

**Remarks for Lucille Beseler**  
**Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative**  
**Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo**

- Hello, everyone! Welcome to Boston!
- It is a great honor to speak with you about the latest news and initiatives that Academy staff, leadership and partners are working on to improve the nation's health.
- Today, I'd like to focus on one initiative, which is the Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative.
- Hospitalized adult patients are often untreated for malnutrition because they are undiagnosed. It is estimated between 15 to 50 percent of patients are malnourished, which can lead to longer hospital stays, higher readmission rates and a greater risk for complications.
- Along with an unclear diagnosis comes a hefty price tag of an estimated \$51 billion annually in the United States for disease-associated malnutrition in older adults.
- Despite all of the advances in health care delivery, and a mandate to conduct a nutrition screening within 24 hours of a patient admission, there is still no universally accepted approach to the diagnosis and clinical documentation of adult malnutrition in this country.

- We know that patients deserve more, and registered dietitian nutritionists are in the best position to offer a medical intervention that can improve patient outcomes!!!
- So we went to work! We partnered with Avalere Health to draft four malnutrition electronic clinical quality measures and a set of tools to help hospital-based RDNs implement best practices in addressing malnutrition. This was all made possible through the generous support of Abbott Laboratories.
- We're now at a critical point in this initiative. The four measures that we developed are under review by the National Quality Forum, where we anticipate an endorsement, and with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, where we seek acceptance into the federal Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program.
- If these quality measures are accepted into the program, these will be the first electronic clinical quality measures specific to the practice of nutrition and dietetics.
- It is truly an exciting time to be a registered dietitian nutritionist and a critical one, so we need to do everything we can to ensure registered dietitian nutritionists continue to play an important role in health care delivery.
- That means we need to advocate and educate!

- To gain public support for the quality measures, the Academy, along with our partners, visited 70 Congressional offices to describe the impact of malnutrition on health care delivery in September, as part of Malnutrition Awareness Week. This included support from the DefeatMalnutrition.Today coalition, of which the Academy is a member.
- We also hosted a Congressional briefing with U.S. Representative Don Beyer of Virginia, which included panelists from the Academy, the Latino Integrative Nutrition Initiative, the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition, or A.S.P.E.N., and Feeding America.
- Now, we need to share this initiative with our broader Academy membership!
- We need to encourage RDNs to learn more about the Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative.
- And, if they are a hospital-based RDN working with adult patients, we need to encourage them to take steps within their hospitals to implement these measures!
- The FNCE session, **132, “Leading Malnutrition Quality Improvement for Better Hospital & Patient Outcomes,”** is dedicated to this quality initiative, and is scheduled at **8 a.m., Sunday, October 16** in **Room 205 A, B, and C.**

- Attendees will learn “How, Why and When” to use the quality measures and how new tools can help them lead a malnutrition quality improvement program in their hospital.
- Please take time to hear more about this important initiative and encourage other RDNs to join you.
- While we still don’t know whether these quality measures will be accepted into the federal quality reporting program, we can still lead in the implementation of these measures in hospitals where RDNs work, and make a difference in patient outcomes by providing a low-risk, low-cost solution.
- Once accepted, these quality measures ensure adult hospitalized patients are properly evaluated, diagnosed and accounted for, and provides our industry the opportunity make a greater contribution in improving health care delivery!!!
- Acceptance into the federal reporting program would also be a major milestone and achievement!
- Our collective wisdom and hard work has led us here, and I’d like to thank you for being a part of our growth! I’d like to especially thank the Academy’s Policy Team and Quality Team, and our partners for all their work in leading this initiative! Thank you all so much! Let’s continue to lead in our profession in profound ways!