

ESPEN 2022 Late Breaking Abstracts

Topic: Qualitative design studies

Abstract Submission Identifier: ESPEN22-LB-2187

DIETARY COUNSELING ON MALNUTRITION: CLIENTS SHOW SELF-HELP IN RESPONSE TO DIETITIANS' HISTORY TAKING QUESTIONS

A. Barkmeijer*, ^{1, 2}, H. te Molder ³, J. Lamerichs ^{3, 4}, H. Jager-Wittenaar ^{1, 5}

¹Research Group Healthy Ageing, Allied Health Care and Nursing, ²School of Health Care Studies, Nutrition and Dietetics Programme, Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen, ³Faculty of Humanities: Language, Literature, and Communication, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, ⁴Research Group Mental Health Care and Society, Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, Zwolle, ⁵University of Groningen, University Medical Center Groningen, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Groningen, Netherlands

Rationale: In this study, we aimed to explore how dietitians' history-taking questions function during dietary counseling of clients with malnutrition (risk). Fruitful functioning of history-taking questions during the problem identification phase is crucial for dietitians to develop a client-centered dietary treatment plan.

Methods: Using discursive psychology, we analyzed the problem identification phase of recorded dietitian-client conversations of 7 dietitians and 17 clients. Discursive psychology is a qualitative, inductive methodology that is used to analyze real-life conversations. Discursive psychology focuses on how descriptions in talk (including wording, intonation, pauses, non-verbal behavior) accomplish actions such as presenting oneself in a particular way.

Results: Our analysis shows how, in response to dietitians' history-taking questions, clients repeatedly demonstrate that they have already made some effort to self-help. Typically, these history-taking questions presume some biopsychosocial factor as the cause of the dietary problems discussed. In response, clients show they already started to eat extra, closely monitored their body weight, and tried to eat despite having no appetite. In addition, clients account for the absence of efforts by claiming various kinds of inability, such as facing difficulties in preparing food for oneself or by questioning whether their underlying medical condition caused the diet-related problem in the first place.

Conclusion: This study shows that history-taking questions not only elicit answers with factual information but also evoke clients' self-presentations. Responses from dietitians show little attention to the relevance of these self-presentations, while clients treat self-help as a normative requirement to demonstrate they have done everything they can before they sought professional help. To optimize the problem identification phase, we suggest that in addition to conversational techniques dietitians could increase their attention to clients' actions performed.

References: -

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

Keywords: client-centered, conversation analysis, dietary counseling, dietetic consultation, dietitian, dietitian-client conversation, discursive psychology, malnutrition