App Review: Pocket Dietitian

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The Pocket Dietitian iPhone app is designed to assist people living with diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and chronic kidney disease stages 1-5 make informed dietary choices. Created by Eric Wechsler, M.D., Inc., the app incorporates current dietary recommendations to create a recommended nutrition prescription based on the user’s current health condition and basic health information. Users have the option to customize the nutrition prescription if they have specific nutrient recommendations from their physician.

The homepage, called Your Dashboard, offers a few features. Today’s Levels is prominently displayed and allows the user to compare current recorded intake to the recommended nutrition prescription. There are two ways to enter food choices, Plan a Meal and Food Log. Food Log is a quick list of breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks where the user taps on a green plus to search for a food item and then add the item into the food log. Plan a Meal allows the user to search for recommendations by food group and create custom foods in addition to the search and enter feature. Users can choose the number of servings consumed for each food item. If the user chooses foods that do not match the recommended prescription, warning alerts appear and the user has the ability to tap and see recommended alternatives. Overview offers graphs that show where intake compares to recommendations for the past week and past month. These graphs can be sent via email to the user’s physician and/or healthcare professional. The last feature is More where users can search for nutrition information, edit health conditions and personal information, learn about the app, and provide feedback.

It would appear that the app has a comprehensive database of food items but a quick search for a brand such as Jimmy Dean® or a restaurant like Panera® was not found. However, general information on most food items and other popular fast food restaurants and food brands is available. Nutrients provided include calories, phosphorus (if known), sodium, cholesterol, total carbohydrates, potassium (if known), fiber, protein, fluids, and fat. This is a nice feature for both the user and healthcare professional to quickly find renal specific nutrient information. It would be helpful if the app allowed the user to enter ingredients from a recipe and number of servings to provide a nutrition analysis of a homemade meal. Another feature missing is a bar code scanner that has been appearing on other popular nutrition apps. The bar code scanner would provide a quick and easy way to input custom foods. Overall, the app is simple to use and should help users stay on track with their nutrition prescription. You can download the app for free from the Apple app store.

Link: http://pocketdietitian.com/

New tool to support referrals for MNT services for renal disease!

The National Kidney Disease Education Program has released an interactive CKD Diet Counseling (Medical Nutrition Therapy) Referral Form to help referring primary care providers share important patient data with the consulting registered dietitian (RD). Developed with input from the Academy, the new form meets Medicare requirements for a physician order for RD reimbursement for MNT services. The form can be saved to a computer, edited and shared electronically with the RD. To access the form and other useful resources for providing Medicare Part B MNT services to this population, visit

www.eatright.org/Members/content.aspx?id=6442468844

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