

# House of Delegates Backgrounder February 2021 Implementation of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs): Customizing to Meet Diverse Needs



The topic of Diversity and Inclusion is a complex and multifaceted critical issue that needs to be addressed by our profession. To that end, the House of Delegates (HOD) is devoting the 2020-21 program year to dialogue and action addressing various aspects of this issue. In collaboration with the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee, the House Leadership Team determined the release of the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs)<sup>1</sup> provided an opportune moment for the HOD to address the critical issue question:

How can the Academy and nutrition and dietetics practitioners support and inform the translation of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans to be applicable to all?

### HOD Meeting Objectives

1. Understand the process involved in developing the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the role played by the Academy and its members.
2. Determine strengths and opportunities for improvement for making DGA resources more applicable to all.
3. Identify populations not adequately served by current iterations of DGAs, MyPlate and associated educational tools.
4. Create a framework to guide development of tools and resources for translation of DGAs for diverse groups.

Background Materials:	
Please review the following information to prepare for the February 2021 HOD dialogue. This information is not repeated in the document.	
Required Readings	Optional Readings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 - Executive Summary</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">MyPlate Resources</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dietary Guidelines Most Popular Questions</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Academy Issue Brief: Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities and Chronic Disease (NEW!)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Academy Commends Evidence-Based 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Notes Opportunities for Future Updates</a> (January 15, 2021)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Academy Submits Recommendations for Dietary Guidelines Scientific Report</a> (August 14, 2020)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Academy President Provides Oral Comments on Scientific Report of 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee</a> (August 11, 2020)</li> <li>• <a href="#">A Systems Approach to Accelerating Nutrition and Health Equity, HOD Backgrounder Fall 2020</a></li> </ul>

This topic affects nutrition and dietetics practitioners across all practice areas. The DGAs serve as a foundation for nutrition policies and programs across the United States, many of the programs in which nutrition and dietetics practitioners work in or volunteer their efforts. While the United States Department and Agriculture (USDA) develops some consumer resources, such as MyPlate, the agency sees it as the responsibility of health care providers, such as the Academy, to get out the message and develop tools/resources. The Academy and its members are positioned to sensitively and successfully translate dietary guidance across all populations.

Although the new guidelines reflect many of the Academy's suggestions, they do not include important Academy recommendations designed to accelerate nutrition and health equity, including:

- Considering the guidelines' recommendations through a health equity lens.
- Offering substantive, strategic recommendations tailored to health care professionals, industries, community groups, federal and state governments, and others responsible for either implementing the guidelines or facilitating the public's adoption of them.

### Current Academy Activities and Initiatives

The topic of nutrition and health equity is not new to the Academy; however, now is the time to build on initiatives to accelerate progress toward achieving nutrition and health equity for all.

#### **Academy Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

The Academy encourages diversity and inclusion by striving to recognize, respect and include differences in ability, age, creed, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, size, and socioeconomic characteristics in the nutrition and dietetics profession.

- Per the SOPs/SOPPs for RDNs and NDTRs, "assess[ing] the nutrition-related health needs of patients/clients/populations, considering other factors affecting nutrition and health status (e.g., culture, ethnicity, and social determinants of health) and develop[ing] priorities, goals and objectives" is a cornerstone of nutrition and dietetic practice.<sup>2</sup>
- The Academy's Strategic Plan includes three focus areas and impact goals in (1) Prevention and Well-being, (2) Health Care and Health Systems, and (3) Food and Nutrition Safety and Security, as well as strategy areas. These focus areas, impact goals, and strategy areas include items designed to reduce nutrition and health disparities.<sup>3</sup>
- Through its visioning process, the Council on Future Practice (CFP) released the *Change Drivers and Trends Driving the Profession: A Prelude to the Visioning Report 2017*.<sup>4</sup> Embracing America's Diversity and Population Health and Health Promotion Become Priorities are two Change Drivers relevant to the topic.
- The Academy Board of Directors approved the organization's Healthful Eating Stance in April 2020.<sup>5</sup>

"The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics believes the foundation of a healthful lifestyle is a pattern of eating nutrient-rich foods in appropriate portion sizes, combined with regular physical activity. Credentialed nutrition and dietetics practitioners use the best available science to develop personalized healthful eating recommendations for all people at every stage of life. A registered dietitian nutritionist is **the** expert source for

customizing an eating plan based on a person's health status, culture and personal preferences."

- The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics forms alliances, which includes long and ongoing participation as a National Strategic Partner with MyPlate and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025.<sup>6</sup>
- The Academy's Policy Initiatives and Advocacy team is forming a DGA Implementation Group to explore: incorporating implementation science into the DGAs; working with USDA and other agencies to implement the DGAs into government programs such as school nutrition and military bases; and how to get individuals to implement the DGAs into their daily lives.<sup>7</sup>
- The Academy's Strategic Communications Team, in conjunction with the Nutrition Information Services Team and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, have created materials for National Nutrition Month® with the theme "Personalize Your Plate".<sup>8</sup>
- The Academy Publications Team is currently revising the book, *Cultural Food Practices*.<sup>9</sup> The team is also considering development of other resources, such as expanding the Dish Up a Healthy Meal series and the guidelines developed by the HOD can help inform their work moving forward.<sup>10</sup>
- The Nutrition Care Manual (NCM) team has been using customer survey data to inform continuous updates to the NCM suite of products to better meet the needs of RDNs and NDTRs serving diverse populations. The Boards of Editors for all NCM products will be actively engaged in updating clinical content, as well as brainstorming methods to narrow accessibility (cultural/diversity) gaps.<sup>11</sup>
  - Since 2018, Nutrition Care Manual (NCM) and the Pediatric Nutrition Care Manual (PNCM) released 40 new or updated cultural foods sections. Detailed analytics revealed users are spending less than one percent of time on the cultural foods sections when compared to client education or condition sections, which has cemented efforts to prioritize cultural food menus within the client education handouts.
  - Approximately 60 client education handouts are being sent for translation.
  - Data from recent users' surveys conducted in Fall 2020 indicate:
    - Top translation requests are Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese.
    - The top cultural food menus requested are Hispanic, Black/African American, Muslim/Halal, and Asian Indian.

Efforts across the Academy have laid a strong foundation for working internally and externally to translate the new DGAs to meet diverse needs. Results of the HOD dialogue will be shared with the appropriate Academy organizational units to advance their work to arm members with the tools and resources needed in their daily work, whether it be directly through the Academy or through the Academy's work with the USDA and the National Strategic Partners. And finally, individual members should be able to apply results of the HOD's dialogue to their efforts to make the DGA's applicable to the populations they serve. Together the Academy and its members can be leaders in accelerating nutrition and health equity through appropriately sensitive translation of the DGAs.

## References

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020. Available at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov). Accessed February 3, 2021.
2. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2017 Scope of Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. [https://jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672\(17\)31624-6/fulltext](https://jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672(17)31624-6/fulltext). Accessed February 3, 2021.
3. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The Academy's Strategic Plan. 2017; <https://www.eatrightpro.org/leadership/academy-policies/strategic-plan/what-is-the-academys-strategic-plan>. Accessed February 3, 2021.
4. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Visioning Process. Change Drivers and Trends Driving the Profession: A Prelude to the Visioning Report 2017. 2015. <https://www.eatrightpro.org/-/media/eatrightpro-files/leadership/volunteering/committee-leader-resources/changedriversandtrendsdrivingtheprofessionreport.pdf?la=en&hash=72EFFF0E3FFFA5D6F103D77F30B2316DB3148EED>. Accessed February 3, 2021.
5. Healthy Eating Stance Announcement. April 2020. <https://www.eatrightpro.org/news-center/member-updates/from-our-leaders/healthful-eating-stance-announcement>. Accessed February 3, 2021.
6. USDA MyPlate, US Department of Agriculture. <https://www.myplate.gov/professionals/partner-us>. Accessed February 3, 2021.
7. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Policy, Initiatives and Advocacy. <https://www.eatrightpro.org/membership/member-benefits/policy-intitatives-and-advocacy>. Accessed February 3, 2021.
8. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. National Nutrition Month. [https://www.eatright.org/food/resources/national-nutrition-month?\\_ga=2.166708030.122222496.1612480827-1279114837.1573273446](https://www.eatright.org/food/resources/national-nutrition-month?_ga=2.166708030.122222496.1612480827-1279114837.1573273446). Accessed February 3, 2021.
9. EatrightSTORE. <https://www.eatrightstore.org/product-type/books/cultural-food-practices>. Accessed February 3, 2021.
10. EatrightSTORE. <https://www.eatrightstore.org/product-type/brochures-handouts/dish-up-a-healthy-meal>. Accessed February 3, 2021.
11. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Nutrition Care Manual®. <https://www.nutritioncaremanual.org/about-us>. Accessed February 3, 2021.