

Chapter 5

Dietitians / Nutrition Care Specialists

5-1. Description of Duties.

a. Dietitians (65C). During peacetime and mobilization or wartime formulates policies, develops procedures and directs and supervises the operation of nutrition care services and the provision of comprehensive nutrition care programs in fixed medical treatment facilities (MTF) and field medical units. Manages medical food preparation and service systems in MTF and field medical units. Ensures therapeutic diets and foods are available and prepared for patients in MTF and field medical units. Coordinates and ensures the procurement and receipt of safe, wholesome food items/rations for patients and staff during wartime and peacetime. Provides nutrition health promotion programs for the military community and develops and directs nutrition education or dietary intervention programs for the military and military beneficiaries. During peacetime and wartime assists the physician with nutritional assessment and therapeutic dietary intervention of patients, and participates and conducts applied research. Serves as a consultant at all levels of nutrition related health and performance issues, and medical food service operation in MTF and field medical units. Develops, implements and directs nutrition and medical food service education programs for hospital food service specialists, dietetic interns and other medical personnel during peacetime and wartime. Assists the Army Surgeon General in executing his duties as the DOD Executive Agent for nutrition (DA Pam 611-21).

The following should be added to the above job description: Supports humanitarian missions by recommending policy and providing management and guidance on food distribution and food security issues in support of disaster victims, internally displaced persons, and refugees.

b. Nutrition Care Specialists (Hospital Food Service Specialist) (91M). Assists in the supervision of medical nutrition care operations, plans, prepares, cooks, and serves food for regular and therapeutic diets in field and fixed hospitals. Duties for MOS 91M at each skill level are:

91M10. Performs basic clinical dietetic functions in the dietary management and treatment of patients. Prepares, cooks, and serves therapeutic and regular food items according to nutrition care treatment plans under the supervision of a dietitian or 91M NCO.

91M20. Performs and supervises basic clinical dietetic functions in the dietary management and treatment of patients. Supervises, prepares, cooks, and serves therapeutic and regular food items according to nutrition care treatment plans under supervision of a dietitian or senior 91M NCO.

91M30. Supervises the clinical dietetic management aspects in nutrition clinics, clinical dietetic branches, or production and service branches in nutrition care divisions. Supervises and assists in the preparation, cooking, and serving of therapeutic and regular food items.

91M40. Supervises the production and service branch in nutrition care divisions.

91M50. Supervises the nutrition care divisions or appropriate headquarters staff position. (DA Pam 611-21).

5-2. Roles in Humanitarian Missions.

a. Education. Provide and assist in planning and implementing education to military and HN individuals and groups on age and disease specific nutritional needs, performance nutrition, breastfeeding, alternative food preparation techniques based on individual and group resources, food safety, personal hygiene, and health promotion. The dietitian and nutrition care specialist can also develop exportable packages on the aforementioned topics for troops and HN populations.

b. Training. Train HN health care providers on basic nutrition, nutrition assessment and surveillance techniques, supplementary feeding programs, micronutrient supplementation and fortification options, community feeding programs, health promotion, and infrastructure restoration. An SME program can also be established whereby HN health care providers could travel to the U.S. to exchange knowledge and training on nutrition topics.

c. Consulting. Provide recommendations to military commanders, HN representatives, and NGOs supporting the local population on the nutritional needs of the troops/HN population. Plan and implement feeding operations, ration selection, appropriate medical nutrition therapy interventions, and disease prevention/health promotion programs.

d. Assessment. Provide guidance and conduct nutrition/health/sanitation assessments on selected populations to determine their nutritional/health status. Based on the assessment information, plan and implement appropriate nutrition / health/ sanitation interventions. Measure the effectiveness of nutrition / health interventions that have been implemented.

e. Administration. Serve in a variety of administrative duties. These include policy development, nutrition surveillance, subsistence procurement and management, feeding operations management, resource management, facility planning, personnel management, and contract planning and administration.

5-3. Operations Dietitians and Nutrition Care Specialists Can Support.

a. Noncombat Evacuation Operation (NEO). Plan and implement medical nutrition therapy for evacuees. Plan and manage the facilities and shelter for evacuees.

b. Domestic Support Operations – Disaster Assistance. Provide medical nutrition therapy to include nutrition counseling and education (modified from FM 8-42, 3-3, a[3]). Conduct nutrition and health assessments. Plan or provide guidance on the appropriate rations for the troops and the population in need. Coordinate and manage the resources provided to support the assistance effort.

c. Domestic Support Operations – Community Assistance. Plan and participate in community health care programs such as health screening and educational presentations

(modified from FM 8-42, 3-3, b). Provide guidance on the operation and management of community feeding programs.

d. Domestic Support Operations – Environmental Assistance. Provide recommendations for the use of local subsistence resources.

e. Domestic Support Operations – Law Enforcement. Provide nutrition education that will maximize performance in a variety of energy demanding environments.

f. Foreign Humanitarian Assistance. Conduct population assessments and provide recommendations to the supporting agencies and/or HN health officials on appropriate health and nutrition interventions. Collaborate with NGOs working within the region to establish an optimum food distribution program. Develop and manage food programs and ensure that food wholesomeness standards are maintained (modified from FM 8-42, 3-4a[1]). Plan and manage facilities and shelter for the population in need. Provide consultation on the establishment and management of micronutrient fortification, breastfeeding promotion, maternal child health programs, growth monitoring, culturally appropriate food support, and supplementary feeding programs. Provide education to the HN population on a variety of nutrition and disease prevention topics, and provide training to HN health care providers on nutrition assessment, medical nutrition therapy, and on providing nutrition education for better health.

g. Security Assistance. Develop and implement military training packages on basic nutrition and health promotion to enhance the skills of the medical paraprofessionals (modified from FM 8-42, 3-5b). *Participate in the Department of the State cultural exchange program by exchanging US and foreign military medical personnel for visits, training, and education (FM 8-42, 3-5b).*

h. Nation Assistance. Perform population health assessments. Assist Ministries of Health and other HN representatives with health policy development. Assess the education and training levels of health care professionals and technicians (modified from FM 8-42, 3-6a[3]). *Assess the existence of health education and health promotion programs targeted at the general population (modified from FM 8-42, 3-6a[3]). Participate in consultation programs to share knowledge and new techniques (FM 8-42, 3-6b).*

i. Peace Support Operations. Provide education to troops on health promotion. Provide recommendations on the appropriate rations for the operation. Plan and manage the feeding of the peacekeeping force. Provide combat health support to the peacekeeping force (modified from FM 8-42, 3-9a).

j. Show of Force. Provide recommendations on the appropriate rations for the operation. Provide education on performance nutrition and health promotion to the troops.

k. Support for Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies.

(1) Insurgencies. Provide training on medical nutrition therapy to the medical personnel (modified from FM 8-42, 3-11a[4]). Provide nutrition guidance (modified from FM 8-42, 3-11a[4]).

(2) Counterinsurgencies. *Assist the HN in identifying the health needs of the population (FM 8-42, 3-11b[3]).* Develop, in concert with the HN, nutrition and health promotion programs aimed at the resolution of potential or actual health problems (modified from FM 8-42, 3-11b[3]). Provide education on performance nutrition to the HN troops. Perform nutrition / health assessments on the HN troops to aid in the planning and implementation of intervention programs.

1. Attack and Raids. *Plan and manage the facilities, shelter, feeding, and the provision of care for EPW, detained or retained personnel, refugees, and civilian casualties (FM 8-42, modified from FM 8-42, 3-12a[4]).*

5-4. Nutrition Care Training Opportunities

- a. Lactation Consultant Course
- b. Facility planning courses
- c. Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) Course
- d. Civil Affairs courses
- e. Correspondence courses in logistics and engineering
- f. Health Promotion Director's Course (Cooper Institute)
- g. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) training
- h. Field Sanitation courses
- i. Joint Field Nutrition Operations Course

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