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Digital Health: A New Horizon in Dietetics

This issue of Kompass Nutrition and Dietetics focuses on the topic of e-Health and nutrition. It is my privilege, as editor-in chief, to present you with an overview of this current topic, which aims to illustrate its relevance to the practice of nutrition and dietetics.

The World Health Organization describes the term e-Health as a broadly defined group of activities, computer applications, and/or services that utilize electronic means to deliver health-related information, resources, and services [1]. Examples of various applications include, but are not limited to, the following:

- websites and apps that are used for provision of information,
- interactive platforms and systems that enhance and speed up communication,
- digital diaries and e-learning platforms aimed at particular target groups
- the use of any of these tools for the provision of tailored patient recommendations
- wearables and virtual reality options which can be used at every step along the nutrition care pathway.

Importantly, the diversity of available technologies and the variety of ways they can be used in health-related services is increasing rapidly. Concurrently, the evidence for the use of e-health in nutrition related services and healthcare is growing. Therefore, the

opportunities available to enhance current delivery of nutrition and dietetic services using these tools is open to our imaginations and the possibilities are infinite.

Every practitioner should seize this opportunity to be at the forefront of progress. From experience, I can assure you, that even Health Care Practitioners with no previous knowledge of the topic, and that those who are not technically oriented can still successfully utilize these opportunities. This can be achieved by collaborating with Information Technology experts, Communication experts, and/or e-Health experts. It is also important to increase the body of evidence-based e-health offers on the internet, and on the market. In fact, the average person's readiness for e-health has not only increased over the last few years, but this trend has been accelerated during the pandemic. This development has thus put a focus on the importance of steering people towards the appropriate tools and applications. Particularly in a field such as nutrition and dietetics – where myths and trends often overshadow the evidence – the importance of putting our expertise and efforts in to channels such as social media and internet presence is not something we should overlook.

This issue of the Kompass Nutrition and Dietetics provides the first step so everyone can get started. We present an overview of a wide range of e-health applications that

are currently being developed and researched for use in nutrition and dietetic-related settings. Additionally, we strived to provide examples of the use of different types of e-health applications in wide range of settings. For example, you will find articles showing how e-health tools can help identify and treat nutrition related problems in the clinical setting, while other contributions focus on how on education and information can be harnessed to reach different target groups in the areas of primary prevention and public health. Lastly, as emerging evidence reveals that the potential of e-Health tools can be explored across the lifespan, we illustrate that age is not a limitation when it comes to the use of e-health.

Enjoy learning more about e-health and use this issue to get inspired as to ways you can use e-health to enhance your daily practice!

References

- 1 World Health Organisation, UN City. From Innovation to Implementation: Health in the WHO European Region. Copenhagen, Denmark: World Health Organisation 2016. Available at: https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/302331/From-Innovation-to-Implementation-eHealth-Report-EU.pdf.