

**Board Certification as a Specialist in Gerontological Nutrition
Application Instructions**

Table of Contents

Introduction ----- 2

Journal Articles----- 2

Principles of Equal Opportunity----- 2

Confidentiality ----- 2

Specialty Examination ----- 3

Gerontological Nutrition Dietitian Definition ----- 3

Eligibility Requirements----- 3

Specialty Examination Dates and Locations ----- 4

Specialty Examination Fee ----- 4

Specialty Application Deadline ----- 4

Recertification ----- 5

Appeals Process----- 5

Instructions for Completing the Examination Application ----- 6



Introduction:

The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) invites you to apply for Board Certification as a Specialist in Gerontological Nutrition. Board Certified Specialists are Registered Dietitians (RDs) who have met established criteria and have successfully completed a specialty certification examination.

As a Board Certified Specialist, you will be recognized for your unique expertise and skills in the specialty practice area by your professional peers, the public, medical and allied health professionals and the media. You may be identified as a role model and mentor to other dietetics professionals. Qualified RDs use the designation Board Certified Specialist in Gerontological Nutrition, "RD, CSG". Benefits of Board Certification as Specialists in Gerontological Nutrition include:

- Specialty lapel pin
- Specialty embroidered patch
- Specialty certificate suitable for framing
- Specialty identification card
- Subscription to the Specialty List Serve
- Listing in the Online Specialists Directory
- Listing on CDR's website
- Copy of *You are the Food and Nutrition Expert: Tips and Tools to Prove It*
- Attainment of Specialty Certification in Gerontological Nutrition fulfills the 75 CPEU requirements for recertification as an RD (See the *Professional Development Portfolio Guide* for details).

Journal Articles:

If you would like more information about specialty certification, refer to the following articles:

Bogle, ML, Balogun L, Cassell J, Catakis A, Holler HJ, Flynn C. Achieving excellence in dietetics practice: certification of specialists and advanced-level practitioners. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 1993;93:149-150.

Bradley R, Young W, Ebbs P. Characteristics of advance-level dietetics practice: a model and empirical results. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 1993; 93: 196-202.

Bradley RT, Young WY, Ebbs P and Martin J. Specialty practice in dietetics: empirical models and results. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 1993;98: 1339-1353.

Leonberg B, Stivers Rops M. The current state of specialty practice in pediatric and renal nutrition. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 1998; 98: 1339-1353.

Principles of Equal Opportunity:

CDR, the credentialing agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is an equal opportunity organization and does not discriminate among candidates on the basis of race, creed, gender, religion, national origin, disability or marital status.

Confidentiality:

Information about candidates for testing and their examination results are considered confidential. Test question drafts and other materials used to create examination questions (except for test content outlines or reference lists) are secure and confidential. All such materials shall be kept in secure, locked storage, accessible only by

authorized personnel, and not disclosed to or shared with others. All questions written and materials developed for questions are considered a “work for hire,” and remain the property of CDR. Question writers are not allowed to conduct “review courses” or other programs designed to prepare candidates to take a CDR Specialty examination. Studies and reports concerning candidates will contain no information identifiable with any candidate, unless authorized by the candidate

Specialty Examination:

The examination for Board Certification as a Specialist in Gerontological Nutrition is developed and administered by CDR.

Subject matter experts contribute to the development and review of each specialty examination prior to its use.

These examinations are administered by computer at designated testing locations. The examination consists of 150 questions multiple choice and scenario based questions. Up to 20 of the 150 questions may be pretest questions that will not be used to compute your score. Pretesting is done to see how well items perform before they can be used in the scored portion of the examination.

The pretest questions cannot be distinguished from those that will be scored, so it is important that all questions are answered to the best of your ability. The examination content outline and reference list are available in this application booklet and on CDR’s website:

<http://www.cdrnet.org>.

Gerontological Nutrition Dietitian Definition:

Gerontological nutrition dietitians design, implement and manage safe and effective nutrition strategies to promote the quality of life and health for older adults. They work directly with older adults to provide optimal nutrition and food sources and information in a variety of settings (such as, hospitals, long term care, assisted living, home health care, food service industries, correctional facilities, community-based nutrition programs, governmental programs, related industries), or indirectly as documented by management, education or research practice linked specifically to gerontological nutrition.

Eligibility Requirements:

Minimum requirements for specialty certification are established and approved by CDR. In order to be eligible to become a Board Certified Specialist in Gerontological Nutrition, candidates must meet the following requirements:

- Current Registered Dietitian (RD) status by CDR.
- Maintenance of RD status with CDR, for a minimum of two years from original examination date (by specialty examination date).
- Documentation of 2,000 hours practice experience as an RD in the specialty area within the past five years (by the date the application is due). Related experience can include direct and indirect activities. **Please note:** certain education and professional experiences can be used as substitution for the

required 2,000 specialty practice hours up to a maximum of 40% (800 hours).

Specialty Examination Dates and Locations:

There are two windows of testing a year, one in the summer and one in the winter. Each window lasts three weeks. The computerized examinations are administered Monday through Friday within regular computer center hours at locations around the country. A general list of test center locations is available on CDR's website: <http://www.cdrnet.org>. You will be able to schedule your examination by calling a 1-800 number or by going online. More specific information regarding test centers and testing times will be sent to you once your application is processed and approved

Specialty Examination Fee:

The examination fee of \$250 must be submitted with the eligibility application. Checks, money orders, or credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover) are accepted. Checks or money orders should be made payable to the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

Refunds will be provided under the following guidelines:

- If you are ineligible to take the examination.
- A candidate who does not schedule his/her examination appointment during the current test administration window may have their application and examination fee transferred to the next administration free of charge

by contacting the Program Manager at CDR, 1-800/877-1600 ext. 4705 or specialists@eatright.org.

Candidate's eligibility and examination fee will only extend one test administration window.

- A candidate, who does not schedule his /her examination appointment after confirmation of eligibility, may request a full refund, if you do not wish to test during the current or subsequent test administration window. Requests for refunds must be made in writing and mailed, faxed or e-mailed to CDR. If you wish to take the examination again, you will need to resubmit an application and examination fee.
- A candidate who wishes to reschedule their examination, but fails to contact AMP at least four business days to the scheduled testing session will be required to pay a \$85 fee to reschedule the examination. This fee applies even if the candidate waits to the next test administration to reschedule their examination appointment. Please note examination eligibility will expire after the next test administration window. We will contact you if your application needs to be updated. Other requests for refunds must be made to CDR Specialty Certification Panel and are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Specialty Application Deadline:

All applications must be postmarked on or before the deadline date for candidates to be considered to take the specialty examination.

Incomplete or improperly submitted applications will be returned to the applicant and may cause the applicant to miss the postmark deadline. Copies of applications will not be accepted. A candidate is required to request and submit a new application for a subsequent examination administration. Candidates will be notified of eligibility status within three to four weeks of receipt of their application by CDR. Candidates who are eligible will also receive the candidate handbook and test center information, and instructions for scheduling an examination appointment.

The application forms/documents must be sent in one packet to:

Commission on Dietetic Registration
120 South Riverside Plaza
Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
Attn: Specialty Certification

Recertification:

At the end of the specialist five-year certification period, specialists who wish to recertify must be a current Registered Dietitian with CDR and:

- Successfully complete an eligibility application – including the required minimum number of specialty practice hours
- Successfully complete a specialty examination
- Submit an application fee

The reasoning for requiring recertification testing is that the Specialty Board Certification is a practice credential, a credential that represents to the public that

the certificant possesses the knowledge, skills and experience to function effectively as a specialist in that area. The nature of the knowledge and skills to practice at a specialty level is subject to change due to technological and scientific advances. Recertification testing helps to provide continuing assurance that the certified specialist has indeed maintained their knowledge in the specialty area.

Appeals Process:

Applicants may appeal a decision regarding certification eligibility or assessments results by following the process below:

1. Appeal of certification eligibility or assessment results
2. Written notification shall be submitted to the Program Manager within fourteen calendar days after receipt of notification of the adverse decision. The written appeal should include:
 - a. The stated appeal
 - b. The reason for the appeal (including relevant supporting materials)
 - c. Appellant's registration identification number, and
 - d. Appellants daytime phone number
 - e. The Program Manager will notify the individual of the decision of the Specialty Certification Panel within fourteen days of the decision. Notification of the decision will be sent mail.

- f. Should the Specialty Certification Panel grant an appeal on an issue that impacts the eligibility status or the examination scores of other candidates, a review or regarding will automatically be conducted. The Program Manager will notify the individuals of the review or the final decision within fourteen days of the decision.
3. Further written appeal and the reason for such an appeal of the decision of the Specialty Certification Panel shall be referred to the Commission on Dietetic Registration. For procedures, refer to the brochure *Appeals Procedure for Members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Credentialed Dietetic Practitioners, and Applicants*, Section V, C, The brochure can be obtained by calling CDR at 1-800/877-1600 ext. 5500.

Special Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities:

The Commission on Dietetic Registration makes every reasonable effort to accommodate applicants for the Specialty Certification Examinations who have a disability, as that term is defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. If you are requesting accommodations due to your disabilities, please indicate at the top of the first page of the application. CDR will then mail you the

forms to complete with instructions for the required documentation.

Practice Problems:

Practice problems will be available in the Candidate Handbook. The Candidate Handbook is mailed to candidates once they are eligible to take the specialty examination.

Instructions for Completing the Examination Application:

Read and follow carefully all instructions when completing the application forms. All candidate information must be complete. Incomplete applications and copies of applications will not be accepted. Applications must have original signatures. The application forms must be mailed together. Please print clearly in blue or black ink.

Part A- Candidate Information:

- Indicate the examination window you are applying, summer or fall.
- Print your registration number and your social security number. These will be used for identification purposes only.
- Print your credentials. Divide your credentials with commas.
- Print your last name, first name, address, city, state, and zip code. Since your eligibility letter and examination information may be mailed via UPS, do **not** use a post office box as your address.
- Provide a daytime phone number that you can be contacted if there are questions regarding your application.
- Print your e-mail address in the boxes provided.

- Indicate whether or not you have taken the Specialty examination before.
- Indicate your highest degree completed.
- Indicate your primary work setting. Mark all that apply
- Indicate the status of your specialty certification for your current job.

Part B- Examination Fee Payment:

Indicate how you would like to pay the \$250 examination fee. Payment must be included with the application. Checks and money orders should be made payable to Commission on Dietetic Registration. Make sure that your registration number is written on the check or money order. If you would like to pay by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover), complete the payment information on the application form.

Part C- Documentation of Specialty Hours:

A minimum of 2,000 hours of specialty practice experience, as an RD with CDR is required within the past five years (by the date the application is due), to meet eligibility requirements. Required activities can include direct and indirect activities. You do not need to document more than 2,000 hours. Please note that certain education and professional experiences can be used as substitution for the required 2,000 specialty practice hours up to a maximum of 40% (800 hours).

It is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain the appropriate Part C documentation and submit

them to CDR with the completed application packet. CDR will not retain statements received directly from other individuals or employers. Signatures must be original. Statements that are predated or pre-issued are invalid.

C-1 Verification of Employment:

To document employment hours use form C-1. One C-1 form must be completed for each position, even if the position is within the same facility. You may need to photocopy the form. **Please note that dates of employment must be within the past five years (from the application deadline date).** The dates should reflect the timeframe for the hours that you are documenting (which may not necessarily be your start date of employment). Indicate the specialty hours worked with in the dates/timeframe documented. Indicate if you are currently employed in the position that you are documenting. An authorized individual will sign off on the form to verify the hours that you are documenting (employer, supervisor, human resources, if consultant, the person or MD who refers clients to them. Another option for consultants to document hours would be to include tax/income documentation as well as brochure/information about their business.)

C-2 Verification of Professional Experience: To document professional experiences, use form C-2. For each professional experience, print the number of specialty hours documented (according to the table below) and enclose the requested information. Professional experience(s) must be related to gerontological nutrition. Dates of professional experiences must be within the past five years. Note that substitution of the required 2,000 specialty practice hours cannot exceed 800 hours, even when combined with an education substitution.

Specialty Work Experience	Documentation Required
Primary author of an article in a peer-reviewed scientific publication <i>(20 hours, maximum per article)</i>	■ Copy of the article(s) or letter(s) verifying acceptance for publication in a peer-reviewed journal
Co-author of an article in a peer-reviewed scientific publication <i>(10 hours, maximum per article)</i>	■ Copy of the article(s) or letter(s) verifying acceptance for publication in a peer-reviewed journal
Author of a gerontological nutrition textbook/manual <i>(100 hours, maximum per textbook/manual)</i>	■ Copy of the title page, copyright page and introduction for each textbook/manual
Author of chapter in a gerontological nutrition textbook/manual <i>(15 hours, maximum per textbook/manual)</i>	■ Copy of the chapter (s), copy of the title page, copyright page and introduction for each textbook/manual
Presenter at a peer-review national, state, and/or regional scientific conference <i>(5 hours, maximum per presentation)</i>	■ Copy of objectives and handouts for presentation, copy of the brochure/program agenda for each presentation documented
Research– sole or principal investigator <i>(20 hours, maximum per research activity)</i>	■ Copy of published research article/final summary technical report for each research activity documented
Research– co-investigator <i>(10 hours, maximum per research activity)</i>	■ Copy of published research article/final summary technical report for each research activity documented

C-3 Substitution of Education for Specialty Practice Hours:

To document substitution of education for specialty practice hours use form C-3. Education from a US-accredited college or university (or foreign equivalent) will be allowed to substitute for some of the required experience according to the following chart (any combination can substitute for up to a maximum). Note that graduate academic coursework and fellowship hours, even if combined with more than one degree of specialty professional experiences hours, cannot substitute for more than the

800 hours (40%) of the required 2,000 hours of specialty practice experience. For each education substitution print the requested College/University, degree and date information the form. Indicate the total number of hours substituted. An official transcript is required to document education.

Degree	Hours Substituted
Master's degree in nutrition, health or education	300 hours
Doctorate Degree in nutrition, health or education	400 hours
Fellowship in specialty area, post RD	500 hours

Part D-Candidate

Acknowledgement:

Note that all signatures must be original. Copies will not be accepted.

- Print your first and last name in the space provided.
- Read the verification statement carefully.
- Sign and date the application.

Part E- Final Checklist:

Once you have finished the application, complete the final checklist. This will help to ensure that the application is complete.

Questions? Please contact CDR by telephone at 1-800/877-1600, ext. 5500 or e-mail at specialists@eatright.org.