

ICCN

Putting Nutrition into Practice

Letters from the Front: Improving Clinical Nutrition Practice in Primary Care Settings

L Robinson

Med-E-Serv, Level 1, 535 Milton Road, Toowong QLD

The experience of providing continuing professional development to general practitioners within an integrated comprehensive primary care curriculum demonstrates that GPs are both interested and able to integrate clinical nutrition into practice. Of a total of 400 educational units offered in the PriMeD program, 16 units are specifically designed to target clinical nutrition skills.

Since 2002, 961 of 4580 participating general practitioners have elected to include clinical nutrition units in their learning programs. Effective educational modalities are case based learning and peer group discussion supported by resource material and a clinical tool kit to take learnings into practice.

Educational outcomes include increased confidence to undertake counseling for weight management, increased used of anthropometric measurements, increased understanding of and use dietary indicators especially the food variety score of which only 10% of general practitioners were aware. Sustained change in clinical practice was measured by the use of clinical nutrition tools with 59% of participants making modifications to practice. A further 34% indicated an intention to review their practice and/or take up the clinical nutrition practice tool kit.