

Sudanese Dietitian's Role in the Provision of Parenteral Nutrition: The Past, Present, and Future

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Abstract : Introduction: Balanced nutrition is undeniably essential for maintaining health, body functions, and integrity of cell metabolism; however, some sick patients cannot tolerate oral or enteral feeding to meet their nutritional needs, so partial or total parenteral nutrition (PN) may be the most suitable alternative route in such situations. Dietitians are fundamental personnel among the medical team to ensure the proper provision of PN service, which was introduced in Sudan in the 1980s. Objective: The study aimed to recognize the dietitians' awareness of parenteral nutrition and their role in providing this service in Sudan - Khartoum State. Methodology: Formulated questionnaire forms composed of twelve questions were distributed to the dietitians working in four tertiary level hospitals. Results: The majority (75%) of the responded dietitians had reasonable knowledge about the importance of PN, its advantages, and its indications. Sixty percent of them were mindful of the PN side effects. Most of the dietitians were aware of the different assessment measurements and PN calculations and were exposed in their clinical practice to patients who were in need of PN, but only a few of them (about 30%) had the actual chance to participate in the formulation and application of PN therapy. The unavailability of the multidisciplinary team, lack of the required equipment and financial support, and associated complications were basic obstacles to the provision of long-term PN service in Khartoum state hospitals. Conclusion: Although dietitians in Khartoum state hospitals have good information about PN definition, indications, accesses, and assessment measures, they do not have enough knowledge and clinical exposure that make them confident to provide the PN service. Establishing a few models of parenteral nutrition units in tertiary hospitals will be of great help, as well as providing the dietitian's training in the area of parenteral nutrition. Further study can explore more requirements to run this service.

Keywords : nutrition support, dietitian, Sudan, parenteral nutrition, nutrition support team

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