



CARRIE EDWARDS, MS, RDN, LDN
Project Manager/Clinical Informatics Specialist

CONTACT ME

cedwards@metzcorp.com 

[Carrie Edwards](#) 

Getting Started

What was your first job as an RD?

- I worked for a nonprofit community organization as a Food Service Manager/Nutrition Educator, where I oversaw operations for government-funded programs. I then moved on to clinical and management roles.

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

- I assisted with an EMR transition as a clinical RD and enjoyed the work related to this implementation. A new opportunity arose to do this work on a larger scale with clinical and food service software programs, so I applied and was hired. I developed programs and processes and was largely self-taught related to this field.

What education or training helped you most?

- My MS degree in Organizational Management set a solid foundation to work in this field. Seeking information on informatics and project management, and being a self-directed learner has been key to success. Reviewing the Project Management Book of Knowledge and the Google Classroom Project Management Certificate courses has also been very helpful.

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

- The job required technical knowledge in subjects unrelated to dietetics, such as system architecture, software installation and configuration, VPN access, hardware, translation tables, change control, and project management—areas in which I did not have formal instruction. I asked a lot of clarifying questions and researched online and with experts to learn as much as possible about these areas.

Day-to-Day & Key Skills

What is your current role?

- I work as a remote Project Manager/Clinical Informatics Specialist for a clinical and food service management company. I oversee and am involved in the details of clinical and food service software implementations and system integrations with our client partners.
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What does a typical day look like for you?

- It ranges from providing guidance to team members on project planning and implementation strategies, to software, hardware, or interface troubleshooting, to database programming and testing, to training and development, to task coordination with project teams. I spend a lot of my days on conference calls and working with others to bring projects to life, all while ensuring patient safety, and customer and client satisfaction.
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Must-have technical skills (software/tools):

- Knowledge of related system architecture, software applications/hardware, VPNs, virtual communications platforms, change control processes, and project management.
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Beyond tech, what other skills are essential in this field?

- Knowledge of and experience in project management is important. Flexibility, eagerness to learn, excellent organizational skills, ability to multitask, and a growth mindset are key to success.
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Has AI impacted your day-to-day work? If so, how?

- No. Our work requires integration of many departments and concepts, as well as clinical application of data. There's a lot of manual work related to clinical judgment and strategy that I'm not sure can be easily replicated by AI that is currently available in the marketplace.
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Resources and Tips

What resources do you swear by for learning?

- Google Career Certificate Programs courses, Project Management Book of Knowledge, Google searches, YouTube, regulatory websites, and software vendor websites are some of my key resources.

What's one key tip for someone trying to get into Nutrition Informatics?

- Volunteer for tech- and/or project-related opportunities to gain experience. Offer to assist with projects that stretch beyond the field of nutrition.

How do you stay updated on the latest trends?

- I'm enrolled in email newsletters from many resources and browse these regularly. I attend free industry webinars that are tech related.

Favorite AI tools, tips, or tricks?

- I don't [use AI], but would like to learn more about this area!

Has the NI DPG been helpful on your journey? If so, how?

- Yes, I've learned a lot from newsletters, webinars, and communications. It's great to see what other RDs are working on and involved in.
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The Impact

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

- I love bringing complex projects to life to help add value to the products and services we offer to our clients, staff, and patients. It's extremely challenging and also very rewarding work!
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Can you share a project you're proud of and its impact?

- I worked with our team to develop standardized healthcare recipes and menu cycles, and then programmed these and typical formulary items into two different platforms with appropriate allergen and diet compliance coding. These have been used as a data source over the past nine years for the customized development of 23 databases with 16 EMR interfaces which serve over 48 client partner sites and millions of patients! Our team has grown from one (just me!) to eight Clinical Informatics Specialists staff in that same time frame. It's very rewarding to see hard work and dedication result in growth and development of myself and others!
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