

## 2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The *Professional Development Plan* is based on an applicant's self assessment, and addresses those areas where an applicant identified she/he needs to take action to address one or more indicators within a Standard of Practice.

The professional development planning process consists of five activities:

1. Record a minimum of three Standards of Practice and Indicators to work on
2. Identify learning goals to address each standard/ indicator as it relates to practice
3. Identify a minimum of two learning activities to achieve each learning goal
4. Describe how your new knowledge/ skills will contribute to your practice of dietetics
5. Indicate the progress stage of each goal/learning activities

Applicants may find that consulting with mentors, peers or colleagues helps to develop their professional development plan, and in identifying learning activities as information is shared about educational activities, events and services.

### Actions

Applicants:

- Complete a *Professional Development Plan* based on their *Self Assessment Relative to Standards of Practice*.

### Using the *Professional Development Plan*

#### 1. Recording Standards of Practice and Indicators

Applicants record the standards/ indicators they felt required attention in the first column, on the right side of their *Professional Development Plan* form.

Applicants must record at least three standards/ indicators. Applicants may choose the same standard of practice, but with three different indicators or three different standards and indicators.

#### 2. Identifying learning goals

A learning goal is identified for each standard/indicator the applicant chose in step 1. Each goal relates to a specific topic/area of practice registrants wish to maintain, develop or enhance.

#### 3. Identifying learning activities to address the learning goals

For each learning goal, applicants identify a minimum of two learning activities. These cover the full range of formal and informal activities such as attending educational programs, reviewing current research, and attending in-service events. Applicants provide specific details for each planned learning activity such as the title and date of a lecture, or a specific area of internet research.

- Examples of formal learning:
  - university, college or other accredited courses
  - accredited certificate programs
  - self-directed or distance learning programs
  - residency and fellowship programs

- Examples of informal learning:
  - published articles
  - internet or literature research
  - professional reading, relevant films or videotapes
  - in-service educational experiences
  - research projects and presentations of research results
  - workshops, conferences, exhibits or lecture seminars
  - study, journal or discussion groups
  - case studies/case presentations
  - professional interactions with others including preparation for and participation in mentor or preceptor roles
  - mentorship/coaching/shadowing with other professionals

#### 4. Describing contribution to practice

Applicants briefly describe how achieving each learning goal will help maintain, develop or enhance their practice of dietetics.

#### 5. Indicating progress

Progress tracking allows applicants to rate their learning goals/activities' progress according to five different stages:

- Preliminary progress
- Intermediate progress
- Substantial progress
- Completed goal
- Suspended goal

#### Example

To base program and service planning decisions on client feedback, you want to learn to create and use more effective client surveys.

- Under *Standard/Indicator* you record *Standards of Practice 3, Indicator 2*,
- Under *Learning Goal*, you write: "I want to learn about the best approach to develop client survey forms to receive feedback about my counseling."
- Under *Learning Activities* you list: "1. Liaise with colleagues for client survey references; 2. Research/ analyse survey references and select appropriate format for client group; 3. Develop survey and implement with clients; 4. Review survey results and select new counselling approaches if unsatisfactory results; 5. Implement changes to counselling if necessary, re-survey clients/ look at return rates."
- Under *Contribution to practice* you could write: "Reviewing surveys and tips on development will help me improve my own client surveys with the goal of improving my private practice client return rates."
- Completion of activity 1 would be preliminary progress; completion of activities 1 and 2 would be intermediate progress; completion of activities 1 to 3 would be substantial progress, etc.

Refer to Appendix 1 for an example of a completed *Professional Development Plan* from the perspective of a dietitian planning to return to clinical practice.