

Practice Guidelines Co-signing Dietetic Students' Records

Introduction

Under the *Health Professions Act*, the College is required to set standards for competent practice to ensure public safety.¹ Ethical standards for professional behaviour are outlined in the CDBC Code of Ethics, Standard 1c states: “*Assume responsibility for services provided by those under your supervision.*”²

Registrants, which include both Full Registrants and Temporarily Registered Dietitians, who agree to supervise dietetic students are responsible for the care the student provides and accountable to the client. Accountability is confirmed by the Registered Dietitian (RD and RD(T)) co-signing a student's entries in a client's record.

Co-signing Guidelines for Registrants Supervising Dietetic Students

1. Supervisory preparation

Before supervising a dietetic student, the Registrant obtains information about a dietetic student's knowledge, skill and ability level.

2. Supervisory level

The Registrant sets their supervision level on a case-by-case basis, depending on the dietetic student's education and experience and the client's medical and nutritional complexity. Note: a Temporarily Registered Dietitian (RD(T)) may not supervise a full Registrant, per CDBC bylaw 45(7a)³. An RD(T) who has failed the CDRE may not supervise, nor co-sign student records.

3. Observation of client care

When the dietetic student or client case requires direct observation, the Registrant supervising ensures they is present during the dietetic student's session with the client. The Registrant intervenes and corrects the care being provided if necessary and appropriate for client safety.

4. Co-signing the dietetic student's entry in the client record

Whether or not client care is observed, the supervising Registrant discusses the care provided to the client and reviews the dietetic student client record entry to ensure appropriate care is provided.

- If the supervising Registrant observes the dietetic student providing care and agrees with the care provided and the dietetic student's signed record entry, the Registrant co-signs the record.
- If the Registrant doesn't see the care provided, they review the record entry and if both the stated care provided and the record entry are appropriate and accurate, the Registrant co-signs the record.
- Whether or not the Registrant sees the care provided, if the record entry is determined to be incomplete/unsigned, the Registrant adds, or observes the dietetic student adding, an explanatory or corrective entry and/ or signature, and then co-signs the record.

5. Co-signer's name and designation

A co-signer signs their full name or initials and “RD” or “RD(T)” in accordance with facility protocol.

References

- 1 [Health Professions Act](#), section 16(2)(d).
- 2 [CDBC Code of Ethics](#)
- 3 [CDBC Bylaws, section 45\(7a\)](#).