

Report, ARRC Webinar, August 23, 2023

“What’s for Dinner? Unpacking Food and Nutrition in Long Term Care”
August 23rd, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

ARRC’s third webinar, offered on August 23rd, 2023, was very well received. Dietitian Shauna Prouten, RD IFNCP - Gerontology Nutrition Society B.C., presented “What’s for Dinner? Unpacking Food and Nutrition in Long Term Care” and the webinar recording can be viewed at:

<http://arrcbc.ca/issues.html>

Speaking as a registered dietitian who works in long-term care, Shauna presented a reality-based look at meals and nutrition in B.C. care homes. She effectively used personal stories from her practice to illuminate such historic and existing challenges as: institutionalized food services leading to poor quality meals and lack of food choices, inadequate dietitian time, low food budgets, and inadequate care for diabetes management.

Shauna described the major impact of food and nutrition on cognition, mental health, nerve and immune system function, and skin integrity for older adults. She presented a case history to illustrate the impact of food on quality of life and discussed the barriers to ensuring that the residents get what they want and need. Participants then participated in a True/False game called “Fun Facts About Food and Nutrition Policy for LTC in BC”. Watch the video to learn some of the very interesting answers!

In closing, Shauna reviewed Nutrition Care Policies for LTC in B.C. and discussed ways we can all get involved in advocating for change. She shared groups currently working on LTC nutrition policy/nutrition best practices and education:

- Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion (BC MOH)
- Dietitians of Canada – Gerontology Network www.dietitians.ca
- Canadian Malnutrition Task Force: <https://nutritioncareincanada.ca/>
- Canadian Nutrition Society <https://cns-scn.ca/>
- OSNAC <https://www.osnac-fnat.com/>
- BC LTC Nutrition Standards Action Group
- Gerontology Nutrition Society

Following the presentation, the Q and A session generated energetic discussion and questions. One participant, a family caregiver with recent personal experience, described food in his loved one’s long-term care facility as “appalling”. There was general agreement that there is a long road ahead to improve food and nutrition services.

ARRC thanks Shauna for a very interesting and informative presentation. Next month’s webinar, entitled “Care for and Cared About: Nursing in LTC”, will be presented by Michelle Sordal of the B.C. Nurses Union. No need to register – just log in at 7:00 p.m. on September 27th. Hope to see you then!
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84924990042>