



OPTIONS FOR ACCESSING A REGISTERED DIETITIAN

Free of charge unless otherwise noted
All ages unless otherwise specified

Service	Description	More information
Dietitian Services at HealthLinkBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No referral required - Call 8-1-1 (or 7-1-1 for the hearing impaired), Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and ask to speak with a dietitian - Or email a dietitian (see link) 	
Eating Disorders - South Vancouver Island ED Program (MCFD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referral required 	250-370-0000
Eating Disorders Services (Island Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referral from health care professional required, except for children & youth in Cowichan 	250-519-5390 x.36925
Diabetes Education Services (Island Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accept self-referrals and referrals from health professionals 	
Home & Community Care Dietitian (Island Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referral required from physician, hospital dietitian or BC Cancer Agency - In Cowichan, no dietitian services except for HSCL clients 	
Outpatient Dietitian (Island Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referral from health professional required 	
Pediatric Feeding & Swallowing Clinic (Island Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referral from health professional required. Must be < 19 with significant feeding and oral motor challenges, chronic upper respiratory problems, growth issues, or needs related to transition from tube to oral feeding. 	
Private Practice Dietitians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fee for service - May be covered by extended health care benefits 	BC Dietitians - Pediatric Find a Dietitian - all ages

DIETITIAN OR NUTRITIONIST: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

In BC, Registered Dietitians (RDs) are dedicated health professionals with education, training, expertise, and accountability to provide evidence-based nutrition advice.

RDs are the only nutrition professionals regulated by law.

Nutritionists, Holistic Nutritionists and Certified Nutritionists are not regulated in their training requirements or their practice.

	Registered Dietitian	Holistic Nutritionist	Certified Nutritionist
Titles	In BC, the title 'Registered Dietitian' (RD) is protected and regulated by law.	In BC, the term 'nutritionist' is not protected or regulated by law, so anyone can use it. Commonly used titles include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Holistic Nutritionist (RHN) • Certified Nutritional Practitioner (CNP) • Registered Nutritional Therapist (RNT) • Registered Nutritional Consulting Practitioner (RNCP) • Natural Nutrition Clinical Practitioner (NNCP). 	
Government Regulation	Accountable to provincial regulatory body (College of Dietitians of BC) for the highest standards of education & ethics, including mandatory annual training. This is important in protecting the public.	No governmental regulation exists or is required for Registered Holistic or Certified Nutritionists. Terms such as 'certified,' 'registered,' 'specialist' or 'therapist' (and many others) are also not controlled.	
Entry-Level Training & Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University degree (4-5 years) • Plus ~1300 hours of supervised practicum in counselling, disease management, population health & food systems • Plus completion of the Canadian Dietetic Registration Examination The only program in BC is at the University of British Columbia. Total training >2800 hours.	1 year full time course work (11 instructional months) at a private, vocational school. Total training ~632 hours.	Qualifications vary from post secondary certificates or degrees in nutrition to no formal education or training in the field.
Scope of Practice	Qualified to work in hospitals, medical clinics, long-term care, schools, communities, government offices, food industries, private practice, and other areas.	May work in naturopathic wellness clinics, schools, stores, community agencies. Can work in private practice but cannot make claims by using words such as prevent, treat, cure, or heal.	

References

- www.closingthegap.ca/dietitian-vs-nutritionist-whats-the-difference
- csnn.ca/careers/scope-and-code (Canadian School of Natural Nutrition)
- www.unlockfood.ca/About-Dietitians/Is-there-a-difference-between-a-dietitian-and-nutritionist (Dietitians of Canada)