Genius, Work Life with Adam Grant, The AI Daily Brief.
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Favorite AI tools, tips, or tricks?

- If something is time-consuming or challenging, AI can help. My biggest tip: get really good at prompting! Tell the AI who you are and what you want. Be specific about what to include or exclude. And if you're unsure how to prompt—just ask the AI! It will guide you.
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Has the NI DPG been helpful on your journey? If so, how?

- The NI DPG has been so helpful to connect me with other RD's that like informatics and I love how the tech fairs make me think about new innovative ways to collaborate with other companies!
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The Impact

What do you find most rewarding about working in nutrition informatics?

- I love being able to influence my team's productivity by improving workflows and accessing reports that help us stay laser-focused on our goals.
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Can you share a project you're proud of and its impact?

- As a CNM, I know it's crucial that our team understands, documents, and intervenes for malnutrition. A few years ago, I was part of a QI interdisciplinary group that developed tools to streamline this process. We created a "smartphrase" that allowed RD documentation to flow directly into provider notes. This changed how providers viewed malnutrition—they no longer had to rewrite notes, just embed the smartphrase. As a result, our malnutrition capture significantly improved and now leads the organization. The work was even published in a QI journal, which was very exciting! Read the article [here](#)!
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