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Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative: A Fundamental Part of Our Global Impact

“Have a global impact in eliminating all forms of malnutrition” is a key principle of the Academy’s Strategic Plan, which guides how we are transforming the next century of nutrition and dietetics practice.¹ Our current efforts particularly focus on the hospital setting, where more than 30 percent of patients in the United States experience malnutrition.²

At the heart of our work is the Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative (MQii), a collaborative initiative between the Academy and Avalere Health and other stakeholders. The MQii aims at improving care and outcomes for hospitalized adults aged 65 and older by providing a series of nutrition-focused resources. At its center, is the Global Malnutrition Composite Score (GMCS) electronic clinical quality measure (eCQM).³

As a past Board liaison on the Academy’s Quality Management Committee, I had the privilege of receiving regular briefings on many MQii accomplishments, and this month I would like to share some of them with you.

Recent developments of the incredible MQii initiative include:

- **December 2020:** The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published the final “Measures Under Consideration List” that included the MUC20-0032 Global Malnutrition Composite Score.
- **June 2021:** The National Quality Forum’s (NQF) Consensus Standards Approval Committee unanimously endorsed the GMCS (NQF #3592). Endorsement indicates a measure is “best in class.”
- **April 2022:** The GMCS eCQM was included in the CMS Inpatient Prospective Payment Systems proposed rule for acute care and long-term care hospitals for FY2023. CMS is proposing to adopt the GMCS eCQM as part of the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program measure set for which hospitals can self-select beginning with the CY2024 reporting period/FY2026 payment determination and for subsequent years.³

The GMCS is a composite measure made up of the components outlined in the figure on this page. As registered dietitian nutritionists, we play a critical part in the GMCS: The RDN conducts a nutrition assessment of patients identified at-risk of malnutrition; uses clinical indicators that inform a malnutrition medical diagnosis documented by a

physician; provides treatment recommendations to address nutritional status; and ultimately follows up with a nutrition care plan.

Whether in the hospital or in the community, RDNs continue to be vital practitioners of interdisciplinary teams. As health care leaders recognize the urgency of malnutrition care and adopt the GMCS, positive changes to RDN clinical staffing, optimal malnutrition outcomes,⁴ and RDN progression both in the clinical and public health sectors can only follow suit.



I encourage all credentialed nutrition and dietetics practitioners to engage hospital leadership to adopt the GMCS and support their RDN colleagues’ efforts. More information about the MQii can be found at <https://malnutritionquality.org/> including an MQii Toolkit <https://malnutritionquality.org/mqii-toolkit> and the GMCS <https://www.eatrightpro.org/practice/quality-management/quality-initiatives/global-malnutrition-composite-score>. These tools mutually support one another: The toolkit provides practical, interdisciplinary tools and resources to help hospitals establish best practices and to adopt the GMCS to evaluate their success in meeting standards of care.

I hope all practitioners and members will join me in taking part in the Academy's Quarterly Spotlight on Malnutrition

Malnutrition Resources from the Academy

- Evidence Analysis Library
- *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*
 - Malnutrition
 - Pediatric Malnutrition
 - Adult/Senior Malnutrition
 - Special Population Malnutrition
- Malnutrition Coding
- Nutrition Care Manual
- Nutrition Care Process and Terminology
- Nutrition Focused Physical Exam Hands-on Training Workshop

events, which are devoted to raising awareness and promoting RDNs' crucial role in identifying and treating malnutrition. We should all be proud of the amazing work that is being done to fulfill our strategic goal of having a global impact on improving this all-too-common health issue.

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References

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4. Arensberg MB, D'Andrea C, Khan M. Clinical Leadership and Innovation Help Achieve Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative Success. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2019;119(9) Suppl 2:S49-S55.