



First DIETS Conference

## Competence in Healthcare Education - The European Agenda



Friday 7th September 2007  
UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH, UK

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Issue 2 - June 2007

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### Welcome to the 2nd DIETS Thematic Network Newsletter.

We hope that you enjoyed the first DIETS Thematic Network Newsletter and would like to welcome you to the second Newsletter which we hope that you will also find both beneficial and interesting. The feedback that we have received to date has been very positive, so we hope that we can continue the momentum.

All those involved with the Thematic Network have been very busy and many of you have either hosted a visit from colleagues providing nutrition and dietetics undergraduate education in a HEI in Europe or have visited a HEI that provides such education. In this Newsletter, there is a report on the visit of two professors from the Thessaloniki Technological Educational Institution in Greece to the Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin, Ireland. We hope that this will provide you with some small insight into visits which all found hugely interesting and rewarding and maybe encourage more of you to answer our call for volunteers to take part in future visits between DIETS partner organisations.

Each visit will generate valuable information which can then be used to improve dietetic practice placement learning. All information gained through these visits will be shared with all network partners to help improve the education and training of dietitians in Europe. This information will be posted on the DIETS Thematic Network website as soon as it becomes available.

As it is important that we raise the profile of dietetics with all stakeholders throughout Europe, we urge you to disseminate this Newsletter as widely as possible, to all lecturers in dietetics, practising dietitians, students and ministries for health, education and employment. We would also like all members of the partner organisations to contribute to the Newsletter so please send your contributions to the Thematic Network Manager, Judith Liddell at

[network.manager@thematicnetworkdietetics.eu](mailto:network.manager@thematicnetworkdietetics.eu).

If we all give a little of our good experiences in nutrition and dietetics, we will all learn and ultimately we will grow stronger as a united profession in Europe.

Best wishes,  
**Dissemination Group,**  
**DIETS Thematic Network for Dietetics**

*The DIETS Thematic Network for Dietetics is the grateful beneficiary of generous financial support from the European Union's Socrates programme. The Network takes sole responsibility for everything it publishes, including this newsletter, and wishes to make clear that the Education, Audiovisual and Cultural Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained herein*



# Visit Report

Thessaloniki Technological Educational Institution, Greece  
and the Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin, Ireland

- May 2007 -

Until May this year, we here in Ireland knew very little about the education or work of dietitians in Greece. The visit of Professors Maria Hassapidou and Thomai Karagiozoglou-Lampoudi was a beneficial and enjoyable learning experience for my colleague Mary Moloney, and me, who both lecture on the conjoint Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and University of Dublin, Trinity College BSc (Hons) in Human Nutrition and Dietetics. The visit was arranged from the 15<sup>th</sup> until the 19<sup>th</sup> May, a time of examinations, corrections and examination boards, so we were fearful that we would have insufficient time to discuss the education of student Dietitians adequately. However, when we began to compare courses and discuss examples of dietetic education, the corrections got put on hold in favour of more interesting discussions. We had put together a draft timetable and our initial job was to identify areas of particular interest to our visitors, make arrangements to facilitate them in this regard and agree the timetable.

The first morning we spent on a tour of the facilities provided for dietetics education in DIT including visiting the new clinical teaching room which can be adapted to either an inpatient or outpatient setting and enables us now to video and record students engaged in role play assessing dietary intakes and learning basic nutritional counselling skills. We also met with a number of key academic staff. Ms Brid Ann Ryan, Head of School of Biological Sciences then gave us an overview of the courses provided by the School of Biological Sciences in DIT and we discussed the current curriculum in depth and possible changes to the curriculum based on current graduate needs. This was a very useful exercise and generated

much discussion. Following lunch, for which we thank the School of Biological Sciences, and further discussion of the curriculum, particularly in relation to preparing students for their clinical placements, the postgraduate nutrition/dietetics students presented their work to the visitors. There are currently six postgraduate students carrying out nutrition/dietetics PhD work in the School, one is based at present in the Karolinska Institute in Sweden and one is based within the Irish Health Service



Visitors from Thessaloniki pictured with 4<sup>th</sup> Year BSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics students from DIT, Dublin

Executive. However, the other four were available to present their work. This work focuses on breastfeeding and infant feeding practices in Ireland and on the barriers to healthy eating in socio-economically deprived young women - both areas of interest to our Greek visitors. Dr Kate Younger, Lecturer in Nutrition also actively participated in this session. It transpired that both Maria and Kate had carried out some of their postgraduate research in the same institution, in University College London. Nutrition and Dietetics in Europe is a 'small world'.

Thursday morning was spent discussing the area of enhancing learning through assessment with a

sharing of how this was managed in both countries. We then made a visit to St James's Hospital where third year clinical classes are held and had interesting and fruitful discussions on placement-based studies with the Dietitian Manager, Ms Sandra Brady and the Manager of Therapy Services, Ms Philomena Flood, who is also a Dietitian. The visitors were then given a tour of the hospital by the Senior Renal Dietitian, Ms Tracey Waldron which they found very useful and they were very impressed with the depth and breadth of Tracey's knowledge. On Thursday evening, a glorious evening in contrast to the constant rain since the arrival of the visitors, and following a short tour of the south-east coast of Dublin, we enjoyed dinner in a Spanish restaurant for which we thank the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute.

Friday was spent in further discussions and the evaluation of the visit.

In summary, we learnt a lot from this visit and we hope our Greek visitors did likewise. I hope that we can maintain and develop the links between ourselves and Thessaloniki. The DIETS Thematic Network must be congratulated for facilitating these exchanges which can only enrich and strengthen dietetics across Europe and we look forward to the next set of visits.

**Dr Clare Corish, Dublin Institute of Technology.**



# Visits - Call for Volunteers



The first round of visits between Higher Education Institutes has now been completed. While the data generated by the visits have still to be analysed one thing is absolutely clear. Everyone who was involved reported that not only had they benefited from the experience professionally but that they had also enjoyed themselves. Many professional contacts and friendships have already been formed as a direct result of the visits. Initial data analysis also shows that examples of best practice and innovative training methods have been identified.

We are now starting to plan the next round of visits. These should take place between October 2007 and April 2008, but other dates would also be possible.

We are calling for volunteers from campus-based teachers of students and also from practice placement trainers. Ideally we are seeking combinations of teachers and trainers, so that a lecturer and a practice placement trainer could either travel together to visit another centre or could jointly host a visit which would show guests two centres – a Higher

Education Institute and a practice placement centre. However, we would also be happy to consider applications from dietitians who are involved in supervising students during their practice placement training without accompanying lecturers.

This is an opportunity for practising dietitians to get involved in DIETS – if you are involved in practice placement learning in any way please take this opportunity to volunteer to take part in a visit.

DIETS will reimburse 75% of the costs of travel, accommodation, subsistence and staff costs for 2 guests to visit another country and 75% of staff costs for 2 people to host each visit.

Once again **12 visits are planned so we need 24 pairs of volunteers.**

Volunteers must be members of a DIETS partner organisation (either a Higher Education Institute or a dietetic association).

To register your interest please contact Judith Liddell

[network.manager@thematicnetworkdietetics.eu](mailto:network.manager@thematicnetworkdietetics.eu)

## Education Mapping Questionnaire

One of the main benefits expected from the DIETS network is the adoption and implementation of the European Dietetic Benchmark Statement by all DIETS partners.

For this purpose, one of the outcomes of DIETS for year one is to map and describe contemporary dietetic education and training in each partner Higher Education Institute (HEI), focusing especially on practice-based learning.

To achieve this aim, the Education and Practice Group has developed and piloted an Education Mapping Questionnaire (EMQ) making reference to methodologies developed by Tuning I and II especially in practice-based learning. This will enable comparison of current education with the Benchmark Statement and with data collected by the European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD) to identify changes in Education since 1986.

The EMQ is divided into different sections, with questions related to basic education, post-graduate courses and questions related to practical placement learning. Also, generic competencies are listed which should be ranked in order to help us start the process of developing a competency statement document for Dietitians in Europe.

## Smaller portions



Telling Stories  
Understanding Real  
Life Genetics



This month saw the launch of an innovative online genetics education resource *Telling Stories, Understanding Real-Life Genetics*. It is a collection of stories from patients, family members and healthcare staff from around the UK which powerfully illustrates what it is like to have, be at risk of, live with, and support those affected by genetic conditions. As well as video or audio clips, each story has activities, reflections on implications for practice and links to additional material and genetics competences - all downloadable for educational use.

[www.geneticseducation.nhs.uk/tellingstories](http://www.geneticseducation.nhs.uk/tellingstories)

# ITC Mapping Questionnaire

Advancing the IT Capabilities of DIETS Partners

Among the objectives of the DIETS Thematic Network are the following:

- To improve communications between educators and dietetic practitioners about practice competencies through the development of a dedicated website and associated databases
- To facilitate sharing of knowledge and disseminate research findings concerning practice education competencies
- To develop the role of the dietitian in the promotion of nutritional health through embedding lifelong learning competencies in first cycle degrees
- To develop and promote education courses for dietitians and to publicise best practice
- To contribute to the research capacity and capability of dietitians

In today's world, developing competencies in Information Technology and Communications (ITC) would be a *sine qua non* in achieving these objectives. One of the tasks of the ITC Group within the DIETS Thematic Network is to aid partners in developing these competencies. Another task of the Group is to develop a Virtual Learning Environment, utilising both asynchronous (eg. Discussion boards) and synchronous (eg. Webcasting) E-Learning methods.

The Tuning Project has identified up to thirty generic competencies that need to be developed. Two of these are directly concerned with ITC, and they are:

Information  
Management  
Skills

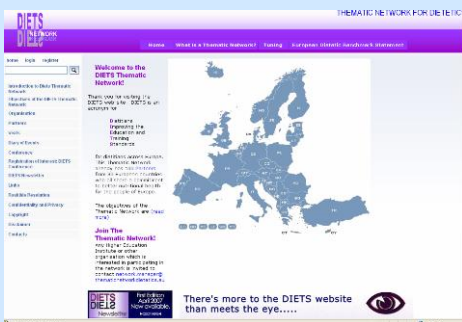
Elementary  
Computer  
Skills

In order to properly plan for activities that will aid in developing these competencies among DIETS Thematic Network partners, the ITC Group will soon be circulating an ITC Mapping questionnaire. This questionnaire will be available online at the DIETS website. The questionnaire aims to establish the current status of ITC competencies among DIETS partners, and will be the basis for decision-making for the future ITC and E-Learning development activities to be undertaken by the Thematic Network. One of the planned activities is the establishment of webcasting studios in some of the DIETS Partner Institutions. There are funds allotted for the purchase of the webcasting equipment, and the results of the questionnaire will aid in determining which Institutions are awarded the webcasting equipment.

The questionnaire is currently under development and will be available very soon on the DIETS website. All of us in the ITC group are hoping for a good response from the DIETS partners.

**Dr Cito Maramba,**  
**DIETS Web Administrator**

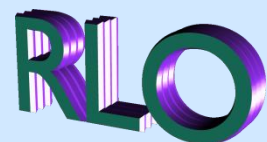
## What's new on the DIETS website



[www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu](http://www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu)

New features are being added to the DIETS website on a regular basis. Recent additions include a **glossary** which offers definitions of words and phrases frequently used in dietetics and nutrition and an exciting new **Reusable Learning Object** from Professor Anne de Looy, Thematic Network Co-ordinator. Members wishing to learn more about the contractual obligations of the Thematic Network can view this information on the website too.

## Glossary



Socrates



## Transversal - what is it and what does it mean?

When we submitted the bid to establish the Thematic Network a section had to be included on how the Network would make a contribution to meeting transversal policy directives in Europe (see Section 7 of the bid). I have been asked on several occasions what exactly does this mean and so here is a brief explanation. In 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations published its Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in 2000 the Charter of Fundamental Rights was published by the Commission in Europe. Both are concerned with the rights of all citizens and can be divided into six sections; dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizen's rights and justice

([http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm)).

For example the Charter makes these statements: 'Everyone has the right to education and to have access to continuing and vocational training' (Article 14) and that 'Everyone has the right to engage in work and to pursue a freely chosen or accepted occupation' (Article 15). Each nation state has a duty to its citizens to provide for these fundamental rights. Now education is very much at the centre of ensuring that all people know about these rights and setting a good example of how these are put into practice. Here is a website that speaks of new initiatives being put in place to ensure that we continue to educate all citizens of Europe in these matters <http://www.transversal.org.uk/>. But for dietitians it also means that we need to respect the rights of our clients, our colleagues and or course our students. What this might entail in reality is making sure that any diet literature is easily understood (i.e. language) by all our client groups and is provided in a form they can



understand and this might mean making it especially available for the deaf, the blind and the person who has never learned to read. Equally our website should be accessible to all; so it should not use very small text or flashing lights that could cause an epileptic fit, it should use colours that make it easy to read and be non-discriminatory between men and women or those

from different cultural groups (especially about the food they eat) and so on. Above all our Thematic Network should be promoting and advancing our understanding of each other; embracing our differences and learning how to promote cooperation through our educational activities and other means. We will soon be asking our partners to give us examples of how they are taking account and addressing transversal issues on a day to day basis.

**Anne de Looy**  
Thematic Network Coordinator

Another useful site for a summary of the history of Europe and engagement in education and transversal areas [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts/4\\_16\\_1\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts/4_16_1_en.htm)

## Enhancing Student Learning through Assessment

It is well recognised that students are preoccupied by exams with one of the most common questions being 'will this be in the exams?' Like it or not, we must accept that assessment usually drives student learning and react accordingly. We need, therefore, to devise assessments that prioritise the most important areas we want our students to learn from, create clear learning outcomes and assess appropriately. We also need to use assessments to produce students who are 'deep' rather than 'surface' learners.



When devising assessments always consider that the assessment should help equip a student with transferable skills and competencies. Assessment can test memorising, acquiring facts, skills or methods, abstracting meaning and interpreting knowledge. The level and type of skills and competencies will depend on the level and type of course.

Assessment can be summative, formative or continuous. Summative assessment is assessment that signifies competence or that contributes to a student's grade in a course, module, level or degree. However, formative assessment is also essential to learning. It provides students with feedback on their learning and advice on how to maintain and improve their progress. Both academic curricula and placement-based studies should maximise the amount of formative assessment but it is important that it should not form part of their summative grade. Continuous assessment involves individual assessment of a series of tasks. It is best used when there are distinct learning outcomes which are achieved at definable stages during the learning process. With both formative and continuous assessment, the feedback must be timely; too soon, and it may disrupt the student's reflective process, too late, and it is no longer salient to the student.

As teachers of student Dietitians both in the academic and the workplace settings, appropriate assessment should enhance our students' learning.

**Clare Corish**

# Could Obesity Be Cultural?



**New research comparing French and English eating habits has shed new light on one of Britain's most rapidly growing problems.**



**University of Plymouth Dietetics lecturer, Dr Clare Pettinger** has co-authored a research paper recently published in the *Public Health Nutrition Journal* (**Public Health Nutrition (2007) 9:1020-26**), which compares meal patterns and cooking practices in France and England.

While the French most often cook from raw ingredients, enjoy their meals together as a household and follow a regular pattern of three meals a day, the English are relying on calorific ready meals and take-aways, skipping breakfast and filling the gap with unhealthy snacks. Staggeringly, nearly 60% of British people were found to gorge regularly on crisps and fried snacks, compared with only 6% of the French.

One stereotype has been dismissed, as English women have been found to pull their weight in the kitchen just as much as their cross-channel counterparts, with females in both countries reported as having the most responsibility for preparing meals.

The research was conducted by polling 1,000 males and 1,000 females between the ages of 18 and 65 in each country.

Dr Clare Pettinger says the research gives an interesting insight into England's obesity problem in terms of culture and that something must be done:

***"These cultural differences between France and England may explain the higher prevalence of adult obesity in England than France. The way certain foods are marketed and advertised is an area in need of special attention."***

***"I believe public health nutrition professionals are in the position to develop interventions and policies that take into account the different cultural contexts of the current obesity epidemic."***

## Summary of key findings

- Nearly two-thirds of French (64.8%) compared with just over half of English respondents (51%), reported eating together as a household on a daily basis.
- More females in both countries were responsible for food purchase, but more females in England (72.4%) than in France (58.4%) reported deciding which foods to purchase. More females in England (73%) than in France (55%) reported doing the food shopping.
- Almost two-thirds of French respondents (61.9%) reported cooking a meal from raw ingredients, compared with less than a quarter of English respondents (22.2%).
- More than three times as many English respondents (23.9%) than French (7%) reported purchasing a take-away meal at least once a week.
- More French (84.9%) than English (71.3%) reported eating breakfast on a daily basis.
- Over half (58.8%) of English respondents reported eating crisps/fried snacks at least once a week compared with only 6% of French respondents. Almost two-thirds of English respondents (63.9%) reported eating cakes and biscuits at least once a week compared with just over half of the French (55.1%).

## OUT&ABOUT IN THE NETWORK



## Update from the Iberian Peninsula

### Conferences 2007:

From the 27th to the 29th of September 2007, the Second Portuguese-Spanish Congress of Food, Nutrition and Dietetics, organized by the Portuguese Association of Nutritionists and by the Spanish Association of Dietitians-Nutritionists will take place in Oporto, Portugal, [www.skyros-congressos.com/](http://www.skyros-congressos.com/)

### Commission on dietetic registration in Spain

During the last two years, the process to create a commission for the registration of dietitians has been advancing and at the moment there are official commissions for dietetic registration in two Autonomous Communities, hopefully leading to a National Council for Dietetic Registration in Spain.

### Dietitian of the Year

For a second consecutive year, Dietecom Spain with the collaboration of the Spanish Association of Dietitians-Nutritionists, has made the award of "Dietitian of the year". This prize is for a piece of original work on the prevention of the childhood obesity carried out by a Spanish dietitian. The award was presented in April ([www.aedn.es](http://www.aedn.es)).



## Revolution in Provision of Food Composition Data



Food composition data is the foundation that enables dietitians to calculate nutrient intakes and deliver dietary recommendations but it can be frustratingly difficult to acquire comprehensive, high quality and up-to-date data for all products.



Help is at hand in the form of **EuroFIR (European Food Information Resource)**, an EU-funded Network of Excellence which is creating an internet portal, allowing access to high quality food composition data from across Europe.

National compilers of such data from across Europe have joined forces, adopting high standards and ensuring comparability between datasets. EuroFIR is also funding analysis of traditional and ethnic foods for which data has not previously been available.

Another feature of the portal will be access to extensive data on plant bioactives (e.g. flavonoids). Furthermore, we plan to develop links to up-to-date information from retailers and manufacturers on the foods they sell, so that the information available truly reflects the innovations taking place across the food industry.

There will also be guidance on recipe calculation, for example how to take changes in weight and nutrient losses during cooking into account when planning menus, and top tips for choosing software packages. Work is progressing well and a prototype is now available for testing.



To find out more about EuroFIR visit [www.eurofir.net](http://www.eurofir.net), or contact us at the British Nutrition Foundation ([b.aisbitt@nutrition.org.uk](mailto:b.aisbitt@nutrition.org.uk)) if you'd like to be involved in testing the prototype.

**Professor Judith Buttriss**  
**Science Director**  
**British Nutrition Foundation**

## Reusable Learning Objects - what are they?

A good place to start has come from the University of Nottingham in the UK:

"The acronym RLO stands for *Reusable Learning Object*. That's about the only thing that learning object practitioners and theorists worldwide agree on. There is no agreed definition of what a RLO is, which given the range of interested parties - academic, military, governmental, corporate - across the world is hardly surprising. Definitions range from 'any thing that exists that can be used and re-used in learning' to full-blown courses."

(<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/nursin/sonet/rlos/rlofaq.html>)

So any thing which can be used and re-used for learning is a RLO! I guess books were the first RLO but

now with the wealth of the World Wide Web it is possible to access an enormous source of RLOs. Projects have been set up to build libraries of RLOs and especially for people learning about healthcare. Here is a link to a site with RLOs deposited: <http://www.ucel.ac.uk/shield/>. This project has now been captured in a Centre of Excellence for the promotion of RLOs (<http://www.rlo-cetl.ac.uk/>) and you will find on this site a RLO for teaching on reflective writing.

What is available for dietetics and nutrition as RLOs is still a mystery for me....however with a little surfing on the Net I came across this one on patient dietary assessment [http://www.wisc-online.com/objects/index\\_tj.asp?objID=DTY1703](http://www.wisc-online.com/objects/index_tj.asp?objID=DTY1703) which could be useful to us as we teach our students here at Plymouth.

The DIETS Network would like to have some RLOs posted on our Website or information from our members on good RLOs that they now use to be downloaded from the web. I've put one on our site which is a quiz for vitamins and minerals which I have devised from using pictures gathered on the web. If you want the answers, please ask! But have fun...

**Anne de Looy**  
**Thematic Network Coordinator at Plymouth**

And for those of you who would like a little more theory, try this paper from Finland which talks about using the 'plate model' to teach about nutrition <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/iel5/9382/2/9792/01357412.pdf>.

## The central role of the administrative dietitian

The administrative dietitian works in very different areas of the healthcare spectrum, but whether securing a healthy school-lunch programme for children or establishing a suitable meal plan for hospital patients, the most important function is always to ensure that the right product is delivered to the right customer/patient at the right time.



This task is complex and requires the use of several administrative and communicative tools by the administrative dietitian, to ensure that the different participants involved in the connected processes cooperate at the highest level. For the administrative dietitian planning is of vital importance.

Communication is also essential. This is because many different healthcare professionals, with varied backgrounds and aims, are involved at each stage of meal production from planning through to disposal of leftover food. A study conducted on a Danish hospital, as part of an educational project, indicates that better communications between different healthcare professionals have an effect on the energy-intake per meal in low-energy-intake patients, and produces other benefits such as more time for patients and less food waste. Also, the patients expressed an elevated degree of satisfaction and a higher level of contentment. These benefits can result in substantial cost savings, because of less resource-use and a faster patient recovery period at the hospital.

Another advantage that emerges from better communication between healthcare professionals is the increased level of shared knowledge which can create

innovation in the system.

Communication has always been a part of the administrative dietitian's work, but in recent years the focus of this communication has changed. Previously the administrative dietitian functioned as an internal communicator within the healthcare institution or even within the production kitchen itself, but today the administrative dietitian often has to function as an external communicator involved in political, organisational and nutritional related activities.

This development has given our profession a new dimension and given us the opportunity to engage in processes and decisions that can help better the nutritional service for many people in the healthcare system both locally, nationally and globally. Thereby our voices have become louder in a society that more than ever needs to hear what we have to say.

**Dorthe Biilmann - Administrative dietitian graduate 2007 – JCVU Aarhus Denmark**

## Free fruit and vegetables in Norwegian Schools!

The Norwegian Government, which is a collaboration of Labour, Socialist Left Party and Centre Party ("red and green parties") has recently decided that all pupils in levels 8 to 10 (pupils aged 12 to 15 years) and all combined schools with levels from 1-10 will get fruit and vegetables free of charge during their school day, starting autumn 2007.



Since the mid-nineties, there has been an arrangement throughout Norway which has made it possible for all pupils to buy fruit in schools. Parents have to pay nkr. 2.50 (0.30€) daily and the authorities subsidise the scheme with 1 nkr (0.12€) per day.

15 % of pupils have used this opportunity to buy fruit or vegetables each day.

Even though there has been an increase in the total consumption of fruit and vegetables in recent years, studies show that less than half of all children and young people eat fruit and vegetables daily. Young people from low social classes have the lowest consumption of all.

Studies show that the arrangement of paying for fruit in schools is mainly used by children who already have some fruit in their daily diet. Offering free fruits and vegetables is seen as important in closing the gap of fruit consumption, despite the parents' income or social class.

It is assumed that the scheme will cost about 87 million nkr (10 mill €). If we are going to reach the aim of "Five a day" it will be of great importance to have easy access to good food. The provision of free fruits and vegetables is seen as a step towards the goal of providing free meals in schools.

**Kristina Monsbakken**



## Hot Topics In Research

In each edition of the newsletter we feature research undertaken by members of DIETS partner organisations.

Please send contributions to Judith Liddell, Thematic Network Manager at [network.manager@thematicnetworkdietetics.eu](mailto:network.manager@thematicnetworkdietetics.eu)

The DIETS Thematic Network would like to congratulate Dietitian, Sedegheh Gharagozian, who obtained her PhD degree in Clinical Nutrition on the 19th January 2007 from the University of Oslo, Faculty of Medicine, under the supervision of Professor Svein Olav Kolset.



### Extracellular matrix changes in diabetes mellitus

Diabetes mellitus can affect the vascular system, giving rise to complications. Nephropathy is a common complication of diabetes types 1 and 2. The filtering function of the kidneys is critically dependent on biosynthesis and turnover of the different extracellular matrix (ECM) component. Proteoglycans (PGs) are important constituents of the ECM, providing the basement membranes (BM) with negative charge and functioning as a filter against cationic molecules and proteins. Matrix components undergo continuous turnover, where matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) play a major role.

We determined if the diabetic condition could affect the activities of the MMPs in blood samples from subjects with diabetes type 1 compared with controls. We also investigated if hyperglycemia would affect the synthesis and release of MMPs and PGs in cultured primary human endothelial cells in vitro.

MMP-2 and MMP-p activities were measured in serum and urine samples from type 1 diabetic subjects at baseline and after 8 years of follow-up and in control samples using ELISA and zymography. Serum levels of MMP-9 and MMP-2 were significantly higher in patients with diabetes type 1 compared to controls. No differences in the levels of MMP inhibitors TIMP-1 and TIMP-2 were observed. When human umbilical vein endothelial cells (HUVEC) were incubated with high glucose (HG) or advanced glycation end product (AGE) N<sup>ε</sup>-(carboxymethyl)lysine bovine serum albumin (CML-BSA), decreased secretion of pro MMP-2 was observed. Lower levels of secreted PGs were found in HUVEC exposed to HG using gel chromatography after electrophoresis and immunoprecipitation.

These data support the hypothesis that the matrix accumulation observed in diabetes may be due to altered turnover of the endothelial ECM involving MMPs and PGs. Altered levels of PGs in cultures of primary HUVEC exposed to hyperglycaemia could contribute to ECM changes and thereby play a role in endothelial dysfunction. MMP measurements in serum and possibly in urine could be used as prognostic markers for matrix changes and possibly, for kidney changes seen in diabetes.

### Food at Work: The Effect of Shift Work on the Nutritional Behaviour of Female Nurses

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**Background:** Shift work may have a negative effect on the development of welfare related diseases such as cardiovascular diseases and obesity. This may be caused by a change in nutritional habits during shift work.

**Objective:** To measure the effects of shift work on the nutritional intake and nutritional behaviour of female nurses (n=36) in an academic hospital setting.

**Methods:** We examined dietary intakes using 48-hour food records. Attitude, intention and behaviour according to dietary intake were measured using a questionnaire. The participants were divided into a shift-work group (working day, evening and night shifts) (n=23) and a control group (only day shifts) (n =13). Dietary intakes were calculated using a validated computer programme (Becel 5.05, in Dutch). Differences in dietary intakes between groups and results of the questionnaire were analysed using the Mann-Whitney U test or Friedman test with SPSS for windows 11.5.

**Results:** The dietary intakes of both groups did not meet the Dutch guidelines for healthy dietary intakes. The intake of saturated and trans-fatty acids was higher, while the intake of dietary fibre was lower compared to recommended intakes. The reported attitude and intention according to healthy dietary intake did not effect the reported behaviour. The nutritional intake of nurses of the shift-work group was not significantly different or (un)healthier than the nutritional intake of nurses in the control group.

**Discussion:** Based on these results, a nutritional intervention on the intake of saturated and trans-fatty acids and dietary fibre in our participants seems desirable. During this intervention, attention should also be given to exercise.

## Clinical Management of Acute and Chronic Pancreatitis in Ireland

### Dietetics Researcher: Ms Sinead Duggan

A number of nutritional studies in patients with acute and chronic pancreatitis are currently underway in the Centre for Pancreatico-Biliary Diseases at the Adelaide and Meath Hospital incorporating the National Children's Hospital in Dublin, Ireland.

The feasibility and efficacy of bedside insertion of naso-jejunal (NJ) feeding tubes by a senior surgical dietitian in patients requiring specialised nutrition support for acute pancreatitis has been studied since August 2005. This initiative includes the production of a video on NJ tube bedside placement, which will be used for education purposes throughout Ireland and the UK and provides evidence for the extended role of the Dietitian working in clinical practice.



A prospective study on nutrition in chronic pancreatitis, focusing on bone mineral density, exocrine and endocrine function, anthropometric measures, fat soluble vitamin status, haematinics and pain has just begun. The study is in the patient recruitment stage, and Sinead hopes to recruit 50 subjects and 50 controls. This study will provide valuable data which will facilitate evidence based nutrition and dietetic management for this patient group.

Based on the work carried out to date, two abstracts have been accepted for presentation at the European Pancreas Club in Newcastle, UK in July 2007. These are:

1.) " The identification of severe nutritional deficiencies in a 27year old patient with a 5 year history of chronic pancreatitis - a case report"

This case report describes the severe malnutrition and significant sub clinical deficiencies of fat soluble vitamins observed in a 27year old patient with Chronic Pancreatitis. The provision of protein/energy and micronutrient supplements accompanied by appropriate pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy resulted in major improvements in the clinical status of this patient.

2.) " Early Jejunal feeding may be associated with a shorter length of stay in severe acute pancreatitis".

This is a 12 month review of acute pancreatitis showing that those fed within 4 days of admission to hospital had a shorter length of stay and did not need Intensive Care Unit admission compared to those fed 4 or more days after admission to hospital.

Sinead Duggan is a member of the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute.

Clare Corish

## Eating Disorders Evaluation Among Nutrition and Dietetics Students at Hacettepe University, Turkey

### E. Odabaşı, D. Ersan, A. Hasbay, B. Nursal Tosun

*\*This study was presented at the 5th International Nutrition and Dietetics Congress, 12-15 April 2006, Ankara, Turkey*

**Objectives:** This study was planned to evaluate the possible impact of nutrition knowledge on eating disorders among students undertaking professional nutrition and dietetics education.

**Methods:** The study population was composed of 212 voluntary female students (freshmen: 47, sophomores: 45, juniors: 46 and seniors: 74) from Hacettepe University, Nutrition and Dietetics Department. General characteristics, some anthropometric data, eating attitudes and self-evaluation were obtained using a questionnaire. Eating disorders and self-evaluation was assessed according to EAT-40 test and body cathexis scale, respectively. Statistical evaluation was done using the SPSS-11 statistical programme.

**Results:** While 17.5% of the students expressed that they were dieting before starting their professional education, 8.5% of them stated that they dieted at least once after starting their education. The percentages of dieting students were 2.1% for freshmen, 6.7% for sophomores, 10.9% for juniors and 12.2% for seniors; the difference

between the frequency of dieting practices between groups was not significant ( $p>0.05$ ) even the differences seem to be considerable. The median (min-max) of the EAT-40 scores for freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors were 18 (5-39), 17 (8-60), 18 (4-50) and 15 (6-50), respectively ( $p>0.05$ ). By considering the EAT-40 cut-off score of 30, 9.4% of the students (freshmen: 6.4%, sophomores: 13.3%, juniors: 13.0% and seniors: 6.8%,  $p>0.05$ ) were regarded as having abnormal eating attitudes and behaviours. The median (min-max) of the self-evaluation score was 148 (83-200) with no significant differences between the classes ( $p>0.05$ ). Moreover, when EAT-40 scores, self-evaluation scores and anthropometric data were considered together, no significant association was observed between these variable either in the full student cohort or in the different classes ( $p>0.05$ ).

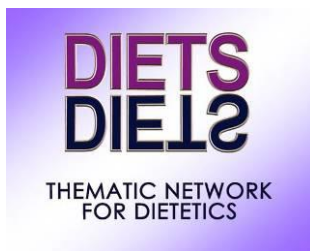
**Conclusion:** The results obtained indicate that the frequency of abnormal eating attitudes and behaviours is 9.4% among students undertaking professional nutrition and dietetics education. In this cross-sectional study, competence in nutrition knowledge was found to have no effect on the occurrence of abnormal eating attitudes and behaviours. However, this group should be monitored by a longitudinal study.

# 1st DIETS Conference

## The European Perspective on Placement Learning

### Friday 7 September 2007

The DIETS conference, on 7<sup>th</sup> September at the University of Plymouth, will bring together, for the first time, practising dietitians, practice placement trainers and campus-based teachers of dietetics from many different European countries. It will provide a wonderful opportunity for networking while advancing the work on education and training standards of dietitians.



We are delighted with the quality of speakers who have agreed to make presentations.

**Linda Renton** has 10 years experience of working with the Thematic Network for Occupational Therapy and will give us an insight into the professional opportunities presented by DIETS.

**Ruth Young**, a reader in Health Policy Evaluation at Kings College London and a Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the European Health Management Association will give an expert opinion on competency of the European healthcare workforce

**Inger-Margrethe Jensen** has many years experience in working with the Tuning agenda to develop nursing competencies and can help us to begin to work out competencies for dietetics, while **Brian Tobin**, Professor and Founding Chair of the Department of Basic Medical Science Education and coordinator of Nutrition Science Research in El Paso, Texas will update us on developments in life long learning.

Our seminars, led by members of the DIETS Education and Practice Working Group, will give us all the opportunity to discuss the preliminary outcomes of



the visits, namely identifying best practice and quality indicators, introducing evidence-based health care and working out how to develop the skills of practice placement trainers. It would be particularly helpful if all those who were involved in a DIETS visit, or wish to be in future, would attend this conference.

### Sharing Innovation in Placement Learning

All DIETS delegates are welcome to attend the conference “**Sharing innovation in placement learning**” on 6<sup>th</sup> September. This conference is organised by the Centre for Excellence in Professional Placement Learning (CEPPL), University of Plymouth.



Both conferences should be useful to everyone who is involved in dietetics: teachers, practice placement trainers, practicing dietitians, students and policy makers.

We look forward to welcoming you to beautiful Plymouth, so that you can play an active part in the advancement of the DIETS network.



# Placement Learning Double Bill

1 Theme  
2 Conferences  
1 Venue

6/7 September 2007

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH, UK



cepl and DIETS: working in partnership to improve practice learning



Thursday 6 September 2007

## Sharing Innovation in Placement Learning

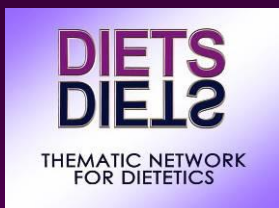
Organised by the **Centre for Excellence in Professional Placement Learning (Cepl)**  
University of Plymouth

- Introductory keynote: The work of Cepl – sharing best practice
- Morning and afternoon workshop sessions on key aspects of placement learning including a focus on:
  - Preparing and training staff supporting students in practice
  - Promoting disability equality and access for students
  - Assessment in practice
  - Using objective structured clinical examinations
  - Monitoring and enhancing placement quality
  - Evaluation research in placement learning and teaching
  - Cepl Innovation Fund Project Activities



Register at [www.placementlearning.org](http://www.placementlearning.org) or e-mail [cepl@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:cepl@plymouth.ac.uk)

£99\*  
for both days  
or £65 each  
(day rate)



Friday 7 September 2007

## Competence in Healthcare Education - the European Agenda

Organised by **DIETS – Thematic Network for Dietetics.**

- Health in Europe - why we need to have a competent healthcare workforce
- The Tuning agenda – significance to ensuring healthcare competence
- The role and scope of Thematic Networks
- A new Thematic Network – introducing DIETS
- Life Long Learning; how can healthcare practitioners remain competent
- Seminars:
  - Identifying best practice in practical placement training
  - What are the quality indicators for practical education?
  - How to develop the skills of practice placement trainers
  - Is all health care practice evidence-based?



\* One member of each DIETS partner organisation will be exempt from DIETS conference fees and will be able to claim a financial contribution towards staff costs.



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