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Media contact: Angie Antonopoulos, Amanda Cohen
800/877-1600, ext. 4769
media@eatright.org

120 South Riverside Plaza
Suite 2000
Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995
800.877.1600

1120 Connecticut Avenue NW
Suite 480
Washington, D.C. 20036
800.877.0877

Media Advisory:

September 26 Briefing on Malnutrition to Highlight Need for Medical Intervention

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A Congressional briefing on “The Growing Crisis of Malnutrition in Older Adults,” organized by the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#) in cooperation with [DefeatMalnutrition.Today](#) coalition, will take place at 9:30 a.m., September 26, at 385 Russell Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C. The briefing, for Congressional staff, the coalition, and the public, will address the current state of health care delivery for adults with malnutrition in the United States; malnutrition’s effect on health care costs; and interventions that could help reduce incidents of malnutrition and improve the quality of life for adult patients. U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (Va.) plans to attend the briefing.

Up to 60 percent of older adults go untreated for malnutrition when they are admitted to hospitals because they were not properly diagnosed. This lack of diagnosis often leads to costly readmissions. An estimated \$51.3 billion is spent annually on disease-associated malnutrition in older adults, according to the [Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition](#). The Academy, with the DefeatMalnutrition.Today coalition, want to change that, through the endorsement of new electronic clinical [quality measures](#) by the National Quality Forum and acceptance by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services into their reporting programs. Both are currently reviewing these measures. A study conducted by Abbott Laboratories’ nutrition division and University of Illinois estimate that more than \$15 billion could be saved in health care costs with a medical intervention to treat malnutrition.

Speakers at the briefing will include registered dietitian nutritionists representing the Academy and other partner organizations:

- Sharon McCauley, MS, MBA, RDN, LDN, FADA, FAND, senior director of quality management, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- Cecelia Pozo Fileti, MS, RD, FADA, director of the Latino Integrative Nutrition Initiative
- Peggy Guenter, PhD, RN, FAAN, senior director of clinical practice, quality and advocacy, American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (A.S.P.E.N.)
- Eleni Towns, manager of legislative affairs, Feeding America

This event will kick off Malnutrition Awareness Week and the Academy’s Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill, where registered dietitian nutritionists, health care professionals, advocates and private sector stakeholders will visit more than 60 offices and encourage all members of Congress to support the measures with a sign-on letter.

U.S. Sens. Mark Kirk (Ill.) and Cory Booker (N.J.); and U.S. Reps. Michelle Lujan Grisham (N.M.) and Rodney Davis (Ill.) are also advocates for the addition of these quality measures through their support of the letter campaign to the agencies.

“Registered dietitian nutritionists can make a difference in patient outcomes by providing a low-risk, low-cost solution to managing chronic illnesses in adult patients,” said Lucille Beseler, president of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and a practicing clinician who frequently works with individuals and families experiencing malnutrition.

“Gaining acceptance into the federal Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program ensures that 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,” Beseler said.

The Academy has been working with Avalere Health on the development of the quality eMeasures with support provided by Abbott.

To RSVP for continental breakfast and attendance, email: info@defeatmalnutrition.today.

For media interviews, contact: Angie Antonopoulos or Amanda Cohen at media@eatright.org.

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The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world’s largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving the nation’s health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy. Visit the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics at www.eatright.org.