

Exploring the Perspectives of Community-dwelling Patients and Care Partners Receiving Nutrition Care in a Rural Primary Care Memory Clinic: Preliminary Findings

Baylee Cresswell¹; Julie Kosteniuk^{2,3}; Thera Kusch¹;
Amanda Dupperon³, Debra Morgan^{2,3}; Allison Cammer^{1,2}

¹College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, University of Saskatchewan; ²Canadian Centre for Rural and Agricultural Health, University of Saskatchewan; ³College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan;

RaDAR Online Summit 2025
November 2025



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Pharmacy
and Nutrition
PHARMACY-NUTRITION.USASK.CA



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Medicine
MEDICINE.USASK.CA



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Canadian Centre for Rural
and Agricultural Health
CCHSA-CCSSMA.USASK.CA



Background

- 🧠 Community-dwelling older adults are at increased risk of malnutrition⁽¹⁾, and dementia exacerbates this risk⁽²⁾.
- 🧠 Dementia poses unique nutrition challenges^(3,4,5).
- 🧠 Registered dietitians provide tailored individual nutrition care and interventions that can improve dementia-related nutrition challenges⁽⁶⁾.

RaDAR Memory Clinics

- 🧠 RaDAR primary care memory clinics are held one day every 1-2 months in several southern Saskatchewan rural communities.⁽⁷⁾
- 🧠 At the time of the study, four memory clinic teams included a registered dietitian.
- 🧠 The present study was conducted in one memory clinic team that included a registered dietitian.



Methods

Objective

To explore the experiences of patients and care partners with nutrition care provided by a registered dietitian in one RaDAR memory clinic site, focusing on nutrition issues and dietitian recommendations, resources, support, and availability from the perspective of patients and care partners.

Design

Qualitative descriptive study

Data Collection

Telephone interviews
(March–October 2025)

Participants

5 patients and care partners

Analysis

Reflexive thematic analysis ⁽⁸⁾



Preliminary Findings

There's No I in Team

"And people know who the people are and their community, you know. You know who your Dietitian is. You know who your home care workers are. Like those things are important."

- Care partner 2002

No Concerns, But...

"If we hadn't had a dietitian there, then we wouldn't have been told that he needed to drink more water, he needs calcium, and he needs vitamin D...it was good to know that these are things that he has to do, because we wouldn't have figured that out on our own, I'm sure."

- Care partner 2002

Navigating Complexity Through Clarity

"We told her he drinks Glucerna because of his weight loss and pre-diabetes, but she said he could go ahead and just drink the normal Ensure, it doesn't have that much sugar. And those drinks will help him get more protein in his daily intake."

- Care partner 2003

Shared Voices, Shared Choices

"And it was nice that everyone listened to my concerns, and then compared them to my mom's, to how she answered."

- Care partner 2001

Conclusion



Dietitians are valuable members of the team, addressing important nutritional care needs of patients.

Dietitians provide an individualized approach to complex nutrition concerns, giving clear advice to patients and their care partners.

Patients attending memory clinics may have nutrition-related challenges, and dietitians consider both care partners and patients in decisions and intervention planning.

References

- (1) Macasaet, M., Dhaliwal, R., & Chan, C. B. (2024). Addressing Nutrition Risk in Older Adults in Community Settings. *Medical Research Archives*, 12(9). <https://doi.org/10.18103/mra.v12i9.5893>
- (2) Arifin, H., Chen, R., Banda, K. J., Kustanti, C. Y., Chang, C.-Y., Lin, H.-C., Liu, D., Lee, T.-Y., & Chou, K.-R. (2024). Meta-analysis and moderator analysis of the prevalence of malnutrition and malnutrition risk among older adults with dementia. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 150. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2023.104648>
- (3) Labyak, C., Sealey-Potts, C., Wright, L., Kriek, C., & Dilts, S. (2024). Informal caregiver and healthcare professional perspectives on dementia and nutrition. *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics*, 37(5), 1308–1319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jhn.13344>
- (4) Lahiouel, A., Kellett, J., Isbel, S., & D'Cunha, N. M. (2023). An Exploratory Study of Nutrition Knowledge and Challenges Faced by Informal Carers of Community-Dwelling People with Dementia: Online Survey and Thematic Analysis. *Geriatrics*, 8(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.3390/geriatrics8040077>
- (5) Fostinelli, S., De Amicis, R., Leone, A., Giustizieri, V., Binetti, G., Bertoli, S., Battezzati, A., & Cappa, S. F. (2020). Eating Behavior in Aging and Dementia: The Need for a Comprehensive Assessment. *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2020.604488>
- (6) Bull, C., Low, E., Holloway, H., Kellett, J., Roberts, E., Chelberg, G., Wiseman, L., Chau, A., Mitterfellner, R., Isbel, S., Bail, K., Gibson, D., & D'Cunha, N. M. (2025). Exploring the Role of a Dietitian in an Early Intervention Program for People With Dementia and Their Care Partners: A Composite Case Series. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/07334648251338302>
- (7) Morgan, D. G., Kosteniuk, J., & Bayly, M. (2024). Perceptions and outcomes of an embedded Alzheimer Society First Link Coordinator in rural primary health care memory clinics. *BMC Health Services Research*, 24(1), 607. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-024-11066-0>
- (8) Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Thematic analysis: A practical guide. *SAGE Publications Limited*.