



**Dynamic Paths, Inc.**  
**Kristen Allott, ND, L.Ac. and Associates**

**Mailing Address:**

10002 Aurora Ave. N. #36  
PMB6604  
Seattle, WA 98133

**Clinic Address:**

444 NE Ravenna Blvd.  
Suite 405 Seattle, WA  
Phone: 206-579-2757

**Contact Information:**

Fax: 206-985-2240  
Web: [dynamicpaths.com](http://dynamicpaths.com)  
[Kristen@dynamicpaths.com](mailto:Kristen@dynamicpaths.com)

---

**Mental Health Professional Scope of Practice -  
Discussions with Clients Regarding Diet, Nutrition and Wellness.**

Mental Health Professionals often feel unsure about the boundary between their professional scope of practice and providing clients with information about healthy diet, adequate nutrition and general wellness. This article is intended to provide some guidance to assist you in navigating the boundaries of this aspect of your practice.

**1. Am I required to have a special license in order to talk to my clients about healthy diet, adequate nutrition and general wellness?**

No, you are not required to have a specific license to talk to your clients about diet, nutrition and wellness. While the State of Washington does require certification in order to call oneself a “certified dietitian” or a “certified nutritionist,” there is no law, rule, or regulation that restricts other professionals from also addressing this type of information with their clients. In essence, Washington State requires certification only for the use of the titles “certified dietitian,” “certified nutritionist,” or use of the acronyms “D.,” “C.D.,” or “C.N.” (RCW 18.138). Of course, credentialed professionals must still always practice within the scope of their own credential.

**2. Is it within the scope of my license to talk to my clients about healthy diet, adequate nutrition and general wellness?**

Yes, it definitely can be within the scope of your license. Here’s how: According to RCW 18.225.010(9), the definition of Mental Health Counseling includes “the application of a wellness model of mental health.” This means that addressing diet, nutrition and wellness can fit squarely within the scope of practice for Mental Health Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists.

**3. What is an example of addressing healthy diet, adequate nutrition and general wellness within the scope of my practice?**

There are many ethical ways to address diet, nutrition and wellness with clients. First, it is always appropriate to discuss how clients’ lifestyle choices impact their *mental health and wellbeing*. Second, it is generally good practice to make available to clients resources and references that support healthy lifestyle choices and wellness. Third, it is often appropriate for you to offer referrals to other professionals with expertise in these areas once you and your client have recognized a need.

**4. What is an example of addressing healthy diet, adequate nutrition and general wellness that is outside of the scope of my practice?**

While it is generally within your professional scope of practice to address diet, nutrition, and wellness with your clients, you must avoid engaging in activities that are outside of your knowledge, training, or expertise. For example, it would be inappropriate for you to suggest a specific diet or exercise routine to a client without also being able to provide a justification for your recommendation.