Interactive Diet Goal Setting Software for Primary Care Improves Provider Obesity Counseling Competence: The Nutri Pilot RCT

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Background: Despite its importance in chronic disease management, primary care providers (PCPs; physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners) receive limited training in obesity counseling. We developed a software application, Nutri, to improve brief dietary behavior change counseling by PCPs via “the 5 As” framework. Nutri 1) collects and synthesizes patient diet data (Assess), 2) provides goal recommendations prioritized by a patient’s dietary risk (Advise), 3) guides PCPs to collaboratively select one diet goal with a patient (Agree), 4) tailors take-home materials support goal attainment (Assist), and 5) facilitates PCP follow-up (Arrange).

Objective: To evaluate Nutri’s effect on PCP obesity counseling competence.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: In a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of Nutri in a large primary care network, intervention group PCPs (n=8) received a 10-minute training video on theory-based nutrition education, a live Nutri demo, and Q&A. Control group PCPs (n=8) received training on a health record alerting tool.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: We assessed pre-post change in PCP’s competence on the 5As of obesity counseling with a validated self-report measure. We compared intervention and control PCPs in an intent-to-treat analysis using multiple regression with Bonferroni correction.

Results: Intervention and control groups were demographically similar; however, we adjusted models for gender and years in practice to account for between-group differences. 100% of intervention PCPs received training. 75% used Nutri with one or more patients. Nutri PCPs improved in overall competence compared to control (b=0.8, p=0.001; model F=8.3, p=0.002, R=0.63). Nutri PCPs had significantly greater improvement on Assess and Agree subscales.

Conclusion: Nutri improved PCP obesity counseling competence. This indicates that a technology used in clinic with real patients is a viable alternative to more didactic clinician training approaches. Nutri’s effect on PCPs’ perceived ability to Assess and Agree corresponds directly to Nutri’s design, which emphasizes data collection/synthesis and collaborative goal setting between patient and provider. Future research will assess Nutri’s effect on patient outcomes; however, current findings suggest that interactive, in-clinic technologies have potential to impact PCP counseling.

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Las Comidas Latinas Food Security Evaluation: 2008 vs 2022 Needs Assessment

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Background: Oregon State University Extension Service (OSUES) implements the Federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education. Linn-Benton “Las Comidas Latinas” provides cultural and language-specific nutrition education for Spanish-speaking audiences. A Latino Family needs assessment was conducted among participants and eligible non-participants Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008 and FFY2022-23.

Objective: Examine Latinx household experiences accessing healthy food for their families in FFY08 (pre-Covid 19) compared to FFY22-23 (post-Covid 19). Research aims included acculturation, language, transportation and cultural food preference influences home food practices, interest in community nutrition education, and food access and household food security.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: Participants were mothers aged 18 years and older, identified as Latina, and lived in Linn or Benton counties. The FFY08 assessment consisted of structured interviews (n=106); during FFY22-23, 101 structured surveys and 30 follow-up interviews were conducted. Core measures included acculturation, food security, dietary patterns, and food access.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Univariate and bivariate statistical techniques were used. Summary statistics for all discrete and continuous variables were calculated. Chi-square tests were performed to assess differences by food security, geography, and acculturation. Qualitative data were analyzed using a combination of inductive and deductive approaches to develop a coding system across interviews.

Results: Preliminary comparison results show food insecurity continues to be a challenge, preference for fresh foods is still connected to low acculturation, moms prioritize home food preparation, and low family incomes, language, and cultural barriers influence households’ ability to access social services (fear of public charge). Moms are motivated caregivers focused on the health of their families.

Conclusion: A continued focus on policy, system and environmental changes is an evident need to improve access to cultural food and language specific resources. These findings will support capacity building trainings with community partners to better serve Spanish speaking audiences. OSUES Las Comidas Latinas nutrition education will promote and educate the continuance of traditional food preparation practices, a positive attribute to the entire family’s nutrition.

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