

A Précis of the publication: *Physicians' perceptions regarding the detection and management of malnutrition in Canadian hospitals: Results of a Canadian Malnutrition Task Force Survey.*

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This European survey was modified for use in a Canadian context where over 400 physicians from 18 hospitals, in 8 provinces, completed the survey. The majority of the physicians were male (61%), and worked as attending physicians (76%) in academic teaching hospitals (75%). The physicians surveyed included general internists, general surgeons, specialist surgeons and internal medicine subspecialists. A few highlights of the survey results are included below.

1. Physicians were asked to assess current versus optimal practice for when the patient's nutrition status was evaluated >50% of the time
 - o upon admission
 - o during hospitalization
 - o at discharge

Each answer yielded an overwhelming difference between "current" and "optimal" practice. For example, while only 33 % of surveyed physicians believed that nutritional status was determined upon hospital admission where they worked, 87% of physicians believed this should be an optimal practice.

2. Using a 10-point scale, physicians were asked to rank their knowledge, interest, and relevance with respect to treating malnourished patients. While their knowledge was ranked at 5.3, their interest was indicated at 6.9 and relevance 7.6.

3. Another intriguing outcome of the study is the physicians' perception regarding the reasons for insufficient nutrition support on the wards where they work. The three top reasons identified were:

- Ignorance;
- No definition of responsibility; and
- Hard to identify relevant patients.

Physicians, as part of the inter-disciplinary team, need to be educated on how to identify and treat the prevalent problem of malnutrition.

To read the full paper, please go to
<http://pen.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/05/12/0148607114534731?papetoc>