

Southwestern Dietetic Internship

Intern Handbook



2026 – 2027

(Updated August 2026)

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Introduction

The Southwestern Dietetic Internship (SWDI) was formed by the Phoenix Indian Medical Center (PIMC) and Kayenta Service Unit (KSU), two health care organizations within the Indian Health Service (IHS). The IHS is an agency within the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The SWDI accepted its first intern in 2006 and is a unique program focused on American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) nutrition and provides both urban and rural nutrition rotations at PIMC and the Pinon Health Center (PHC), respectively. The PHC is located in the heart of the Navajo Reservation in northern Arizona.

The IHS is responsible for providing health care services to members of federally recognized tribes, mandated by the United States Constitution and several treaties and laws. The mission of the IHS is “to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level” (Indian Health Service, n.d.). The SWDI was developed in response to data revealing limited access to culturally appropriate nutrition services provided by a qualified nutrition professional.

The mission of the SWDI is to prepare entry-level Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) to provide culturally appropriate, comprehensive nutrition services in AI/AN communities. Often times, RDNs working within Indian health may be the sole RDN working in a service unit located in a remote and isolated location. The SWDI is a 34-week program which provides supervised practice in both urban and rural areas.

The SWDI is based at the PIMC, a 127-bed referral hospital, where interns complete the clinical, ambulatory care/urban community, food service, and management rotations. Interns then complete a 2-week rural community nutrition rotation in Pinon, Arizona. The rural rotation may include other rural sites for the purpose of enhancing the learning experience.

Rotation sites and addresses:

Phoenix Indian Medical Center
4212 N. 16th Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85016
Nutrition Services: 602-263-1532

Pinon Health Center
Navajo Route 4
Pinon, Arizona 86510
Phone: 928-725-9500

Southwestern Dietetic Internship Team

CDR Charisse Holiday, PhD, MPH, RDN, CDCES, BC-ADM, CPH

Internship Director

Chief of Professional Officer

(602) 581-6052

Charisse.Holiday@ihs.gov

CDR Thelma Elliott, MBA, RDN, CDCES, BC-ADM

Phoenix Indian Medical Center Internship Acting Director & Supervisory Nutrition Management Preceptor

Chief of Nutrition Services

(602) 581-6038

Thelma.Elliott@ihs.gov

LCDR Samantha Smith, MPH, RDN

Pinon Health Center Site Coordinator & Supervising Rural Community Preceptor

Pinon Health Center Supervisory Dietitian

(928) 725-9500, extension 9676

Samantha.Smith@ihs.gov

Jeff Parrish, MBM, RDN

Supervising Food Service Rotation Preceptor

Food Service Director

Jeff.Parrish@ihs.gov

(602) 581-6407

Jamie.Morgan@ihs.gov

LCDR Jamie Morgan, MBA, MHA, RDN, CDCES

Phoenix Indian Medical Center Internship Site

Coordinator

Clinical Nutrition Manager

LCDR Sandra McCabe, MHA, RDN

Supervisory Ambulatory Nutrition Preceptor

(602) 581-6045

Sandra.McCabe@ihs.gov

CDR Lisa Grier, MBA, RDN, CDCES

Pediatric Nutrition Preceptor

(602) 581-6612

Lisa.Grier@ihs.gov

CDR Stacey Gyenizse, MS, RDN, CDCES

Ambulatory Nutrition Preceptor

Clinical Nutrition Preceptor

(602) 581- 6046

Stacey.Gyenizse@ihs.gov

LT Rocio Marquez, MS, RDN

Food Service Rotation Preceptor

Women's Clinic Preceptor

(602) 581-6993

Rocio.Marquez@ihs.gov

LT Alyssa Katz, MS, RDN, CDCES

Clinical Nutrition Preceptor

Ambulatory Nutrition Preceptor

(602) 581-6048

Alyssa.Katz@ihs.gov

Accreditation Status

The SWDI is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND). The contact information for ACEND is as follows:

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190
Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995
Phone: 312/877-1600 (ext. 5400)
Email: ACEND@eatright.org
[RD Handbook for Candidates](#)

Becoming a RDN: Requirements and Steps

There are several pathways to becoming a RDN (see www.cdrnet.org/RDNeeligibility for details on the pathways to becoming a RDN). For students interested in completing eligibility requirements by completing a Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) with supervised practice through a dietetic internship program, the requirements and steps to become a RDN include the following:

1. Prospective Dietetic Interns must complete a DPD accredited by ACEND and obtain a DPD verification statement from the educational institution's nutrition program. The DPD verification statement is a prerequisite to applying to an accredited dietetic internship (DI). Students who have not yet graduated may obtain an Intent to Complete DPD Statement when applying for a DI but must provide a final DPD verification statement prior to beginning the internship. A DPD grants at least a bachelor's degree (some grant a master's degree) and is ACEND-accredited for only the required dietetics coursework. A list of accredited programs is available on the ACEND website.
2. In addition to completing a DPD program, prospective interns must complete a graduate degree from a United States Department of Education recognized accredited institution. The graduate degree requirement can be met in any study area. Effective January 1, 2024, the CDR requires a Master's degree to be eligible for the RDN credentialing exam.
3. Prospective Dietetic Interns must then apply, be accepted into, and successfully complete an ACEND accredited DI program, and obtain a DI verification statement. The DI verification statement is a prerequisite to taking the Registration Examination for Dietitians by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. The DI is required supervised practice experience. The SWDI is an ACEND accredited DI program.

In summary, this pathway requires a DPD verification statement, a Master's Degree and a DI verification statement. Once all required steps have been completed and verified, students can register for the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Examination. Please see the Registration Examination for Dietitians Handbook: [RD Handbook for Candidates](#)

SWDI Mission, Goals and Objectives

Mission: The mission of the SWDI is to prepare entry-level RDNs to provide culturally appropriate, comprehensive nutrition services in AI/AN communities.

The SWDI focuses on AI/AN nutrition; therefore, its goals and objectives are aligned with the program's specific focus and overall purpose. .

Goal 1: Prepare graduates to be competent entry-level RDNs.

Objectives:

1. At least 80 percent of program interns complete program requirements within 12 months (150% of the program length).
2. 80 percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for RDNs within 12 months of program completion.
3. The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for RDNs is at least 80%.
4. 90 percent of employers will evaluate graduates' entry-level skills as meeting overall competency requirements.
5. Each year the mean program score on the CDR credentialing exam for RDN will meet or exceed the national mean score.
6. Of graduates who seek employment, 70 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

Goal 2: To increase the number of dietitians who service AI/AN communities.

Objective: At least 30% of employed graduates will be employed in programs serving AI/AN people.

Goal 3: To increase the number of AI/AN dietetic professionals.

Objective: At least 30% of graduates will be registered with a federally recognized tribes.

- This objective will be measured by the application completed by the applicant.

The SWDI outcomes data are available upon request.

Admission Requirements

- Applicants must be a United States (U.S.) citizen.
- Complete applications must be submitted through the AND Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Service (DICAS). The SWDI participates in the spring computer match and the following items must be submitted and/or are required to be considered for the SWDI.
 - a. A completed application.
 - b. Official Transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.
 - c. A DPD grade point average of at least 3.0.
 - d. All candidates must have a Master's degree. Students who have not yet graduated, but anticipate graduating before the start of the internship may apply. If selected, students

must submit an updated, official transcript demonstrating a Master's degree prior to starting the SWDI.

- e. An original DPD verification statement that is dated within 5 years of the application deadline. If the applicant has not yet graduated from a DPD program, a current Declaration of Intent to Complete must be submitted. Application packets with outdated DPD Verification statements or Intent to Complete statements will not be considered.
- A current resume documenting work experience related to nutrition and dietetics. For full credit during applicant scoring, 1000 hours is required. Work experience examples include: dietetic technician, food service worker, dietary manager, nutrition educator, etc.
- Three academic and/or professional letters of reference. Letters should be from a professor and an employer/supervisor. No letters from relatives or friends will be considered.
- Supplemental documents which must be uploaded in DICAS.
 - a. *A single-spaced 1-page essay* with one-inch margins discussing 3 prevalent health-related problems among AI/AN communities (rural and/or urban) along with potential solutions. Responses demonstrate an applicant's professional writing capability and the student's interest in serving the AI/AN population. Citations and a reference page must be included. To allow for adequate essay space, the reference page must be placed on page 2 of the essay. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are not permitted when writing the essay; essays will be evaluated against AI demonstrated essay results.
 - b. *Personal statement* explaining why the applicant chose to apply to the SWDI and how the program aligns with professional and personal short and long-term goals. Statement should also discuss personal and professional strengths and weaknesses and expectations of a dietetic internship program.
- Physical Requirements:
 - a. Must be able to stand for extended periods of time.
 - b. Must be able to lift objects weighing 20 lbs. unassisted and 40 lbs. with assistance from one other person.
- Applicants must be able to read, write, and communicate effectively in English, and type on a computer daily for extended periods of time.
- Applicants must have a valid driver's license, their own transportation and valid auto insurance.

The SWDI does not grant credit for prior learning or for graduate work.

Important to take note:

- The Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Service (DICAS) fee for Spring 2027 will cost \$50.00 for the first designation and \$25.00 for each additional designation.
- Applicants can begin applying for the SWDI in December for admission for the following SWDI year (August).

Cost to the Intern

There are no tuition or application fees for the SWDI. However, interns should expect costs related to relocation (if required) and travel.

Costs to the intern may include:

- Relocation to Phoenix, Arizona (*if required*).
- Personal Vehicle and Travel Expenses for the rural community rotation:
 - Pinon Health Center is approximately 275 miles from PIMC, with an estimated one-way travel time of 4.5 hours. Interns should anticipate making two round trips and are responsible for all fuel expenses associated with this travel.
 - If rotations are coordinated with another rural location, travel from Pinon, Arizona to the next location will be required. Distance to the next rural location can range from 50-170 miles.
 - Note: During the internship, the intern will be permitted to ride in a government vehicle on official duty but will not be permitted to operate the vehicle. Passengers in government vehicles are covered by the federal government in the event of an incident. Interns traveling in their personal vehicles will assume all safety and liability responsibilities.
- Housing in the Phoenix area: please check the many online resources for housing in the Phoenix area. Average monthly rent for apartments in Phoenix is \$1500.
 - Books and other reference materials not available on-site.
 - Medical exams and immunizations prior to arrival and health care during the internship.
 - Student membership to the AND which is ~\$58 per year.
 - Liability insurance which cost ~ \$24 per year for Student Members of the AND.

Please note: Financial aid is not available for the SWDI. Interns participating in the IHS Scholarship Program should contact their Scholarship Coordinator to see if financial aid is available.

Rural Community Rotation Housing

Housing is provided at no cost for the weeks that interns are completing the rural community rotation. The housing provided is what is provided to locum physicians and nurses. Therefore, it is possible SWDI interns may have a roommate for part of the stay. Housing is furnished with a bed and cooking appliances/equipment. Interns are welcome to bring their own dishes, utensils and cleaning supplies. Interns are welcome to subscribe to internet services through Frontier Communications.

Recommended Navajo Nation websites:

- Navajo Nation Tribal Government: www.navajo-nsn.gov
- Navajo Nation Special Diabetes Program: www.nnsdp.org
- Navajo Nation Newspaper: www.navajotimes.com
- Newspaper for both Hopi and the Navajo Tribe: www.navajohopiobserver.com

Preparing for the SWDI

Required Documents

Once intern(s) have been accepted into the SWDI and the intern has accepted the internship, the prospective intern must submit a number of required documents. The required documents allow interns to be onsite and gain supervised practice experience at the PIMC. Required documents and any deadlines will be communicated by the SWDI Director.

The following must be submitted:

- **Transcripts and DPD Verification:** Interns who had not yet graduated from their DPD when applying for the SWDI must submit final transcripts, indicating that the degree has been conferred and a final DPD verification statement.
- **Proof of Liability Insurance:** The AND currently offers a member benefit with Mercer Consumer for liability insurance. You can access their application via the AND website.
- **Proof of Student Membership in the AND:** Membership provides intern access to the AND's publications, the Evidence Analysis Library, and other resources that will be required to complete assignments. Member benefits may be found at <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/membership/student-member-center>.
- **Completed Volunteer Application Packet:** The packet will be coordinated by the PIMC Staff Development Department. Interns will be in a volunteer status during the internship. The Volunteer packet for PIMC, which includes immunization requirements, must be submitted prior to arrival. The Volunteer packet for the PHC and/or other designated sites will be provided to interns by the Rural Site Coordinator(s) and must be completed and submitted prior to the rotation.
- **Background Check and Fingerprints.** This step is coordinated by the PIMC Staff Development Department. Clearance must be received prior to the intern beginning the SWDI. The results of the background check and fingerprinting will be provided to rotation sites as needed. Two forms of identification are needed to initiate the background check. Background approval is required and necessary for the SWDI.

Selected interns are encouraged to complete the background check and complete fingerprinting as soon as possible to avoid delays in starting the SWDI.

Work Space

Interns can expect to share an office with the PIMC RDNs on the ground floor of the medical center. Each intern will have a desk with lockable drawers, a desk top computer and access to a network printer. Each intern will have an individual desk phone and is responsible for answering calls and responding to voicemail messages in a timely manner. All interns will be issued an ID badge and office keys.

SWDI workspace at the PHC is space shared with the Supervising RDN. Activities in Pinon occur in a few different locations that will require local travel with the preceptor. Additional information on Pinon will be given before that rotation.

Intern Expectations

Interns enrolled in the SWDI are expected to follow all policies and procedures and the expectations outlined below. Failure to meet expectations may result in disciplinary action and termination from the SWDI.

1. Interns are expected to be punctual throughout the internship.
2. Interns are expected to be prepared for each rotation by completing study guides prior to the rotation and communicating with the SWDI Director and/or Rotation Preceptors prior to each rotation to obtain the curriculum, schedule, and any other rotation expectations.
3. Interns are expected to complete all learning experiences, assignments, and/or projects by the due dates. No extensions will be given.
4. Interns are expected to prioritize work and assignment throughout the internship.
5. Interns are expected to be 100% engaged in the learning process, are expected to put quality time and effort into their work, and are expected to demonstrate a continual improvement in nutrition care competence.
6. Interns are expected to be available and onsite at all times.
7. Interns are expected to be familiar with applicable hospital and nutrition department policies and procedures.
8. Interns are expected to uphold the AND Code of Ethics at all times. The AND Code of Ethics can be found online at: eatright.org Code of Ethics for RDNs and NDTRs.
9. Interns are expected to have a positive attitude, to be proactive, and should take the initiative to research areas of nutrition they are not familiar with.
10. Interns are expected to communicate any conflicts, problems and/or challenges with assignments, projects, colleagues, etc. as early as possible in order to eliminate work, collegial and/or experience impact.

All interns must agree to and sign the expectations form.

SWDI Overview

Program Calendar

Duration	Rotation	Location
1 week	Hospital and SWDI Orientation	- PIMC: Staff Development; Aztec Building, 3rd Floor, Staff Development Office, 1616 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix, AZ, 85016 - PIMC: Nutrition Department, 4212 N. 16th Street, Phoenix, AZ, 85016
3 weeks	Nutrition Management	PIMC Nutrition Department
2 weeks	*Rural Community Nutrition	Pinon Health Center
16 weeks	Clinical Nutrition	PIMC Intensive Care and Med/Surgical Units
6 weeks	Ambulatory & Urban Community Nutrition	PIMC Primary Care Medical Clinic, Pediatric Clinic, and Local Communities
3 weeks	Food Service	PIMC Nutrition Department
2 weeks	Enrichment	PIMC Nutrition Department
1 week	Closeout and GRADUATION!	PIMC Nutrition Department

**Rotation depends on the weather and availability of resources.*

The internship schedule begins in August and ends in March/April of the following year. The schedule is subject to change. The SWDI observes all federal holidays.

Orientation Overview

All interns will orientate to PIMC and the Nutrition Department. During this time, interns will obtain a hospital ID badge, a parking decal, complete all required hospital trainings and become familiar with policy and procedures (Appendix B). Computer access will be given which includes access to PIMC's Electronic Health Record (EHR) and Registry Patient Management System (RPMS). The EHR is an electronic patient medical record, and the RPMS is a patient database that interfaces with the EHR. Access codes to EHR and RPMS must always be safe guarded.

Practice Exams

During orientation week and throughout the SWDI, all interns will be scheduled for RDN practice exams. Throughout the entire SWDI, interns will have access to RDN examination preparation resources. Interns are highly encouraged to review examination resources and begin studying. Practice exams serve as a self-evaluation tool and should help interns identify exam strengths and weaknesses.

Scope of Service

When working with patients hospitalized or in an ambulatory care setting, RDNs and SWDI interns must work within their scope of service. The following are commonly questioned situations that arise.

- **Recommendations for Diet Changes:** RDNs may make diet change recommendations but may not prescribe diets. Supported by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), RDNs may accept verbal or telephone orders from the physician or licensed independent practitioner (i.e. PA, FNP, etc.) that are pertinent to the nutritional care of the patient, if the medical staff bylaws authorize it. Interns are NOT authorized to accept verbal or telephone orders and may not enter a physician's order. If an intern receives a verbal or telephone order from a physician, the intern is expected to immediately communicate this request to the supervising preceptor who will complete the required action to implement the order.
- **Adding Supplements:** Nutritional oral supplements are defined as nutritional drinks, shakes, increased portions, etc. Vitamin and mineral supplements are considered medications. Vitamin and mineral supplements can be recommended to the physician. RDNs and interns may add oral supplements to patient meals and/or snacks to enhance and/or meet the patient's nutritional needs. All nutritional oral supplement actions must be documented in the patient's medical record.
- **Modifying Meal Schedules:** Interns may modify a meal schedule to meet the nutritional needs of a patient. Interns are expected to communicate the schedule change with the Dietetic Technicians and document the change and purpose in the medical record.
- **Requesting Labs:** Interns may recommend laboratory studies and ask the physician to place orders for them. If a physician concurs with the recommendation and/or request, interns may inform/remind the physician of the intern's scope of capacity, or interns may ask the supervising preceptor to place the order in EHR.
- **Implementing Enteral or Parenteral Orders:** Orders must be entered and implemented by a physician and/or a RDN who has received a telephone or verbal order from the physician. As a note, standardized order sets already exist in the EHR.
- **Recommendations for Medications:** Medication recommendations may be communicated to the physician but must be pertinent to the nutritional care of the patient. Physicians and independent practitioners are the only providers who may write medication orders.

Clinical Nutrition Overview

The PIMC has 2 primary inpatient wards: Intensive Care and Medical/Surgical. Individuals eligible for health care in IHS facilities are members of federally recognized tribes. The inpatient areas serve adult patients only. Pediatric patients who require hospitalization are transferred to other area hospitals.

The clinical program begins with a one-week “Boot Camp” designed to reinforce the foundational knowledge and skills required to effectively apply the Nutrition Care Process. This orientation includes didactic instruction and a comprehensive review of the program study guide, which interns are required to complete before arriving at the facility.

During the second week, interns are assigned to the Diet Office, where they work closely with Dietetic Technicians to become familiar with the patient menu system, nutrition screening procedures, and departmental workflows. This experience also provides an opportunity to establish collaborative working relationships with staff throughout Nutrition and Food Services.

Dietetic Technicians play an essential role in screening hospitalized patients, verifying that patients receive meals consistent with their prescribed diets, and facilitating communication between inpatient clinical services and food service operations. Because interns will provide nutrition care to hospitalized patients, this orientation is critical to understanding departmental systems, supporting continuity of care, and building effective working relationships with Dietetic Technicians and Food Service staff.

Following orientation to inpatient nutrition procedures, interns will begin providing supervised nutrition care to hospitalized patients and documenting services in PIMC’s electronic health record. The Assessment, Diagnosis, Intervention, Monitoring, and Evaluation (ADIME) framework will be used to guide all patient care and documentation.

Interns’ patient care responsibilities will increase progressively throughout the rotation, with a maximum expected caseload of approximately six to eight patients per day. Interns will participate in interdisciplinary rounds and collaborate with members of the multidisciplinary inpatient care team. Opportunities to observe surgical procedures or other clinical interventions may also be available, depending on scheduling and operational considerations.

Interns should anticipate an eight-hour workday. Additional time may occasionally be required to complete patient care responsibilities and same-day clinical documentation.

In addition to providing nutrition care to hospitalized patients, interns will complete assigned projects and learning activities designed to strengthen clinical knowledge, professional skills, and application of the Nutrition Care Process.

Ambulatory and Urban Community Nutrition Overview

The six-week Ambulatory and Urban Community Rotation focuses on the delivery of nutrition services in outpatient and community-based settings. Depending on scheduling and program availability, the rotation may include brief experiences in the PIMC Pediatrics and Women’s Clinics. Interns will complete much of their supervised practice experience within the PIMC Primary Care Medical Clinic.

Rotation activities may include providing individualized medical nutrition therapy, facilitating group nutrition education classes, and collaborating with other ambulatory services, including PIMC’s Centers of Excellence. Interns may also have opportunities to work with PIMC’s tribal

partners by participating in health fairs, supporting nutrition services at tribal clinics, and engaging in community outreach events.

In addition to providing nutrition care to ambulatory patients, interns will complete assigned projects and learning activities designed to strengthen clinical knowledge, communication skills, cultural responsiveness, and the application of the Nutrition Care Process in outpatient and community settings.

Rural Community Rotation

The Rural Community Rotation is primarily conducted in Pinon, Arizona, on the Navajo Nation. Additional approved locations may be incorporated to broaden the supervised practice experience and support program objectives.

This rotation provides interns with a distinctive opportunity to deliver community nutrition services in a rural and geographically remote setting. Experiences may include developing and implementing nutrition education programs, providing individualized nutrition education and counseling, participating in home visits, and supporting school-based nutrition initiatives.

Food Service Rotation

The Food Service Rotation is completed at PIMC and provides interns with an overview of hospital food service operations and management. The PIMC hospital kitchen prepares meals for hospitalized patients and administers an employee meal program.

Food service operations are guided by patients' nutritional needs and applicable regulatory and accreditation requirements, including standards established by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, The Joint Commission, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Food Code.

Interns will gain practical experience in key areas of hospital food service management, including food safety and sanitation, inventory control, cost analysis, menu planning, recipe development, and the management and maintenance of food service equipment.

Nutrition Services Management Rotation

The Management Rotation is designed to provide interns with a comprehensive and applied overview of healthcare administration and hospital nutrition services management. Experiences may include leadership and strategic planning, risk assessment, medical nutrition therapy billing and coding, quality assurance and performance improvement, human resources management, regulatory compliance, and accreditation standards.

How to Successfully Complete the SWDI

Productivity Benchmarks

To ensure intern rotation success, productivity and performance benchmarks were developed for both the Clinical and Ambulatory Nutrition Rotations. Benchmarks focus on facility awareness and knowledge, clinical nutrition activities and performance, and grading expectations. See Appendix A for Clinical and Ambulatory Nutrition benchmarks. Benchmarks will be reviewed during the rotation's orientation session.

Evaluations

Intern performance is evaluated throughout the entire internship and is guided by competencies, the assignments, and the grading of each activity. Nutrition care is continually evaluated by the supervising RDN(s) daily. Interns are expected to demonstrate a continual improvement in documentation, knowledge and overall performance as the rotations progress. Interns are strongly encouraged to seek guidance, clarification, and communicate challenges as early as possible to ensure assignments are completed in a timely and acceptable manner.

For rotations longer than 4 weeks, preceptors will complete a rotation midpoint evaluation, provide continuous feedback, and will provide a final evaluation of your performance. Performance evaluation should not be a surprise. If an intern's midpoint evaluation is "not meeting expectations," the preceptor will implement a corrective action plan.

Interns are graded on all rotation activities and are evaluated on professional attributes. To successfully pass each rotation, interns must meet the minimum passing grade on all rotation assignments and must have zero 'Needs Improvement' in the professional attributes section. Interns are strongly encouraged to learn and understand the scoring of each rotation and all evaluation forms prior to beginning assignments.

If interns disagree with an evaluation, an appeal may be filed utilizing the appropriate grievance procedures. Interns will complete a rotation evaluation at the end of each rotation.

Presentation Expectations

Dietitians are often called upon to present at professional meetings and to the public, therefore, interns should expect several evaluated presentations. Presentations are expected to be professional and 30 minutes in length. Interns are strongly encouraged to review the presentation evaluation form in preparation for a presentation.

Projects and Assignments

Throughout the internship, interns will complete a variety of projects and assignments in addition to their routine rotation responsibilities. Interns are expected to effectively prioritize their workload, manage competing responsibilities, and meet established deadlines. Completion of assigned work may require additional study or preparation outside of scheduled rotation hours.

These assignments are designed to reinforce learning objectives, strengthen professional competencies, and enhance the overall supervised practice experience.

Utilizing Library Resources

While an intern of the SWDI, interns will have access to a number of resources. Interns are encouraged to become familiar with these resources.

- **Nutrition Services Library:** A number of textbooks related to nutrition are located in the RDN and the Clinical Nutrition Manager's office. Interns may borrow books by requesting it through the supervising preceptor, but must return the book prior to completing the rotation. In addition to textbooks, "RD in a Flash" flashcards, food models, and other teaching aids are available for use.
- **National Institutes of Health (NIH) Library:** A link to the Library can be found on the PIMC intranet homepage under the Departments & Services heading. The contents on the Library internet page is extremely helpful.
- **EHR:** The EHR houses access to a number of websites and helpful links which include UpToDate and Micromedix; both provide current medical information.

In any situation, interns should only use credible sources i.e. NIH, FDA, Mayo Clinic, PubMed, or the Journal of the AND.

Reports/Document Submissions

Interns are required to submit weekly reports to the SWDI Director and to the Supervising Preceptor of the intern's current rotation. Weekly reports are due weekly via email on Fridays at the close of business which is 4:30 PM. The weekly report documents the intern's time and attendance, work and progress, any lessons learned, and the status and progress of pending assignments/projects. The weekly report also serves as an evaluation tool for the preceptors. Interns must utilize the approved format which includes the following details:

- Name, week (e.g., 8/7-8/11) covered by report, and rotation (e.g., Clinical)
- Hours worked
- Productivity (e.g., number of patients seen, presentations done, etc.)
- Lessons learned
- Status/progress of research and other projects

All intern evaluations and copies of all assignments, projects and presentations are kept in the intern's file. Therefore, interns must submit final and original assignments, projects and presentations via email to the SWDI Director and the Supervising Preceptors.

Interns will have access to their own personnel file upon request. Paper personnel files are kept locked in the office of the Director or Site Coordinator and electronic information is kept secured by password-protected computer access for the privacy of intern information.

Study Week, Close Out, and Graduation

Once interns successfully complete the SWDI, interns will have a final week on site to prepare for the Registration Examination for RDNs, to prepare for PIMC departure, and to participate in the SWDI graduation. Interns must return keys, badges, and any borrowed books prior to being released by the SWDI. The SWDI Director will schedule a close out day to complete required documents i.e. RDE Misuse Statement and help the intern apply for the Registration Examination for RDNs.

Once interns have successfully completed and met all rotation requirements, interns may participate in the SWDI graduation. The DI Verification Statement will be presented to the successful intern during the graduation. The SWDI graduation ceremony is typically planned for the Thursday or Friday of Study Week from 2:00 to 3:00 PM. Graduation is a time to recognize the work and success of SWDI graduates.

References:

Indian Health Service. (n.d.-a). *Agency Overview*. About IHS. Retrieved November 13, 2025, from <https://www.ihs.gov/aboutihs/overview/>

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Productivity Benchmarks

Rotation	Timeframe	Benchmarks
All rotations	Specified Due Date	All study guides must be completed by the given deadlines.
Clinical Nutrition	Weeks 1 - 3	• Demonstrate familiarity with Diet Office operations. • Identify commonly used diets and oral nutrition supplements.
	Weeks 4 – 6	• Independently manage a minimum of 3 patients per day. • Achieve $\geq 70\%$ on Peer Review. • Complete EHR notes by 1:00 PM.
	Weeks 7-9	• Independently lead patient visits with minimal to no RD intervention. • Conduct 4 patient assessments per day • Complete all patients' notes in EHR by 1pm • Meet assignment expectations • Peer Review Grade $>85\%$
	Weeks 10 – 16	• Complete required tube-feeding experience. • Independently provide appropriate diabetes education. • Independently provide diabetes education (meter, medications, etc.) • Conduct 6 patient assessments per day • Complete all patients' notes in EHR by 2pm • Meet assignment expectations • Peer Review Grade $>90\%$
Ambulatory Nutrition Rotation	Week 1	• Progress to conducting 2 patient visits per day by the end of the week. • Complete all patients' notes in EHR by 4pm • Peer Review Grade $>80\%$
	Week 2	• Progress to conducting 4 patient visits per day by the end of the week. • Complete all patients' notes in EHR by 4pm • Peer Review Grade $>80\%$
	Weeks 3-6:	• Independently manage and complete 6 patient visits per day • Complete all patients' notes in EHR by 4pm • Peer Review Grade $>90\%$

Appendix B – Internship Policies

Southwestern Dietetic Internship

4212 N. 16th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85016

Internship Orientation

1. **Purpose:** Provide a formalize orientation to newly onboarded dietetic interns.
Orientation will include hospital orientation, internship orientation, and rotation specific orientation. Orientation introduces interns to the agency, the organization, institutional values and culture, and to the specific nutrition rotation.
2. **Definitions**
Intern – interns are individuals who were selected into the Southwestern Dietetic Internship Program and who have accepted the internship.
Southwestern Dietetic Internship – A dietetic internship program that is focused on training and providing supervised practice of students who have met the internship requirements. The internship begins in August of the year and ends in the spring of the following year.
3. **Policy**
 - a. All interns will attend the Phoenix Indian Medical Center (PIMC) New Employee Orientation (NEO), prior to reporting to the Nutrition Department and the Southwestern Dietetic Internship. Orientation is 3 days. The following will be completed and/or obtained during the PIMC NEO:
 - i. Mandatory training
 - ii. Hospital identification badge
 - iii. PIMC campus parking decal
 - iv. Tour of the facility
 - b. Once the intern completes PIMC NEO, interns will be released to the Nutrition Department.
 - c. Interns will be orientated to the SWDI and PIMC Nutrition Department by the SWDI Internship Director, or designee. Orientation consists of touring the Nutrition Department and reviewing and discussing the:
 - i. The department and internship mission, goals, objectives and the organizational structure
 - ii. SWDI handbook and policies
 - iii. Intern expectations

- iv. Internship schedule
- v. Grading and evaluation
- vi. Summary of each rotation requirements
- vii. Weekly reporting requirements
- d. After completing the SWDI orientation, the intern will begin the Clinical Nutrition Rotation Orientation, which is the first rotation of the internship.

4. Conditions of NEO:

- a. All interns must receive security and employee health clearance prior to being scheduled to attend NEO. Human Resources provides the formal notification of the intern's scheduled NEO.

5. Procedures:

- a. An intern file will be created during orientation. Intern file will mirror the PIMC Employee 7B file which includes position description and curriculum vitae; licensure and certifications; orientation specific documents (competencies and orientation documentation); continuing education, skills and competency assessment; performance evaluation; and miscellaneous information. Interns may have access to their 7B file at their request.
- b. The SWDI Orientation Checklist will facilitate orientation topics (Appendix A).
- c. Intern will complete a nutrition self-assessment during the SWDI orientation, and again at the end of the internship. A completed self-assessment will be placed in the 7B file.
- d. Intern will complete a practice exam during orientation.
- e. Intern will sign the SWDI expectations. The signed copy will be placed in the 7B file.
- f. Intern will review all SWDI policies and applicable PIMC policies.

Southwestern Dietetic Internship

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Intern Schedule, Attendance and Leave Policy

1. PURPOSE:

- A. To define the procedures for reporting and monitoring time and attendance during the Southwestern Dietetic Internship.
- B. To define the procedures for requesting leave.

2. POLICY: In addition to successfully completing each Southwestern Dietetic Internship rotation, interns are required to meet the minimum number of internship hours to successfully complete the internship program. In order maintain the internship and preceptor schedule, sick and vacation days are limited.

3. PROCEDURE:

A. Minimum internship hours and reporting:

- i. Interns are scheduled for a minimum of 40 hours a week throughout the entire internship program. Homework, study and project work may require interns to utilize non-internship hours.
- ii. Interns must report their completed daily and weekly hours by completing and submitting weekly reports, which are due on Fridays at 5:00 PM. The weekly report is to be sent to the Supervising Rotation Preceptor (SRP) and the Internship Director (ID).
- iii. The SRP is responsible for monitoring the intern's time and attendance and will communicate any time and attendance concerns to the ID.

B. Internship Schedule

- i. Each SRP determines the weekly and/or daily intern schedule for a minimum of 40 hours weekly.
- ii. Prior to beginning a new rotation, the intern is responsible for contacting the SRP to determine the rotation schedule.
- iii. The SRP may flex the schedule to meet curriculum and/or rotation needs so long the daily 8 hour minimum requirement is met.

C. Tardiness

- i. Interns are expected to be on time and prepared for the day throughout the entire internship.
- ii. Interns must immediately contact their SRP or designee when they are going to be late.
- iii. Interns will be given a verbal warning after two tardiness incidences.
- iv. Interns will be given a written warning after the third tardiness incident.

- v. A Corrective Action Plan will be initiated after a fourth tardiness incident and further disciplinary action may be taken should tardiness incidences continue.
- vi. Any missed time must be made up.

D. Sick Leave

- i. Interns do not accrue or earn sick leave while completing the SWDI.
- ii. Interns are allowed a total of 2 sick days during the internship program.
- iii. Use of sick time in excess of two (2) days requires a valid physician's written documentation. Some conditions (e.g., infectious diseases, etc.) may require a physician's clearance to return to work regardless of the length of sick time.
- iv. Interns must contact their SRP or designee as early as possible and at the very minimum, 1 hour prior to their scheduled start time to request sick leave.
- v. If the intern becomes ill while on duty, the intern must request sick leave from the SRP or designee on that day.
- vi. All sick leave must be made up.

E. Leave

- i. Interns do not accrue or earn annual leave while completing the SWDI.
- ii. Leave requests will need to be approved by the ID on a case by case basis.
- iii. All leave time will need to be made up and will be coordinated by the ID and the Site Coordinator(s).

F. Early Release:

- i. Occasionally, the United States Health and Human Service Director and/or the Indian Health Service Agency Director may give IHS/PIMC employees a 2 to 4 hour early release prior to a holiday weekend. Should PIMC be given early release of 2-4 hours, interns will also receive early release hours.
- ii. Early release hours do not need to be made up.

G. Holiday

- i. The federal government recognizes the following holidays:
 - New Year's Day
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 - Presidents' Day
 - Memorial Day
 - Independence Day
 - Labor Day
 - Columbus Day
 - Veterans' Day
 - Thanksgiving Day
 - Christmas Day

- ii. If a community site does not observe a particular Holiday and the intern is scheduled to attend the community with a RD, the intern will be required to be in attendance on the Holiday.

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Insurance, Services, and Benefits

1. **PURPOSE:** To define the insurance requirements, services and benefits provided to interns.
2. **Insurance**
 - a. **Liability Insurance:** Interns are required to purchase professional liability insurance. Proof of insurance must be submitted to the Program Director prior to arrival to begin the program. Discounted rates are available through the Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics website.
 - b. **Liability for Travel:** Interns must possess own transportation, a valid driver's license, and valid auto insurance, consistent with Arizona law.
 - c. **Health Insurance**
 - d. Interns registered with a federally recognized tribe are eligible for health care with the Indian Health Service and may access care at its facilities.
 - i. Proof of tribal enrollment and valid identification will be required to establish a medical record.
 - ii. Interns not eligible for health care with the Indian Health Service will be responsible for their own health care at a facility outside the Indian Health Service. Exception: If an intern is injured on the job, the first visit for evaluation of the injury will be covered. Subsequent visits will be the intern's responsibility at a non-IHS facility.
3. **Services and Benefits**
 - a. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE),** such as masks and gowns, if needed, will be provided to complete work assignments.
 - b. **Meals:** Interns, as volunteers, are offered no-cost meals during working hours on work days at Phoenix Indian Medical Center. Meals during rotations at locations outside of PIMC will be the responsibility of the intern.
 - c. **Parking** is provided free of cost on the campus of Phoenix Indian Medical Center and other IHS service units.
 - d. **Housing**
 - i. Housing in Phoenix is the responsibility of the intern.
 - ii. Housing will be provided during the rotation in Pinon, Arizona. Details regarding housing in Pinon will be reviewed by the Pinon Site Coordinator.

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Corrective Action Plan

1. **Purpose:** To define criteria and procedures for identifying the implementation and monitoring of Corrective Action Plans.
2. **Policy:**
 - a. Intern performance will continually be assessed throughout the internship program with informal feedback and periodic formal evaluation reports.
 - b. Intern performance benchmarks will be outlined and communicated for clinical and ambulatory rotations.
 - c. To ensure interns successfully meet rotation expectations, interns who do not meet rotation benchmarks for successfully completing the rotation will be placed on a corrective action plan (CAP).
 - d. Corrective action plans are a proactive approach and are mutually developed between intern(s) and preceptor and can reflect performance and/or behavior.
 - e. Corrective action plans will detail the performance and/or behavior expectations and will be written utilizing SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-based) objectives.
3. **Procedures:**
 - a. Criteria for implementing a CAP:
 - i. Performance-based CAP will be implemented if:
 1. Assigned study guides are not completed and submitted by the due date(s).
 2. Clinical nutrition benchmarks are not met (Appendix A).
 3. Ambulatory nutrition benchmarks are not met (Appendix A).
 4. Presentation & project evaluations at the midpoint of the rotation average less than “meets expectations.” Projects, case studies, and journal article presentations will be graded by preceptors using the standardized Presentation Evaluation Form and by project grade guidelines and points.
 - ii. Behavior-Based CAP will be implemented if:
 1. The intern is rated “Needs Improvement” at the mid-point of the rotation for any element in the Professional Attributes Section of the Rotation’s Curriculum/Evaluation Form.
 2. The intern violates the HHS Standards of Conduct which include:

3. Insubordination or refusal to carry out an assignment.
4. Failure to comply with the Intern Schedule, Attendance, and Leave Policy.
5. Sexual harassment
6. Use of illicit substance or alcoholic beverages or being under the influence of such while on duty.
7. Disruptive behavior, including gambling, threatening or abusive behavior.
8. Violation of Southwestern Dietetic Internship (SWDI) Intern Expectations.
9. Violations of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics
10. Violation of HIPAA or the Privacy Act

b. Implementing a CAP.

- i. Once the preceptor has evaluated an intern's performance being less than "meets expectation" or identifies the need for a Behavioral Based CAP, the preceptor will draft his/her CAP utilizing the SWDI CAP Form.
- ii. The CAP must include the following details: Date the CAP is to be effective, intern name, the purpose of the CAP, rotation, supervising rotation preceptor name, the timeframe of the CAP, and expectations. The SMART criteria must be utilized when writing performance expectation(s).
- iii. The preceptor will send the drafted CAP to the Internship Director (ID) and the Site Coordinator(s) (SC) for review.
- iv. Once the CAP is reviewed and approved, the preceptor will schedule a meeting with the intern to discuss the CAP and allow the intern to provide input and additional strategies for the CAP. Once the CAP is mutually agreed upon, the intern must sign the CAP to officially acknowledge receipt of the CAP.

c. Monitoring and Re-evaluation

- i. Elements for successfully meeting criteria established by the CAP will be re-evaluated weekly by the Preceptor.
- ii. Interns will have access to preceptors for remedial instruction and tutoring.
- iii. The preceptor will meet with the intern formally and document progress toward meeting criteria until the rotation is scheduled to be completed.

- iv. At the end of the CAP timeframe, the preceptor must complete the SWDI CAP Outcome and supply a copy to the intern. The original form will be placed in the intern's file.
- v. Failure to meet the performance expectations established on the CAP by the scheduled completion date of the rotation will result in an extension of the rotation up to repeating the entire rotation. Only one rotation may be repeated.
- vi. If an intern's performance during subsequent rotations leads to failure to successfully meet criteria for passing a second rotation, the intern will be dismissed from the program. Interns who show a minimal chance for success in the program will meet with the ID for career counselling, during which options for career paths more appropriate to their abilities will be discussed.
- vii. All CAP documents will be placed in the intern's 7B file which will be housed in the SWDI Director's Office.

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Grievance Procedures and Complaint Process

1. Purpose:
 - a. To define the process of submitting an intern and/or preceptor grievance.
 - b. To define the process for submitting written complaints to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND).
2. Policy:
 - a. Interns and/or internship preceptors must follow the outlined steps when submitting a grievance.
 - b. Interns and/or internship preceptors must follow the outlined steps when submitting a written complaint to the ACEND for non-compliance of accreditation standards.
3. Procedures:
 - a. If an intern or a preceptor has a grievance with the Southwestern Dietetic Internship (SWDI), at the Phoenix Indian Medical Center (PIMC), the intern or preceptor must submit the grievance in writing to the PIMC SWDI Site Coordinator (SC).
 - b. The SC will investigate both sides and issue a decision within five (5) working days.
 - c. If a resolution cannot be reached, the intern may request that all grievance materials be forwarded to the Internship Director (ID).
 - i. All grievance materials must be forwarded to the ID within three (3) working days of the SC's decision.
 - ii. The ID will investigate both sides and issue a decision within five (5) working days. Resolutions may include re-assignment.
 - iii. If resolution is still not reached, the intern may appeal to the Director of Professional Services (DPS) at PIMC within 5 working days. The DPS will render a decision within 5 working days. This is the final step in the grievance process.
 - d. If an intern or preceptor has a grievance with the SWDI, at the Pinon Health Center (PHC), the intern or preceptor must submit the grievance in writing to the PHC SC.
 - i. The PHC SC will investigate both sides and issue a decision within five (5) working days.
 - ii. If a resolution cannot be reached, the intern or preceptor may request that all grievance materials be forwarded to the ID.
 - iii. All grievance materials must be forwarded to the ID within three (3) working days of the SC's decision.
 - iv. The ID will investigate both sides and issue a decision within five (5) working days. Resolutions may include re-assignment.

- v. When a resolution still cannot be reached or there is fear of retaliation towards either an intern or a preceptor, the grievance materials will be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the PHC. The CEO is the final authority in this grievance process.
- e. If any party has a complaint related to program non-compliance with ACEND accreditation standards, these issues should be discussed with the ID, who will investigate the complaint with the appropriate SC and applicable preceptor(s). Parties are encouraged to follow this process prior to submitting a formal complaint to ACEND, but this is not required.
 - i. If the party is dissatisfied with the ID's response, the party may file a complaint with ACEND. The procedure for filing a complaint with ACEND may be found at <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notice-and-announcements/filing-a-complaint-with-acend>. The process for filing a complaint and the Complaint Investigation Form are found on that website.
 - ii. Copies of all documents related to the complaint will be maintained by the ID for at least seven years.
 - iii. All complaint and grievance materials will be made available to ACEND upon request.

Southwestern Dietetic Internship

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Withdrawal and Dismissal from the Internship

1. **PURPOSE:** To define the circumstances which will result in the withdrawal or dismissal from the Southwestern Dietetic internship.
2. **POLICY:** To communicate the circumstances that would result in withdrawal or dismissal from the Southwestern Dietetic Internship.
3. **PROCEDURE:**
 - a. **Withdrawal from the Program**
 - i. Interns may withdraw from the program at any time and for any reason by submitting written notification to the Program Director. The Director will conduct an exit interview.
 - ii. The intern may not be re-admitted that year. However, the intern may choose to re-apply for future admission.
 - iii. If an intern is readmitted to the program, all rotations will need to be completed.
 - b. **Leave of Absence due to circumstances beyond the intern's control**
 - i. If an intern's experience is interrupted by unavoidable absence or other causes beyond an intern's control and the intern's work was passable at the time of withdrawal, the intern will receive a grade of incomplete. The intern is required to request a leave of absence in writing, stating the reasons for the leave of absence. This request must be submitted through the Site Coordinator to the Program Director. The Program Director, in consultation with the Site Coordinators will have the final approval of any requests for a leave of absence.
 - ii. The intern may complete the experiences at a time mutually agreed upon by the Program Director, the intern, and facility at which the experiences are scheduled not to exceed one year from the date of leave of absence.
 - iii. If the intern does not resume the program within one year from the date the leave of absence began, the intern's status will be changed from "leave of absence" to "withdrawal."
 - c. **Dismissal**
 - i. **Misconduct**

1. Breaches of the Academy's Code of Ethics (education provided during orientation).
2. Breaches of the federal government's Standards of Conduct. The HHS Standards of Conduct are provided during orientation. Examples include:
 - a. Insubordination, refusal to carry out an assignment
 - b. Failure to comply with the attendance policy
 - c. Sexual harassment
 - d. Use of illicit substance or alcoholic beverages or being under the influence of such while on duty.
 - e. Disruptive behavior, including gambling, threatening or abusive behavior.
3. Violations of the HIPAA or the Privacy Act
4. Disciplinary action for misconduct will be based on the severity of the infraction. Types of disciplinary action which may be considered are:
 - a. Admonishment
 - b. Written reprimand
 - c. Removal

ii. Performance

1. Failure to successfully meet competencies and objectives of the rotation will result in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).
 - a. The CAP defines the competency that the intern is having performance problems with, sets goals with desired outcomes, activities for achieving the goals and the appraisal method and target date to re-evaluate progress. This form is completed between both the preceptor and the intern, and the form will be signed by both the intern and the preceptor. This signed agreement will be filed in the intern's official file.
 - b. If the intern does not meet the benchmarks for performance at the conclusion of a rotation, the intern will be offered the opportunity to repeat the rotation one time only and for only one rotation.
 - c. Failure to complete competencies a second time will result in dismissal from the program.

iii. Costs

1. The internship does not charge an application fee or tuition, so there is no refund applicable if an intern withdraws or is dismissed. There will be no costs incurred by the program for an intern's withdrawal or dismissal.
2. Relocation costs are not covered or reimbursed by the program.

Indian Health Service
Phoenix INDIAN MEDICAL CENTER
Southwestern Dietetic Internship
4212 N. 16th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85016

Internship Admission Requirements and Intern Selection Process

1. PURPOSE: To define the process used for selecting interns for the Southwestern Dietetic Internship program.
2. POLICY: A standardized application and selection process will be used to select applicants for the dietetic internship program.
3. ACRONYMS:
 - A. ACEND – Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics
 - B. DICAS – Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System
 - C. AzDPAC – Arizona Dietetic Practicum Advisory Committee
4. PROCEDURE:
 - A. Application Process
 1. Recruitment information and application requirements, including physical requirements, are located on the Indian Health Service website (<https://www.ihs.gov/phoenix/healthcarefacilities/phoenix/southwestern-dietetic-internship-swdi/>).
 2. The Program Director is responsible for ensuring that the information is correct and up to date.
 - B. Application Requirements
 1. Completion of an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) or Intent to Complete an ACEND-accredited DPD program.
 2. The DPD Verification Statement must be dated within 5 years of the application deadline date. Applicants with older DPD Verification Statements will not be considered.
 3. The Intent to Complete DPD must be dated within the same semester as the application deadline date. Outdated forms will disqualify the candidate.
 4. A minimum average DPD Science and Professional GPA of ≥ 3.0 .
 5. Work Experience

- a. Qualifying nutrition-related work experience includes paid or unpaid work as dietary manager, dietetic technician, nutrition assistant or educator/counselor.
 - b. Minimum number of hours for full credit is 1,000 hours.
 - 6. Letters of Reference
 - a. Three letters are required. Letters from relatives will not be considered. Letters from professors and employers are preferred.
 - b. Letters must be dated no more than 6 months from the application deadline date to be considered.
- C. Applications must be submitted through DICAS.
 - 1. All documents must be uploaded on the website by the established deadline.
 - 2. Supplemental Documents include the following:
 - a. Knowledge questions on health-related problems prevalent in American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities.
 - b. Personal Statement addressing SWDI topics is required.
 - 3. Applicants will not be contacted to submit missing information.
 - 4. After the application deadline has passed, no further contact will be made with the applicant, unless the applicant is contacted for an interview.
- D. Intern Selection Process
 - 1. Application packets will be evaluated by a Selection Committee of no less than three Registered Dietitians. At minimum, the Internship Director and two Site Coordinators will generally participate on the Selection Committee. If scheduling permits, all Lead Preceptors will participate in the committee.
 - 2. Applicants are scored based on a number of criteria as follows:
 - a. Complete application packet. Incomplete packets will not be considered.
 - b. A combined DPD Professional and Science Grade Point Average (GPA) of > 3.0 is a requirement. The Selection Committee may make exceptions to this requirement if the applicant pool is limited.
 - c. Knowledge questions: The evaluation of the knowledge question will be subjective on the part of the reviewing dietitian, but must contain at least three pertinent, prevalent health-related issues common in AI/AN communities. Proper

grammar and punctuation and logical content must be present for full credit.

- d. Personal Statement: Must not exceed 2 pages.
- e. Selecting officials will use individual judgment to evaluate the personal statement. However, the desire to become an RDN and work with the AI/AN and/or underserved population may receive full credit.
- f. Work Experience:
 - 1. Type of experience. Credit will be given for work experience in nutrition and dietetics as a dietary manager, dietetic technician, nutrition assistant or providing nutrition education.
 - 2. Minimum number of hours for full credit is 1,000 hours.
- g. Letters of Reference will use the DICAS form.
 - 1. Applicants waive the right to access the letters of reference, per DICAS requirements.
 - 2. Letters must be dated no more than 6 months from the application deadline date.
 - 3. If “needs improvement” is noted on any letter, no points will be given for that letter of recommendation.
- h. The overall application packet will be evaluated for completeness, grammar, and content.
- i. The SWDI does not grant credit for prior learning or competence.
- j. Utilizing the Applicant Scoring Worksheet, Selection Committee Members will tally the score of each applicant.
 - 1. The maximum points in the Applicant Scoring Worksheet without an interview is 25 points.
 - 2. The minimum points in the Applicant Scoring Worksheet without an interview is 18.75 points.
- 3. Applicants receiving the highest scores on the Applicant Scoring Worksheet may be invited to participate in an interview. When interviews are conducted, the following procedures apply:
 - a. Interview Scoring: The interview is worth a maximum of three (3) additional points. Interview points are determined by the interview panel using established interview criteria and are

added to the applicant's Applicant Scoring Worksheet score to determine the final score.

- b. The minimum FINAL score to qualify for possible selection is 75% of the maximum point total, e.g. 18.75 points without an interview or 21 points if an interview is conducted.
 - c. Final Score Calculation: For interviewed applicants, the final score is calculated by adding the interview score, up to three points, to the applicant's previously calculated Applicant Scoring Worksheet score.
 - d. Final Selection: The Selection Committee makes final admission decisions after considering applicants' final scores and alignment with the SWDI mission and program objectives. Only applicants who meet or exceed the established minimum qualifying score are eligible for selection. When multiple qualified applicants are under consideration, the Selection Committee may consider demonstrated alignment with the SWDI mission and program objectives in determining final selections. Final selection decisions will be documented in accordance with program procedures.
 - e. Interview Panel:
 - 1. The interview panel will consist of a minimum of three Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs).
 - 2. Conflict of Interest: Any Selection Committee or interview panel member who has a personal relationship or other potential conflict of interest with an applicant must disclose the conflict and recuse themselves from the applicant's evaluation and selection process. The Program Director will designate an alternate reviewer or interviewer as needed.
4. The Program Director is responsible for notifying the selected applicants through email and/or phone by the designated ACEND notification date. Applicants have 10 days to respond to the selection.
- a. Second Round Selection Process: If no intern selection is matched via the standard process, the program may participate in the DICAS second round.

- b. The SWDI will follow ACEND procedures for a second round and must receive the following materials for intern consideration:
 - 1. GPA (DPD)
 - 2. Letters of Reference
 - 3. Personal statement
 - 4. Knowledge-based questions will not be required
 - c. At minimum, the selection will be made by a panel of at least 2 Registered Dietitians, generally the Program Director and Site Coordinator.
 - d. The Program Director or designee will contact the prospective intern to offer a position with the SWDI.
 - e. The intern must accept or decline the position within the required timeframe either via email or by telephone.
- 5. Selected interns will undergo fingerprinting and background checks, as required by the federal government. If the intern does not comply with the requirements or fails the background check, the intern will be dismissed from the program. If the intern, at any time during the internship, is found to not maintain adequate clearance (e.g., for conviction of a drug-related or other criminal offense), the intern will be dismissed from the program.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
PHOENIX INDIAN MEDICAL CENTER
Southwestern Dietetic Internship
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Pinon Rural Nutrition Rotation

1. PURPOSE:

- a. To establish procedures for planning and scheduling the Rural Nutrition Rotation at Pinon Health Center (PHC), Indian Health Service, Pinon, Arizona.
- b. To ensure rotation provides interns with meaningful exposure to and experience in rural nutrition and dietetics practice.

2. POLICY:

- a. Prior to scheduling the Rural Nutrition Rotation, PHC must confirm its ability to support the two-week rotation, including the availability of PHC-funded housing and utilities, workspace, equipment, information technology (IT) resources, and preceptor support and time to accommodate the intern for the duration of the two-week rotation.
- b. The Rural Nutrition Rotation will be incorporated into the upcoming internship year only after PHC confirms that the resources necessary to support the rotation are available.

3. PROCEDURE:

- a. Annual Planning and Request for PHC Support
 - i. Following completion of each SWDI cohort, the SWDI Director will communicate with PIMC Executive Leadership regarding planning for the upcoming cohort year. The communication will address the need to request PHC's continued participation in and support of the Rural Nutrition Rotation.
 - ii. The request for PHC support will include confirmation of the availability of:
 - a. PHC funded housing and utilities for the intern(s)
 - b. Appropriate workspace, equipment
 - c. IT resources and access
 - d. Preceptor coverage and availability
 - e. Adequate preceptor time to supervise and support the intern(s)
- b. Communication with PHC:
 - i. Following review and concurrence by PIMC Executive Leadership, the SWDI Director will:
 - a. Communicate with the Rural Nutrition Preceptor to confirm the appropriate PHC leadership and other individuals who should receive the request.

- b. Update the SWDI memorandum requesting PHC support for the upcoming cohort year, electronically sign the memorandum, and provide a copy to PIMC Executive Leadership for review and feedback.
 - c. Submit the finalized memorandum to PHC Executive Leadership, PIMC Executive Leadership, the Rural Nutrition Preceptor, and any additional leadership identified by the Rural Nutrition Preceptor.
 - d. Maintain documentation of PHC's response and confirmation of support with SWDI program records.
- c. PHC confirms support for the Rural Nutrition Rotation:
 - i. When PHC confirms its ability to support the Rural Nutrition Rotation, the Lead Rural Nutrition Preceptor will serve as the PHC Site Coordinator unless another qualified individual is designated.
 - ii. The PHC Site Coordinator will be responsible for:
 - a. Coordinating PHC administrative, onboarding, credentialing, security, IT, or other requirements necessary for the intern to participate in the rotation.
 - b. Coordinating housing and utilities for the intern.
 - c. Confirming appropriate workspace, equipment, and IT resources.
 - d. Coordinating preceptor coverage and ensuring adequate preceptor availability throughout the rotation.
 - e. Planning the two-week rotation schedule and learning experiences.
 - f. Reviewing and updating the Rural Nutrition Rotation curriculum and learning activities, as appropriate.
 - g. Communicating significant changes or concerns that may affect PHC's ability to provide the rotation to the SWDI Director as soon as possible.
- d. SWDI and PHC Collaborative Planning
 - i. In collaboration with the PHC and PIMC Site Coordinator, the SWDI Director will incorporate the Rural Nutrition Rotation into the upcoming internship year and confirm:
 - a. Rotation dates
 - b. Rotation-specific competencies and learning objectives
 - c. Planned learning activities and experiences
 - d. Intern onboarding and administrative requirements
 - e. Evaluation requirements and responsibilities
 - f. The SWDI Director will communicate confirmed rotation information and expectations to the selected intern(s).
- e. PHC is unable to support the Rural Nutrition Rotation
 - i. If PHC determines that it is unable to provide the resources necessary to support the Rural Nutrition Rotation:

- a. The Rural Nutrition Rotation will not be scheduled at PHC for the upcoming internship year.
 - b. The SWDI Director will communicate the change to PIMC Executive Leadership and other appropriate stakeholders.
 - c. SWDI will notify the selected or affected intern as early as possible.
 - d. All applicable competencies will be assigned to the Ambulatory and Community nutrition rotation.
- f. Change in PHC Support after rotation is scheduled
 - i. If PHC becomes unable to support the Rural Nutrition Rotation after the rotation has been scheduled, the PHC Site Coordinator will notify the SWDI Director as soon as possible.
 - ii. The SWDI Director, in consultation with the PHC Site Coordinator and other appropriate leadership, will determine whether the identified issue can be resolved while maintaining an appropriate supervised practice experience. If PHC cannot support the rotation, SWDI will notify the affected intern and assign all competencies to the Ambulatory/Community Nutrition Rotation.
- g. Continued PHC participation in SWDI Activities
 - i. Regardless of whether PHC hosts a Rural Nutrition Rotation during a particular internship year, SWDI will continue to include the Rural Nutrition Lead Preceptor and/or designated PHC Site Coordinator in applicable SWDI preceptor communications, training, meetings, and other activities intended to support preceptor engagement and program development.