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TOWARDS EFFECTIVE DIETARY COUNSELING: A SCOPING REVIEW

A. Barkmeijer*, ^{1, 2}, H. te Molder ³, M. Janssen ², H. Jager-Wittenaar ^{1, 4}

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, ⁴University Medical Center Groningen, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands

Rationale: In this scoping review we aimed to identify and map available evidence concerning counseling strategies that contribute to effective dietary counseling. Dietary counseling, as component of dietary treatment, is important to empower clients in achieving dietary treatment goals.

Methods: Following the PRISMA SCR-Scoping Reviews Statement and Checklist, a systematic search in electronic databases (CINAHL, PsychInfo, Pubmed/Medline, Web of Science, SOC Index, Embase, and Psychology & Behavioral Sciences) was performed in March 2020. No date restriction for year of publication was applied to allow for inclusivity. Studies were included if they were peer-reviewed, quantitative and qualitative, had a primary analysis of empirical work, written in English or Dutch, and focused on dietary counseling in 1-on-1 consultations between dietitians and adult clients (≥ 18 years). Only studies which gave a description of the effective strategies of dietary counseling were included.

Results: Analysis of recurring themes in the 28 included studies revealed seven core counseling strategies that effectively contribute to dietary counseling: 1) connecting to motivation, 2) tailoring the modality of dietary counseling, 3) providing recurring feedback, 4) using integrated dietetic support tools, 5) showing empathy, 6) including clients' preferences, wishes, and expectations during decision-making, and 7) dietitians having high self-efficacy.

Conclusion: Multiple counseling strategies contributing to effective dietary counseling have been identified and mapped. Insights from this scoping review provide a foundation for dietitians to effectively carry out dietary counseling. To work towards effective dietary counseling, further development of an integrated approach that includes combinations of strategies that form a unified whole is required.

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