

**From:** Commission on Dietetic Registration <[cdr@eatright.org](mailto:cdr@eatright.org)>

**Date:** September 11, 2023 at 4:48:54 PM EDT

**To:**

**Subject:** Facts, Documentation and Ensuring Media Accuracy

**Reply-To:** [cdr@eatright.org](mailto:cdr@eatright.org)



**A message follows from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics 2023-2024  
President – Lauri Wright, PhD, RDN, LDN, FAND  
who discusses facts, documentation and ensuring media accuracy.**

September 11, 2023

I am writing to alert you to a news article we expect to appear in the coming days that could be critical of some registered dietitian nutritionists and the Academy. Reporters from the Washington Post and The Examination (a new website that is scheduled to launch on September 13) contacted us about a story they were working on that would explore these topics:

*... registered dietitians who partner with food and dietary supplement companies to promote products to their followers on TikTok and Instagram. We're looking at things like which companies they partner with, what products they promote, and whether they follow disclosure rules for online influencers set by the Federal Trade Commission. ... I'm interested in learning more about the Academy's policies for dietitians regarding sponsorships and disclosing potential conflicts to the public.*

This same Post reporter has targeted registered dietitian nutritionists before. Last October, he published an article about a misleading report authored by anti-licensure activists seeking to undermine the important work of the Academy

and our members and to demonize the industry without any regard for the truth. At that time, we responded strongly to rebut the report and to correct the news article with facts.

In response to this latest inquiry, I conducted an interview with the reporters and provided facts and statistics in writing to ensure accuracy. I repeatedly emphasized to the reporters that:

- The large majority of Academy members are involved in clinical treatment of patients
- A small fraction of our members are consultants or social media influencers
- The Academy and CDR have a Code of Ethics for the profession that all practitioners are expected to follow
- The Academy encourages all members to follow FTC guidelines in their social media posts
- The Academy has a stringent and transparent process for reviewing, accepting and rejecting corporate sponsorship support
- The Academy cannot police individual RDNs' online activities or personal social media channels; we do have a Code of Ethics process to review and act on questionable practices that are brought to our attention
- The vast majority of the Academy's funding comes from members' dues and publications; sponsorships represent less than 7% of the Academy's revenues, as noted in [the Academy's Annual Reports, available publicly](#).

I made sure to underscore all these facts, answered all the reporters' questions and provided written documentation. However, we cannot control the editorial or personal perspectives of the reporters or the integrity of their sources. If the article seeks to malign or discredit the Academy or the more than 112,000 credentialed practitioners whom we proudly represent, we will reply swiftly and with purpose.

It is an honor to be your 2023-2024 President. I am adamantly committed to promoting the facts about RDNs and the Academy to the media; to staunchly correcting misinformation peddled by outside detractors; to vigorously protecting

our credentials, our profession and our organization; to tenaciously positioning Academy members as the evidence-based food and nutrition experts; and to persistently advancing the amazing work you do on behalf of consumers, communities, our country and the world.

Thank you for improving and safeguarding the nutritional health of all people.

Sincerely,

**Lauri Wright, PhD, RDN, LDN, FAND**