



Medical Nutrition Therapy Providing Return on Investment

Research demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of **Medical Nutrition Therapy**.

- **Oxford Health Plan¹** saved **\$10 for every \$1 spent** on nutrition counseling for at risk elderly patients. Monthly costs for Medicare claims alone tumbled from \$66,000 before the nutrition program to \$45,000 afterwards. As a result, the health plan continued use of nutrition screenings.
- **The Lewin Group²** documented an **8.6% reduction** in hospital utilization and **16.9% reduction** in physician visits associated with Medical Nutrition Therapy for patients with cardiovascular disease.
- **The Lewin Group²** additionally documented a **9.5% reduction** in hospital utilization and **23.5% reduction** in physician visits when Medical Nutrition Therapy was provided to persons with diabetes mellitus.
- **The University of California Irvine³** demonstrated lipid drug eligibility was obviated in **34 of 67** subjects, the estimated annual cost savings from the avoidance of lipid medication was **\$60,652**.
- **Pfizer Corporation⁴** projected **\$728,772 in annual savings** from reduced cardiac claims of their employees from an on-site nutrition/exercise intervention program.
- **U.S. Department of Defense⁵** saved **3.1 million dollars** in the first year of a nutrition therapy program utilizing Registered Dietitians counseling 636,222 patients with cardiovascular disease, diabetes and renal disease.

¹ Oxford Health Plan's pilot nutrition screening program applied to Medicare population in New York, between 1991-1993.

² Johnson, Rachel. The Lewin Group – What does it tell us, and why does it matter? J Am Diet Assoc. 1999, 99:426-427.

³ Sikland, G et al. Medical Nutrition Therapy lowers serum cholesterol and saves medication costs in Medicare populations with hypercholesterolemia. J AM Diet Assoc. 1998, 98:889-894.

⁴ Pfizer Corp., Lipid Intervention Program, <http://healthproject.stanford.edu/koop/pfizer99/documentation.html>. Accessed 2/16/01.

⁵ The Cost of Covering Medical Nutrition Therapy Services under TRICARE: Benefits Costs, Cost Avoidance and Savings. Final report prepared by the Lewin Group, Inc. for the Department of Defense Health Affairs, 11/15/98.