

## 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.<sup>1</sup> Ethical standards for professional behaviour are outlined in the Code of Ethics, Schedule A of the CDBC bylaws. Principle 2 states: “A Registered Dietitian assumes responsibility and holds her/himself personally accountable for all actions taken in the delivery of dietetic services by: ... assuming responsibility for services provided by those under their supervision.”<sup>2</sup>

Registrants 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) co-signing a student's entries in a client's record.

### Co-signing Guidelines for RDs Supervising Dietetic Students

#### 1. Supervisory preparation

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

#### 2. Supervisory level

The RD sets his/her 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.

#### 3. Observation of client care

When the dietetic student or client case requires direct observation, the RD supervisor ensures s/he is present during the dietetic student's session with the client. The RD 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 RD discusses the care provided to the client and reviews the dietetic student client record entry to ensure appropriate care is provided.

- If the RD supervisor observes the dietetic student providing care and agrees with the care provided and the dietetic student's signed record entry, the RD co-signs the record.
- If the RD doesn't see the care provided, s/he reviews the record entry and if both the stated care provided and the record entry are appropriate and accurate, the RD co-signs the record.
- Whether or not the RD sees the care provided, if s/he determines the record entry is incomplete/ unsigned, the RD 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” in accordance with facility protocol.

### References

- <sup>1</sup> [Health Professions Act](#), section 16(2)(d).
- <sup>2</sup> [CDBC Code of Ethics - Principles and Guidelines](#).