

2025 RD and DTR Job Task Analysis Results

Public Executive Summary

A Practice-Based Foundation for CDR Credentials



Introduction

The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) conducted a comprehensive Job Task Analysis (JTA) and role delineation study for the Registered Dietitian or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RD or RDN) and Dietetic Technician, Registered or Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered (DTR or NDTR) credentialing programs between October 2024 and June 2025.

The purpose of the study was to validate the knowledge, skills, and responsibilities required of newly credentialed practitioners and to provide empirical evidence supporting examination content, test specification development, and the distinct scopes of practice represented by the RD or RDN and DTR or NDTR credentials. The study was conducted using nationally recognized credentialing and psychometric practices consistent with standards for certification program development and maintenance.

Study Overview

The JTA employed a multi-phase methodology that included:

- Subject matter expert (SME) panel development and role delineation review
- Identification and refinement of job tasks and associated knowledge requirements
- National validation survey administration
- Quantitative and psychometric analyses
- Test specification development and validation

The national validation survey was administered from January through May 2025 and collected responses from practicing credential holders across diverse geographic regions, employment settings, and areas of professional practice.

A total of 3,259 individuals initiated the survey. Eligible participants included 2,718 RD or RDNs and 191 DTR or NDTRs. Final analyses were based on responses from 1,723 RD or RDNs and 122 DTR or NDTRs, representing participation from both credential populations.

RD or RDN Practice Analysis Results

The study confirmed that the RD or RDN credential reflects a broad scope of autonomous professional practice requiring competence in nutrition assessment, diagnosis, intervention planning, monitoring and evaluation, evidence-based practice, population health, food systems, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Analysis resulted in four validated content domains with associated test specification weights:

1. Fundamentals of Dietetics Practice: 23%
2. Community and Public Health Nutrition: 22%
3. Human Nutrition and Medical Nutrition Therapy: 40%
4. Food Science and Food Systems: 15%

These findings support examination content that reflects the responsibilities and decision-making expected of newly credentialed RD or RDN practitioners.

DTR or NDTR Practice Analysis Results

The study also confirmed a distinct DTR or NDTR role characterized by technical and operational responsibilities related to nutrition care implementation, community nutrition programming, foodservice operations, and client support activities.

Analysis resulted in three validated content domains with associated test specification weights:

1. Human Nutrition and Clinical Care for Individuals: 40%
2. Community Nutrition and Wellness: 30%
3. Management and Food Service Operations: 30%

The findings demonstrate that DTR or NDTR practice emphasizes implementation, operational support, nutrition education, foodservice management, and wellness activities within the established scope of practice for the credential.

Evidence Supporting Examination Validity

Content Validity

The study provides evidence that examination content is directly linked to contemporary professional practice.

Content domains, tasks, and knowledge requirements were developed and reviewed by representative panels of credentialed practitioners and subsequently validated through national survey data. Respondents evaluated the frequency and importance of practice activities and knowledge requirements, allowing examination specifications to be derived from empirical evidence regarding the responsibilities and competencies expected of a newly credentialed practitioner.

The resulting test specifications are therefore based on the tasks and knowledge judged by practicing professionals to be necessary for competent performance.

Representativeness of Practice

Survey respondents were drawn from the newly credentialed practitioner population and represented diverse practice areas, employment settings, and geographic regions, supporting the relevance of the findings to examination development.

Additionally, respondents reported that the tasks and knowledge statements included in the survey accurately reflected the requirements of their professional practice. The study provides evidence that examination content is directly linked to the practice expectations of newly credentialed practitioners.

Role Delineation

A central objective of the study was to evaluate and document the distinctions between the RD or RDN and DTR or NDTR credentials.

Results demonstrated clear and measurable differences in the responsibilities, expectations, and competencies associated with each credential.

The RD or RDN role is characterized by:

- Comprehensive nutrition assessment and diagnosis
- Development and management of nutrition interventions
- Clinical decision-making and evaluation
- Leadership and evidence-based practice responsibilities

The DTR or NDTR role is characterized by:

- Technical implementation of nutrition care activities
- Nutrition education and client support
- Community and wellness programming
- Foodservice management and operational responsibilities

These findings support the continued use of distinct examination content outlines and separate certification examinations for the two credentials.

Statistical and Psychometric Support

Psychometric analyses demonstrated strong internal consistency across survey rating scales, supporting the reliability of respondent ratings and the stability of study findings.

Frequency, importance, and criticality analyses were used to establish content priorities and examination weights. Subject matter experts subsequently reviewed these findings to ensure the final examination specifications accurately reflected professional practice while maintaining appropriate content representation across domains.

Implications for Certification Programs

The 2025 JTA serves as the evidentiary foundation for the RD or RDN and DTR or NDTR test specifications and supports the ongoing validity of certification decisions.

The study confirms that:

- Examination content is linked directly to the knowledge, skills, and responsibilities required of newly credentialed practitioners.
- Examination specifications are derived from systematic job task analysis data.
- Distinct bodies of knowledge and professional responsibilities exist for the RD or RDN and DTR or NDTR credentials.
- Certification examinations are based on validated content domains, tasks, and knowledge requirements identified by practicing professionals.

Conclusion

The 2025 Job Task Analysis provides a current, comprehensive, and empirically supported description of RD or RDN and DTR or NDTR practice as performed by newly credentialed practitioners. The study validates the content domains, tasks, and knowledge requirements assessed by the certification examinations and confirms clear role distinctions between the two credentials.

The findings establish a defensible foundation for examination development, support content validity of the certification programs, and provide evidence that the RD or RDN and DTR or NDTR examinations reflect current practice requirements for newly credentialed practitioners. As such, the study supports continued compliance with NCCA accreditation expectations for job task analysis, examination development, and ongoing credential maintenance.

Acknowledgement

The 2025 Job Task Analysis was conducted by CDR in partnership with Pearson Professional Assessments and involved contributions from subject matter experts and credentialed practitioners across the profession.