



Nutrition Society – News Bits

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The Nutrition Society of South Africa is a scientific organisation and the main aims are to advance the scientific study of nutrition; to promote objective dissemination of knowledge related to nutrition; and to promote strategies for the improvement of nutritional well-being.

Registration of Nutritionists

Progress has been made with regard to the registration of Nutritionists as witnessed in the publication of 'Regulations relating to the qualifications for registration of Nutritionists' in the *Government Gazette* No. 30075 of 20 July 2007. This has been a difficult and slow process, but we do believe that the final result will contribute towards appropriately trained and registered nutritionists who can assist the country to address nutrition-related problems. Comments on the proposed register can be addressed to the Director-General: Health, Private Bag X828, Pretoria, 0001, for attention: Director: Human Resource Stakeholders. The closing date for comments was originally 20 September 2007, but late submissions will be accepted.

A copy of the official documentation that will be governing the registration of nutritionists, i.e. the 'Minimum competencies for entry level nutritionists', can be obtained from the Professional Board for Dietetics. A meeting facilitated by the HPCSA between the Professional Board for Dietetics

and heads or representatives of educational institutions and clinical/provincial managers will take place on 8 November 2007 in Kempton Park and will discuss, among other items, the registration of Nutritionists.

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(2007/8)*

Public Health Nutrition Symposium 2007

The Western Cape Branch of the Nutrition Society of South Africa (NSSA) in partnership with the South African Medical Research Council (MRC) hosted a one-day Symposium on Public Health Nutrition on 16 March 2007. This Symposium was held at the MRC conference centre in Parow, Cape Town, and brought together scientists, nutritionists, dietitians, policy planners, students and other key role players to forge dialogue aimed at advancing knowledge about the role of nutrition in disease prevention and health promotion. The symposium was a huge



Participants attending the Public Health Nutrition Symposium hosted by the NSSA on 16 March 2007 at the Medical Research Council, Cape Town.

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success and received a remarkable response with more than 120 delegates from academia, industry and the private sector from the various provinces attending, some from as far away as Namibia. The Symposium provided delegates with up-to-date information on nutrition research and the planning, managing, delivering, and evaluation of nutrition services and programmes relevant to the needs of the population and to putting them into context to help address today's nutrition challenges and opportunities.

Ten keynote speakers from Government, academia and the MRC shared their perspectives on nutrition science and successful healthy living strategies. The topics included the following:

- The need for context-specific health and nutrition research, policies and interventions.
- The Integrated Nutrition Program and the Millenium Development Goals.
- Towards understanding the functioning of the national school nutrition programme in the Western Cape.
- The role of nutrition in HIV/AIDS.
- Nutrition and dietary factors as modulators of human carcinogenesis.
- Dietary changes and the health transition in South Africa.
- Lifestyle modification in the prevention of non-communicable disease: Participatory action research.

- The use of food composition tables in public health nutrition.
- Community nutrition in health 2010: Implications for scope of practice and training.
- Research, training and advocacy to address child hunger and undernutrition.

The message was clear that healthy lifestyles needed to be adopted and that research translation specific to the needs of the population needed to be prioritised. The level of deliberations also opened doors to new perspectives and research questions using good nutrition as a means of maintaining health and preventing disease.

The organising committee wishes to acknowledge the MRC for providing sponsorship to host the conference, the Western Cape Department of Health, Directorate: Comprehensive Health Programs, Sub-directorate: Integrated Nutrition Program for providing attendees with nutrition-related information packs, and Unilever SA (Pty) Ltd for providing refreshments. It is hoped that with further financial support such a symposium could be organised on a yearly basis.

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