

HEAR FROM NUTRITION AUSTRALIA'S STUDENT COMMITTEE

NA Q&A

Q1

WHAT IS THE STUDENT COMMITTEE? WHAT DOES BEING ON THE COMMITTEE INVOLVE?



- Chantelle Erwin,
Deakin University

A: The student committee is a group of passionate dietetics students across four universities. The current members are Renee (Latrobe University), Chantelle (Deakin University), Emma (Monash University), Nancy (Swinburne University) and of course Emily Fitt (Senior Business and Account Officer at NA) who established the committee.

Being on the NA committee involves attending fortnightly meetings where we get the opportunity to meet with those who work at NA and learn about their roles and their influence in nutrition & dietetics. I was able to provide my perspective on NA initiatives and programs and engage with public health dietitians and experts in the field. I also got to photograph and create a recipe on social media for National Nutrition Week that showcased increased vegetable intake in light of NA's 'Try for 5' campaign.

Q2

WHO IS NA AND WHAT DO THEY DO? HOW CAN STUDENT DIETITIANS GET INVOLVED WITH NA AND UTILISE THEIR SERVICES?



- Emma van Burgel,
Monash University

A: Nutrition Australia is the nation's peak organisation for public health nutrition. It's an independent not-for-profit organisation, with the Victoria Division managing services for SA, TAS, WA and Victoria. Nutrition Australia provides evidence-based nutrition information and services to encourage good nutrition. Their mission aligns with ours, as aspiring dietitians. Their vision is to create a culture of healthy eating, provide credible, independent, practical and up-to-date nutrition information and to help formulate and implement sound nutrition policy as best practice. It was surprising to learn of the range of sectors that Nutrition Australia works which includes the food industry, childcare, education (primary, secondary, and tertiary), healthcare, government and workplaces. Across all these sectors, NA is also involved in staff training, education, workshops, advice and support to create a culture that values good nutrition and wellbeing.

The way students can get involved is by engaging with NA's social media accounts. This is a really great way to keep up to date with the latest research, be informed on the current and new initiatives running and of course having access to all the delicious recipes posted regularly! I also found it interesting to learn of the services and resources provided by NA available to utilise both as a student and a practising dietitian. Some of these include, the Healthy Eating Pyramid, Healthy Choices Guidelines and countless factsheets with topics ranging from diabetes, fibre, food and mood and so much more. You can find more resources on Nutrition Australia's website or the Healthy Eating Advisory Service website.

Q3

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING THING YOU HAVE LEARNT WHILE BEING ON THE COMMITTEE?



- Nancy Gater,
Swinburne University

A: I really enjoyed learning about the Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS) and the work they do with various organisations to increase the availability of healthier food and drink options, and meet relevant healthy eating policies and guidelines. A handy tool HEAS offers, free of charge, is FoodChecker. FoodChecker lets you check where a food/recipe ranks in compliance with Victorian Canteens, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services Policy using a traffic light system. I have used this tool throughout the year and see it being a very useful resource during community/public health and food service placements in the future. Find out more at <http://foodchecker.heas.health.vic.gov.au/>

Q4

WHAT WAS OUR EXPERIENCE ON THE STUDENT COMMITTEE?



- Renee Howard,
La Trobe University

A: My experience on the student committee has been invaluable so far! It has further opened my eyes to the business aspect of dietetics, from simple tasks such as developing meeting agendas, taking minutes and chairing meetings to understanding the role of dietitians in nutrition advocacy in public health and the community. I have also further learnt the value of working as a team in the dietetics industry.

Another interesting experience I've had whilst on the committee was chatting with Amy Knight and learning about her role as a NA consultant. I found it really inspiring to hear that her work influenced policy change, product reformulation and recipe development for various companies. This provided me with valuable insight into the direction I want to take my career moving forward.

