

# NUTRITION COUNSELING

NTD 412

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# COURSE OUTLINE

- Definition and concepts of counseling.
- Roles of Dietitians/ Nutritionists, dietary counseling for target patients, application of Behavioral Change Communication for healthy living.
- Counselor–Patient relationship, Problems/Barriers to Communication in relation to patients.
- Development of Personal philosophy to problem solving.
- Different approaches to counseling; Steps in dietary counseling.
- The concept of change: The nature of dietary change, implication of dietary change, adapting to dietary change.
- Patients interviewing techniques. Follow up.

# DEFINITION AND CONCEPTS OF COUNSELING.

# DEFINITIONS - COUNSELING

- Counseling may be defined as a process that assists people in learning about themselves, their environment, and the methods of handling their roles and relationships.
- Counseling—the art of providing listening, advice, guidance, or direction regarding an action or decision to help a person change.
- Counseling is a science with a body of literature that assesses techniques and their effectiveness. It is also an art; the skills of the counselor allow the counselor to customize the counseling to the individual client.

# DEFINITIONS – NUTRITION COUNSELING

- “the provision of individualized advice and guidance to individuals, who are at nutritional risk, because of their health or nutritional history, dietary intake, medication use, or chronic illness, about options and methods for improving nutritional status, performed by a health professional in accordance with state law and policy”.
- Nutritional counseling is a service, which may be provided. It is an important component of a nutritional care program in which a Registered Dietitian gives professional guidance to an individual as part of a physician’s treatment plan. The service includes:
  - a. Assessing current nutrition status
  - b. Developing a written plan for appropriate behavior modifications
  - c. Reviewing the plan with the individual to ensure understanding
  - d. Planning follow-up nutrition counseling and evaluating progress toward nutrition goals.

# NUTRITION COUNSELING



- is a two-way interaction through which a client and a trained counselor interpret the results of nutrition assessment, identify individual nutrition needs and goals, discuss ways to meet those goals, and agree on next steps.
- Nutrition counselors may be nurses or other facility-based providers or community health workers or volunteers.

# AIM OF NC

- Nutrition counseling aims
- to help clients understand important information about their health and
- To enable client focus on practical actions to address nutrition needs,
- As well as understand the benefits of behavior change.

# What makes counseling effective?

- Optimal counseling contributes to successful health and nutrition outcomes.
- Ideally, counseling should be done in a place where the client feels comfortable and has privacy.
- Counselors should be trained to understand and use support materials such as flipcharts, counseling cards, take-home brochures, data collection forms, and referral forms effectively



# Tips for Effective Counseling

- Do more listening than talking.
- Ask open-ended questions, not just questions clients can answer with “yes” or “no.”
- Repeat what clients say to make sure you understood them correctly.
- Show interest in and empathy for clients’ problems and situations.
- Avoid judging clients.
- Listen to what clients think and respect their feelings, even if information may need correction.
- Recognize and praise what clients are doing correctly.
- Suggest actions that are possible for clients given their situations.
- Give only a little bit of information at a time.
- Use simple language.
- Give suggestions, not commands.

# Ethical principles for counseling

1. **Provide accurate information.** Clients should be able to trust that counselors' words and actions are truthful and reliable.
2. **Keep client information confidential.** Clients need to know that counselors will keep their information confidential except as needed for their treatment or recovery.
3. **Respect clients' autonomy.** Clients have the right to make their own decisions without coercion.
4. **Keep clients' interests in mind.** Advise them based on professional assessment and offer alternatives if you cannot help them.
5. **Do no harm.** Avoid any interventions that could harm or exploit clients emotionally, financially, or medically.
6. **Be fair.** Treat all clients fairly and without discrimination. Respect clients' rights, dignity, and individual difference.

# Skills and Attributes of the Nutrition Counselor

**Qualities** of good counselors and educators include: empathy, positive regard, and genuineness, as well as knowledge of nutritional sciences

**Skills include:**

**1. Cultural Competency:** it involves cultural sensitivity or awareness.

**2. Asking Questions**

“We are here to talk about your dietary change experiences to this point. Could you start at the beginning and tell me how it has been for you?”

“What are some things you would like to discuss about your dietary changes so far? What do you like about them? What don't you like about them?” -

**3. Building Rapport**

# Skills and Attributes of the Nutrition Counselor

**4. Reflective Listening:** involves a guess at what the person feels and is phrased as a statement, not a question. E.g

Client: I really do try, but I am retired and my husband always wants to eat out. How can I stay on the right path when that happens?

Nutrition counselor: You feel frustrated because you want to follow the diet, but at the same time you want to be spontaneous with your husband. Is this correct?

Client: I feel like I let you down every time I come in to see you. We always discuss plans and I never follow them. I almost hate to come in.

Nutrition counselor: You are feeling like giving up. You haven't been able to modify your diet, and it is difficult for you to come into our visits when you haven't met the goals we set. Is this how you are feeling? (reflective listening) Can you think of a specific time when you feel that you had an opportunity to achieve your plan, but didn't?

# Reflective Listening



# Skills and Attributes of the Nutrition Counselor

**5. Affirming:** When the counselor affirms someone, there is alignment and normalization. E.g:

- “I know that it is hard for you to tell me this. But thank you.”
- “Many people I talk with express the same problems. I can understand why you are having difficulty.”

**6. Summarizing:** The nutrition counselor periodically summarizes the content of what the client has said by covering all the key points.