

## For Providers

### What is the referral/approval process?

In order to obtain CSHN nutritional services, a child must be referred by a primary care provider or other medical/educational specialist, or by CIS-Early Intervention:

- 1 Discuss the referral with the family and obtain their informed consent.
- 2 Prior approval by the CSHN Program Coordinator is necessary before the Nutritionist can be accessed. (Complete referral form or see brochure back for contact info.) Once approved, the Coordinator will authorize services, contact the local Nutrition Consultant, and the referral source.
- 3 The Nutrition Consultant will contact the referral source to obtain further information necessary before calling the family. If the visit is to be combined with a visit with another provider this will be coordinated by the Nutrition Consultant.
- 4 After the assessment is completed you will receive a copy of the report.
- 5 Follow-up visits are available, as determined in collaboration between the family and RD.

### Who pays?

If the child is enrolled in the regional Children's Integrated Services Early Intervention (CIS-EI) program and nutrition assessment is part of the child's "One-Plan", CIS funds may be used. If the child is enrolled in a CSHN program and nutrition services are authorized through that program, CSHN funds may be used. Plans for billing Medicaid and third party insurers for nutrition services are in progress.

### Where are Nutritionists located?

There are CSHN Nutritional Consultants available for every region in Vermont. To find out who the consultant is for your area please contact us.



## Children with Special Health Needs

### Community Nutrition Network

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## Vermont Department of Health Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN)



# Community Nutrition Network

Individualized nutrition services for children who have special growth, feeding and dietary needs and their families. Expertly trained Registered Dietitians (RD) serving all regions of the Vermont.

# Common Questions for Families & Providers about CSHN Nutrition:

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## Why is nutrition important for a child's growth and development?

- ➔ Nutrients and calories are needed for brain, muscle, and body growth.
- ➔ Feeding helps in the development of a child's oral muscles needed for speech.
- ➔ Feeding and eating is a time for social development.
- ➔ Good nutrition plays a role in preventing illness.

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## Why is nutrition important to consider?

A child who is hungry is irritable and less willing to interact and socialize. Parents can become frustrated, as do teachers and therapists when working with an undernourished child, because the child does not feel well. Hard to feed children can ignore hunger cues, grow slowly and are more prone to infections and illnesses. If they are sick more frequently then they are not able to participate fully in therapies and social and educational activities.

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## Who are CSHN Community Nutrition Consultants?

All the CSHN Community Nutrition Consultants are Registered Dietitians (RDs)

and have experience in working with children with special health needs. They all live or work in the region they serve and know their local resources. The CSHN Community Nutrition Program provides its Nutritionists with ongoing training as well as consultation,

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## What do Nutritionists do as part of the team?

A nutritionist assesses the growth, adequacy of the current diet, and feeding skill development of a child. An evaluation results in specific recommendations for feeding the child at an appropriate developmental level at home or in a program or school, to meet the child's biological needs for growth. The nutritionist will also help the family identify local food and nutrition resources they may be eligible for in their community.

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## What do Nutritionists do that is not already being done by my child's team?

The nutritionist knows what foods to recommend in order to meet the child's nutritional needs for growth and good health. Nutritionists also review other feeding and behavioral issues to determine if these issues are impacting the child's growth and nutritional status. The nutritionist can assist in developing nutrition-related outcomes and strategies for the child's IEP or IFSP. They work with the other members of the team in assisting the family and child in developing feeding skills.

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## Are children with special health care needs different in their nutrition needs?

Children with special health care needs are not different than other children, but there is a wider degree of variation in how much they need to eat. Some children have a different body composition, with different proportions of body fat and muscle. This changes how they grow in adding both weight and height. Parents of children who have problems growing and eating often feel they are not competent parents if their child appears small and undernourished. The nutritionist can help the family understand their child's unique nutritional needs so the child can grow to their greatest potential.

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## What are the most common problems that Nutritionists work on?

The CSHN Nutritionists work with families whose children may:

- ➔ Have difficulty gaining weight
- ➔ Are overweight for how tall they are
- ➔ Eat only a limited variety of foods
- ➔ Have problems with constipation
- ➔ Have challenges with feeding and eating
- ➔ Cannot safely eat by mouth
- ➔ Have diagnoses that change their needs for specific nutrients