

PROPER NUTRITION FOR THE CRITICALLY-ILL AND MOST VULNERABLE

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My Role: During this pandemic, my main role is to support the dietitians in all areas, whether providing them with new information/resources or helping them out with patient care.

We have seen a large influx of critically ill patients and feeding these patients can be quite complex. Patients were not eating a lot because they were so sick, and their family members were worried. I wanted to ensure that the clinical team felt confident and well-prepared to give these patients the best nutrition care possible. It involved providing competencies and resources to

them, and also optimizing diet for patients to get more calories. Eating and proper nutrition is a huge part of recovery.

I also coordinated with other departments and vendors to ensure that we had the resources and supplies necessary in order to accommodate for this surge of critically ill patients.

Impact of COVID-19: Much of my time was interpreting the ever-evolving nutrition research and processes, applying that to our patient care and then further providing the information to the dietitians. Because of this critical time, my role changed from working almost exclusively in the clinical side of nutrition to working more in the operational side of nutrition.

I helped facilitate and support new policies and processes in our department. We were fortunate that our staff accepted and adapted to these new challenges. The teamwork we have witnessed has been very commendable. Some staff stepped out of their usual role to serve in other areas of the department. I am so proud of the Food and Nutrition Department.

Why I'm on the frontlines: A lot of people are scared right now, but we're in this war together and I want to help people see it through. One of the primary reasons I enjoy working for Elmhurst, is because of the service we provide to those who are typically underserved. Elmhurst has always had a sense of community and family among colleagues while helping vulnerable people in our community who have high rates of co-morbidities.

This area of Queens has been hit very hard during this pandemic but seeing everyone come together during this challenging time to fight COVID-19 has been very rewarding. Nutrition plays a significant role in a patient's recover, so it is very gratifying knowing that the interventions we recommend helped to facilitate to get well.

