Perceived Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes and Training Needs of Northern Ontario Dietitian Preceptors

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Northern Ontario Dietetic Internship Program Graduates 2010

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Outline

- Background
- Objectives
- Methods
- Results
- Implications
A “dietitian preceptor” is a dietitian with skills, knowledge and experience to teach and guide dietetic interns during dietetic internship placements. Preceptor’s roles are complex and require skills in being clinical experts, as well as being role models, learner facilitators, collaborators, coaches, interveners, learner advocates and evaluators.
Background

- Northern Ontario Dietetic Internship Program (NODIP) is a new program that graduated its first cohort in August 2008
- Distributed, community-engaged internship model
- Preceptors practice in various communities and practice settings
- Baseline data important for training, program infrastructure, curriculum enhancements, and ongoing funding
Objectives

1) To determine the perceived knowledge, skills and attitudes of dietitian preceptors in Northern Ontario
2) To identify barriers of Northern Ontario dietitians to preceptoring
3) To identify the training needs and preferred training modes of dietitian preceptors in Northern Ontario.
Survey

• Modified from Canadian preceptors’ perceived knowledge, skills and training survey conducted in 2008
• Researchers: Roseanne Nasser, MSc, RD; Jean Coleman, MSc, RD; Stephanie Cook, MSc, RD; Catherine Morley, PhD., RD, FDC; Shawna Berenbaum, PhD., RD, FDC.
• Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research funded national project
Survey

Modifications:
• Demographic information
• Primary Area of Practice

Included in Survey:
• Preceptor Training topics
• Modes of Training
• Willingness to Travel for training
Methods

Sample:

- Pretested online survey was distributed in March, 2010 to 161 registered dietitians practicing in North East and North West LHINs.
Methods

- 22 - item online survey via Survey Monkey™
- Most survey questions used 6-point Likert summated scale
- Respondents were able to skip questions and add comments to each question
Results

- Response rate of 40% (n=64)
- Responses per question varied between 55-61 responses

- Analysis mainly descriptive
  - Percentages, counts, bivariate crosstabulations where indicated
## Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Age</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 +</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years as a practicing RD</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 years</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 years</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 +</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical Centre</th>
<th>% Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Nations Communities</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LHIN</th>
<th>% Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North East LHIN</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West LHIN</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Setting</th>
<th>% Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical practice</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Perceived Knowledge of Role

Being a dietitian-preceptor means:

- Having extensive knowledge of one's practice area:
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither disagree or agree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
  - N/A

- Knowing the national requirements for dietetics education (e.g., experience):
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither disagree or agree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
  - N/A

- Knowing the requirements (structure, requirements, policies and procedures):
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither disagree or agree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
  - N/A

- Knowing how to promote learning and skill development in others:
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither disagree or agree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
  - N/A

- Knowing how to assess and evaluate learners:
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither disagree or agree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
  - N/A
Results: Perceived Skills of a Dietitian Preceptor

- Assess and adapt for learners' learning needs
- Recognize mutual learning between preceptors and learners
- Empower learners to take control of their own learning
- Confidence in teaching basic/entry level dietitian skills
- 86% of respondents would like to be a more skillful dietitian preceptor.
Results: Skills

A dietitian-preceptor should:

- Provide learners with constructive feedback
- Establish an environment that encourages...
- Help learners to feel comfortable in the...
- Practice dietetics based on evidence
- Demonstrate a desire to impart knowledge
- Challenge learners
- Identify learning opportunities for learners
- Be aware of learners’ different learning styles
- Allow learners to make mistakes
- Not overwhelm learners
- Other
Results: Perceived Attitudes of Dietitian Preceptors

- 100% believed that a dietitian preceptor commits to learners' learning and development

- 80% of respondents considered learners as colleagues

- 24% of respondents believed that recent graduates with less than one year of experience should be able to serve as preceptors; whereas 43% of respondents disagreed with new graduates acting as preceptors.
Results: Barriers to Preceptoring

- Workplace support
- Workload
- Stress
- Recognition
- Communication
Results: Preferred Training Topics

I believe the following preceptor training topics would be useful (check all that apply):

- Developing learning objectives
- Evaluating learners
- Understanding the NODIP program curriculum
- Fostering critical thinking
- Promoting self-directed learning
- Giving and receiving constructive feedback
- Fostering reflective practice
- Enhancing conflict resolution skills
- Dealing with poor performance
- Assessing different learning styles
Results: Training Tools

I believe the following would be useful as a dietitian preceptor:

- Written guide for preceptors to evaluate learners: 4
- Written guide to help dietitian-preceptors recognize their goals as a: 4
- Self directed training modules on preceptor skill development topics: 4
- Online network of dietitian-preceptors: 3
- Written guide to help dietitian-preceptors recognize entry level prac...
Results: Training Modes

Top 3 Training Modes:
1) Videoconferencing
2) Teleconferences/Webinars
3) Face-to-face

Less popular options included:
Online computer assisted instruction, archived access to online media, computer simulations, networking.
Implications

- Northern Ontario dietitians felt that they would benefit from additional knowledge and skills necessary to be a more effective dietitian preceptor.
- The majority of respondents considered learners as colleagues, and the literature identifies this attitude as being crucial to fostering reflective practice and critical thinking.
Implications

- Respondents perceived that more Northern Ontario dietitians would preceptor if they were supported by their employer and co-workers with a decreased workload while preceptoring.
Implications

- Northern Ontario dietitians reported that they would benefit from further preceptor training and understanding of internship program goals and expectations.
- Northern Ontario dietitians indicated a need for and an interest in preceptor training opportunities:
  - Evaluating learners, dealing with poor performers, fostering critical thinking, and giving and receiving constructive feedback.
Limitations

- Response Rate of 40%
- Results may not be representative of dietitians in First Nations and rural communities
- Results can not be generalized to other internship programs
- 10-15% of respondents did not respond to all questions
Future Considerations

Findings will:

- Contribute to identifying professional development needs
- Professional development needs identified will be considered for use in future preceptor training activities
- Preferred training modes will be considered for delivering professional development training by NOSM
- Be used to advocate for support of dietetic preceptor training programs and resources in Northern Ontario.
Questions?
References

References


