

Excerpt from *Vision 2020*¹, an insert in the *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*, Volume 69, Number 2, Summer 2008.

1. Leaders in promoting health

Dietitians are relied on for their *leadership* in promoting health and wellness. Our food and nutrition knowledge is translated into practical advice that helps Canadians achieve healthy weights and prevent chronic diseases. Dietitians' unique expertise has made a difference for the health of Canadians in all walks of life.

In 2020, dietitians will be...

- Agents of change in the food supply and food and nutrition policy
- Members of a multi-faceted profession, with leaders in food, nutrition and health systems and specialists in health promotion and chronic disease prevention and management
- Working collaboratively with teams in all communities to implement innovative strategies to improve access to personally acceptable, nutritious, safe foods for all
- The 'go-to' providers of gold standard resources for the public, for health professionals, for decision-makers on matters of food and nutrition.

2. Roles are diverse, rewarding and novel

Dietitians are performing and contributing to the full potential of their scope of practice, using their most advanced skills and knowledge in new *roles* and new settings. They are accessed as often in the community as in institutional settings and across many sectors of the economy. Dietitians lead on new frontiers in the application of food and nutrition science and technology from the farm gate to the table, as team members, policy planners, practice-based researchers, educators, facilitators and managers. The health professional entrepreneur, business owner, private practitioner and group practices fully participate on inter-professional teams across the continuum of Canada's health system. Exploration and discovery is an element of every-day practice.

In 2020, dietitians will be...

- Champions of healthy eating skills for planning, purchasing and preparing foods for diverse cultural preferences
- Leaders in all aspects of food systems, including food policy, food service management, food production and marketing
- Knowledge brokers who clarify the practical questions, undertake practice research activities and translate science into best practices
- Policy makers supporting communities to strengthen personal, household and community food security and improve population health
- Specialists in assessing and addressing the food and nutrition needs of patients with complex health problems

3. Self-directing and self-renewing professionalism

Novel approaches and products are abundant. Professionals with leadership roles, such as dietitians, reflect on 'what is the right thing to do or what should be done', rather than simply on 'what can be done.' Despite intense competition for consumer attention, the profession retains the highest credibility and consumer confidence rating for food and nutrition advice.

In 2020...

- Ethical matters are centre stage at professional meetings and the profession's ethics keep pace with emerging technologies and scientific advances in the Canadian context
- Dietitians assess, diagnose, intervene and evaluate nutrition problems for individuals, families, communities and organizations in partnership with the client
- New discoveries, technological advances and swift communications are met head-on by a comprehensive, evidence-based, on-line knowledge system created and shared by Canadian dietitians over the prior 15 years
- All members of the profession see themselves as educators for the profession -- as mentors, preceptors and builders of the knowledge base

4. Dietetics education is accessible, flexible, inclusive and innovative

To fulfill leadership expectations across the broad expanse of our scope of practice, dietetics education meets the aspirational standards of the profession, nationally and internationally, and fosters academic and research careers need to advance our unique body of knowledge. The capacity in dietetics education accommodates all those seeking a career in the Canadian dietetic profession. Lifelong learning is the culture of our profession.

In 2020...

- Academic and practicum programs are integrated, accessible and accredited by the profession
- Programs to assist internationally education dietitians prepare for Canadian practice are accessible throughout Canada
- National approaches to education and accreditation enhance access to leading-edge resources and expertise
- Diverse and advanced options support more academics, scholars and researchers to meet the leadership expectations of the profession
- Dietitians are equipped for inter-professional practice. Educators, scholars, researchers and practitioners are adding to the body of knowledge for inter-professional practice and education
- The majority augment their comprehensive undergraduate dietetics education with advanced degrees leading to careers in senior roles in health services, government, research, education, communications, agri-food business and industry.

¹*A Vision for Dietitians in 2020. Leadership by Dietitians of Canada Board of Directors. 'Eye on the Future' background reports (2007) created through a broad consultation process with dietitians and other stakeholders provided the foundations for Vision 2020.*