

To Whom It May Concern,

RE: Dietitians as partners in community healthcare

As a physician, I am signing this letter to demonstrate my support for increased team based primary health care that includes dietitians.

Nutrition counselling provides an important and necessary adjunct to care provided in primary health settings. The participation of dietitians, especially in the care of many chronic conditions, seems helpful in achieving better patient outcomes.

Dietitian services, however, are not easily accessed. There are limited referral options since dietitians are not always covered by employee health insurance plans, our most vulnerable populations do not have private health insurance plans and many patients are unlikely to reach out for nutrition advice.

Dietitians differ from other unregulated nutrition practitioners. Unlike registered holistic nutritionists, certified nutritional practitioners, and registered nutritional consultants, dietitians are registered and regulated by the College of Dietitians of British Columbia under the Health Professions Act.

Referral to a dietitian ensures that our patients will be counselled by a health professional with at least 5 years of training, including an accredited internship, and—as with physicians, nurses, and other qualified health care professionals—will be accountable to a regulatory body.

Dietitians contribute significantly to the multi-disciplinary medical team. Dietitians' work is supported by evidence-based science; the counsel they provide is based on information that has been well researched and tested to rigorous academic standards.

I strongly recommend including dietitians as a part of team based primary health care across British Columbia.

SIGNATURE

PHYSICIAN'S NAME and SPECIALTY

ADDRESS and POSTAL CODE

Date _____

Please fax hard copies: 604-535-0606 or email scanned copies: claudia@truehealthnutrition.ca

Launched in November 2017, this is an initiative of the Dietitians of Canada's BC Local Action Groups on Primary Care and Extended Health Coverage. Please contact Sonya Kupka, Dietitians of Canada's Regional Executive Director (BC) at sonya.kupka@dietitians.ca or 778-241-8337 with any questions or concerns.