



D.C. Board of Dietetics & Nutrition

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YOUR MAILING ADDRESS

Changing your mailing address? Send your name, mailing address, and license number to:

Board of Dietetics and Nutrition
Processing Department
Address/Name Change
899 N. Capitol Street, NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002



Government of the District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



Spring 2014

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As the Chair of the District of Columbia Board of Dietetics and Nutrition, I am excited to be writing this letter – my first – to all licensees.

To begin, I want to introduce myself to all of you. I have been living and working as a licensed dietitian in Washington, DC for nearly ten years. After finishing my didactic training and dietetic internship at Cornell University, I worked in Cleveland, Ohio for the Cuyahoga County WIC program. I came to DC in 2005 to be a clinical dietitian at Children’s National Medical Center. Being in DC, I couldn’t resist the lure of policy and enrolled at the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, in the health policy program. While at Georgetown I worked as a consultant dietitian and did an internship at the USDA Economic Research Service studying the effectiveness and impact of school nutrition programs. After Georgetown I worked as the Director of Science Policy, Nutrition and Health at the Grocery Manufacturers Association and now lead food and nutrition policy for APCO Worldwide, a communications and strategy consulting firm. I have also served as a consumer member of the DC Board of Medicine and I am on the Mayor’s Commission for Physical Activity, Nutrition and Health.



Melissa Musiker, MPP, RD, LD

For the first time in many years, the Board has a complete set of enthusiastic members and is poised to be more engaged and active in the local dietetics and nutrition community than ever before. The need for nutrition services has never been greater and as a Board it is our job to make sure that there is a robust community of qualified clinicians helping to meet this demand while protecting the health and well-being of the citizens of the District of Columbia.

For this reason we are doing the following:

- Conducting a Continuing Education Audit of current licensees;
- Identifying and taking advantage of opportunities to educate the public about licensure;
- Reviewing the regulations for the scope of practice for nutrition and dietetics;
- Benchmarking the current practice regulations for nutrition and dietetics against those of other states; and
- Finally, proposing updates to the current practice regulations for nutrition and dietetics following a public consultation.

(continued on page 2)

Upcoming Board Meetings

Open Session is at 9:30 a.m.

Board Meetings are held quarterly in MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER and DECEMBER on the 2nd Tuesday, and are open to the public at

899 N. Capitol Street, NE
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Prior to attending, please call (202) 724-8739 to confirm date.

When You Move (or Change your Name)

Licensees sometimes forget to inform the Board of Dietetics and Nutrition when they move or change names. If we do not have your current address, you may not receive your renewal mailing because we may send it to your former address. **All name and address changes must be submitted in writing to our office within 30 days of the change.** Please include your name, address, Social Security number, and license number, if you know it. If you have a name change, you must also enclose a copy of your certificate of marriage, divorce decree, or court order that authorizes the change.

Fax your request to (202) 727-8471, or mail your name and address change to:

DC Board of Dietetics and Nutrition
Attn: Processing Department
Address/Name Change
899 N. Capitol Street, NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR (continued from page 1)

We cannot do this work alone; your input as licensees is invaluable. We hope that you will be more engaged with us as well. Come to our quarterly meetings, ask us questions, bring us your concerns or invite us to participate in your events.

It is an honor to serve you and those seeking healthcare in the District of Columbia and it is a responsibility that I, and the rest of the Board and its staff, take very seriously.

Melissa Musiker, MPP, RD, LD
Chairperson
DC Board of Dietetics and Nutrition

MEET NEW BOARD MEMBER JANET N. UNONU, LN, LD, MS, PHD

The Board of Dietetics and Nutrition welcomes Licensed Nutritionist Board Member Janet N. Unonu, LN, LD, MS, PhD.

Dr. Unonu serves as the Director of Health and Nutrition for the Edward C. Mazique Parent Child Center, Inc. In this position she oversees the center's day-to-day operations, plans infant preschool menus, and oversees a variety of grants. Dr. Unonu is deeply committed to the health and nutritional status of her children and their parents and, to this end, coordinates Cooking Matters classes at the center and involves parents in many aspects of the center.

Possessing a keen desire to improve the health and well-being of those that she serves, Dr. Unonu holds a PhD in Public Health Nutrition from Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio. She also has an MS in Human Nutrition and Foods, and a BS in Dietetics. Dr. Unonu has a long list of publications, and has earned many awards and professional honors.

Dr. Unonu served as the Commissioner for African and Caribbean Affairs for 8 years under Mayor Marion Barry. Dr. Unonu cares deeply about the quality of nutrition services offered to the people of the District. In addition, Dr. Unonu travels on a medical mission to Nigeria each year to donate her time and nutrition expertise to the people of her home nation.

PAID INACTIVE STATUS

If you intend to retire your license, or if you would like to place your license on Inactive Status, you must explicitly inform the Board of your intention before the renewal date expires. If you fail to pay renewal fees on time, your license is not inactive; it is delinquent (expired). It is unlawful to practice while your license is delinquent/expired.

MEET THE BOARD OF DIETETICS AND NUTRITION'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBIN Y. JENKINS

When did you begin serving as Executive Director of the HRLA Allied and Behavioral Health Boards?

I started with the department in August of 2013.

Please tell us a little about your professional experience and areas of expertise.

I have experience within private associations as well as governmental entities. I have a strong regulatory foundation and a long work history in the regulatory arena.

My areas of expertise include operations management, application processing, board operations, policy development, monitoring and compliance.

What position did you hold prior to accepting the position at HRLA?

Prior to joining the Department of Health, I served as the executive director for the District of Columbia's Higher Education Licensure Commission. I was responsible for all daily operations including governance management, staffing, budgeting, strategic planning, and external communications. I implemented regulations governing all colleges, universities, trade and professional institutions, as well as the compliance, and monitoring programs.

What is your background with regard to working for private associations?

Before joining the District of Columbia government, I served as Senior Policy Associate for the National Association of Social Workers as the regulatory liaison to 56 chapters. I also served as the liaison to the examination test vendor

"I would let licensees know that Board members are not scary people or out to get them. Board staff is here to assist and educate them. A board exists for their protection as consumers of service, too."

and managed professional credentials and certifications for the organization.

Have you had the opportunity to interact with regulatory professionals outside of the District of Columbia?

I have served on national and international regulatory committees and boards. I am currently a member of the board of directors for the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation and the National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools. I am also a faculty member for the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation and the Association of Social Work Boards board member training programs.

What is your educational background?

I have a BS degree from George Mason University, an MSW from Howard University, a certificate in Public Management from George Washington University and a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Georgetown University.

What is your top priority in your new position?

After an opportunity to spend time with each board chairperson as well as observe the boards and board staff in action for a few months I decided to engage my team in developing the priorities. We will first work to develop policies and procedures so that we work smarter. As staff, one aspect of our job is to ensure that board members are provided with all the information and data available to be adequately prepared to carry out their mandated duties in the areas of setting standards, codes of ethics, competencies, and continuing competency requirements for practitioners.

What would you say to someone who is interested in applying to become a Board member?

I would tell them that serving on a board is a public service privilege. I would inform them that the citizens of the District of Columbia will have trust and confidence in the board to ensure that there is accessibility to competent, safe, and ethical practitioners.

What message would you like to convey to the licensees of the boards you serve?

I would let licensees know that Board members are not scary people or out to get them. Board staff is here to assist and educate them. A board exists for their protection as consumers of service, too.

Any tips for licensees who may be called to appear before the Board?

Honesty is the best policy.

CE AUDIT RESPONSE FORM

The Board of Dietetics and Nutrition has implemented a new audit form for licensees selected during the CE Audit. If you are selected for Audit, please complete **this form**, and submit it along with **your certificates**, to the Board at: **DC Board of Dietetics and Nutrition, Attn: CE Audit, 899 North Capitol Street NE, 2nd Floor, Washington DC 20002**

Name (please print): _____

License Number: _____

Submitting proof of **continuing education hours** for the licensure period: _____

DIETITIANS: Applicant for renewal shall submit proof of having completed **thirty (30) hours** of approved continuing education credit during the two-year (2) period preceding the date the license expires.

NUTRITIONISTS: Applicant for renewal shall submit proof of having completed **thirty (30) hours** of approved continuing education credit during the two-year (2) period preceding the date the license expires.

NAME OF COURSE & ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDED THE PROGRAM	Date course was taken	Number of Contact Hours	Was it Live or Distance/ Online?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

DIETETIC AND HEALTH PRACTICES – NOW AND TOMORROW

by Edward M. Johnson, AIA, NCARB, Consumer Board Member

Communication today provides instant access to more information than we can absorb. An abundance of communication resources cover topics to a depth never imagined. Health is a major subject that has benefited tremendously from technology enlightening resourcefulness.

Fueling our nation's focus on health is a continuous flow of information describing the growing health crisis in America. One in three Americans is experiencing weight problems and its associated health issues. Poor diets, lack of appropriate exercise and stress exasperates the crisis. The pressure to succeed, no matter what it takes, generates actions and poor judgment at the expense of others. Many have forgotten that beyond the gifts of life and health, access to nutritional food, water and shelter, our personal integrity is still our greatest asset.

Credibility is problematic which can be and is at odds with how success is achieved. Consequently, misrepresentation is dogging licensing agencies across the country. So, the Board of Dietetics and Nutrition is not a lone ranger in this arena. What is a licensing agency supporting ethical practices in health related fields to do? By continuing to bypass consequences, existing penalties have no teeth and do not serve as a deterrent for punishing those who falsify experiences and

“...the license serves as evidence that the professional has invested time and secured appropriate academic credentials, satisfied experience demands and fulfilled local and state licensing requirements. These achievements are supported by documentation giving credibility to the dietitian/nutritionist and other professionals.”

credentials, jeopardizing public health.

Legitimate credentials, including the professional license, are important because the license serves as evidence that the professional has invested time and secured appropriate academic credentials, satisfied experience demands and fulfilled local and state licensing requirements. These achievements are supported by documentation giving credibility to the dietitian/nutritionist and other professionals. Ignoring life's consequences by participating in unjustified claims and public presentations along with falsifying written documentation are all rising practices in DC and the nation. The author has and continues to experience these same practices within his areas of expertise, experiences and current involvement including the falsification of claims as licensed architects,

engineers, building contractors and health professionals.

Reinforcing the increase in claims of credibility is the fact that penalties have not been imposed with sufficient adverse effects on behavior, social status or income to reduce current practices. Falsifying licenses and practices by contributing services under the auspicious of a licensed professional or practitioner is both a violation of law and the public trust. The impact of legitimate dietary claims and practices is compounded by the nation's deteriorating health crisis reinforced by poor diets and a failure to exercise.

What can be done now? Depending upon the harm caused by illegal practices, maybe DC officials should consider prosecution and incarceration. Other jurisdictions have instituted serious penalties against offenders including incarceration. Lesser



Edward M. Johnson, AIA, NCARB

penalties the District might consider include imposition of stiff fines along with providing public media exposure to encourage violators without licenses to cease working in the dietary and nutritional fields within the District. Additionally, to prevent further violations, violators can be included in dietary and nutritional publications.

Expanding public awareness is essential. Publishing violators conduct could be considered a public service and included on the internet, in local newspapers and with local television stations. Providing seminars addressing techniques which should be used by health care providers for verifying licenses, credentials and past and current performance should be scheduled. To balance the negative publications, contributions of outstanding professionals in the Dietetary and Nutrition professions should also be acknowledged and promoted, especially because diet and nutritional health produces a profound effect on the quality of life.

The author is a Native Washingtonian, who professionally is an architect and urban planner with 35 plus years of professional experiences with his firm, Edward M. Johnson & Associates, P. C.. Sharing nutritional and spiritual healing and frequently sharing ideas for improving health is his passion as he encourages improvements in health for all.

SERVE ON THE BOARD: SERVE THE COMMUNITY

We need you!

Community service is one of the highest forms of citizenship. Please consider serving on the Board of Dietetics and Nutrition.

If you are a District of Columbia resident interested in serving on the Board, please contact the District of Columbia Office of Boards and Commissions (OBC).

The OBC assists the Mayor in appointing citizens to boards and commissions by recruiting quality candidates, processing applications, and by providing support to each participant in the Mayoral appointments process. The District of Columbia has over 150 different boards and commissions. These boards or commissions are independent bodies that provide important advisory, regulatory, policy-making services as part of the Government of the District of Columbia.

Go online at

www.obc.dc.gov

to download
an application,
or call the OBC at

(202) 727-1372

Contact the Office of Boards and Commissions if you have questions or would like more information about serving.

ATTENTION LICENSEES:

HELP US TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOU!

Always keep us up-to-date on your current email address, write to:

ERIC.YEAGER@DC.GOV

The Board will be distributing the Board newsletter electronically.

VERIFICATION OF LICENSURE

Licensing authorities and some health facilities often require a letter of verification of the licenses you currently hold or have held in the past. These letters of verification are sometimes called "letters of good standing," even though your DC license may have expired. If the jurisdiction or institution to which you wish the letter sent gave you a form, simply forward the form, with a check or money order payable to "DC Treasurer" in the amount of thirty-four dollars (\$34.00) to:

Ms. Alma White
Health Licensing Specialist
DC Board of Dietetics and Nutrition
899 North Capitol Street NE
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20002

On the form, be sure to include your name, along with the name and address where the form is to be sent. If the jurisdiction or institution that you wish the letter sent to did not provide a form, send the payment referenced above and a short note requesting a letter of verification. The note should include your name along with the name and address of where you want the letter of verification sent.

Please feel free to contact Ms. Alma White at **202-724-7325** or by email at alma.white@dc.gov.

EXPEDITING YOUR LICENSE

Make sure to have your entire application filled out and signed. You must provide "official" supporting documentation to any and all application questions and/or statements that require a detailed explanation.

Please note:

- Official court documents of final case dispositions for any felonies or misdemeanors that you incurred (i.e., a defendant, in any state or country).
- Malpractice case dispositions should include a case number, jurisdiction, year, all the defendant names, all plaintiff names, a brief summary of the case, and final disposition, such as judgment dollar amount, dismissed with or without prejudice, or settlement dollar amount—this information must be sent with your application.
- To use HRLA's website to check and verify a license, go to:

<http://hpla.doh.dc.gov/hpla/site/default.asp>

FILING A COMPLAINT WITH THE BOARD

To file a complaint against a licensed DC Dietitian or Nutritionist, simply write a letter that describes your complaint. The letter must be signed, and you should attach copies of any pertinent documents that you may have. The letter must also include your address, so we may contact you as necessary and notify you of any findings.

PLEASE NOTE: You can print a complaint form from our website at www.hpla.doh.dc.gov

You should mail the complaint to:

DC Board of Dietetics and Nutrition
899 N. Capitol Street, NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

You can also fax the complaint to the Board at (202) 724-8677.

If your complaint alleges unlicensed activity, you should address your complaint to:

Supervisory Investigator
899 N. Capitol Street, NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

You can also fax your complaint about unlicensed activity to (202) 724-8677.

Please be advised that the health professional licensing boards do not have jurisdiction over fee disputes, except for billing for services that were not provided. If you have a fee dispute with a health professional, you can seek redress through the civil courts.

THANKS AND FAREWELL, DR. FESEHA WOLDU

In 2013, DC Department of Health bid farewell to Feseha Woldu, PhD, who served as Senior Deputy Director of the Health Regulation and Licensing Administration (HRLA) for 14 years. During his tenure, Dr. Woldu was able to expedite online licensure renewal and instituted a system to make compliance information available online. Dr. Woldu is now serving as the Associate Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Quality for Howard University. We wish him all the best in his new position.



Dr. Feseha Woldu with Councilmember Yvette M. Alexander and the current and former Directors of the Department of Health. Left to right: Dr. Gregg Pane, Dr. Woldu, Ms. Alexander, Dr. Joxel Garcia, Dr. Pierre N.D. Vigilance, and Dr. Ivan Walks.

BOARD ORDERS

Summary Suspension

Nastaran M. Zonozi, R.D. (2/5/2013) The dietitian's license was summarily suspended for violation of a Negotiated Settlement Agreement with the Board.

DOH WELCOMES SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR RIKIN MEHTA, PHARM D, JD, LLM

Dr. Rikin Mehta was appointed Senior Deputy Director for the Health Regulation and Licensing Administration for the DC Department of Health on January 13, 2014.

Dr. Mehta (or Rik) comes from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), where he served as the Deputy Director for the Division of Medical Policy Programs at the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), Office of Medical Policy. As the Deputy, Dr. Mehta created and led the Nonprescription drug Safe Use Regulatory Expansion (NSURE) Initiative exploring regulatory methods to alleviate the undertreatment of common conditions or diseases through the use of innovative technologies or other conditions of safe use to expand access to medications.

Dr. Mehta received his B.S. in pharmacy from Rutgers University and PharmD from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. He later received a JD from Rutgers University School of Law and a Master of Laws in Global Health Law and International Institutions through a joint program with Georgetown University Law Center and the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland.



Rikin S. Mehta,
PharmD, JD, LLM



Government of the District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



To use HPLA's website to check and verify a license, go to: www.doh.dc.gov

Health Regulation and
Licensing Administration
(HRLA)

Address
DC Board of
Dietetics and Nutrition
899 N. Capitol Street, NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Phone
(202) 724-8800
(202) 724-8739

Webpage
www.doh.dc.gov

DC Government website
www.dc.gov

Current Members of The District of Columbia Board of Dietetics and Nutrition

Melissa Musiker, MPP, RD, LD
Chairperson

Edward M. Johnson, AIA, NCARB
Consumer Member

Janet N. Unonu, LN, LD, MS, PhD
Board Member

Director, Department of Health
Joxel Garcia, MD, MBA

Senior Deputy Director, HRLA
Rikin S. Mehta, PharmD, JD, LLM

Board Staff

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Robin Y. Jenkins
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Assistant Attorney General
Carla M. Williams, Esq.

Investigator
Leonard Howard

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