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Novel digital food photos resource enhances knowledge of nutrition and dietetics students

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Abstract

A robust knowledge of food composition, the Australian food supply and cooking methods is integral to dietetics practice. Students learn these concepts across a variety of subjects, however a new dietetics subject in 2009 and a faculty based learning and teaching grant provided a timely opportunity to develop innovative new digital resources for students to enhance their food composition knowledge. One-hundred and sixty high quality digital food photographs were developed and nutrient composition data were added, before making the resource accessible to students via their eLearning sites. The primary aim of this study was to assess the views and experiences of first and fourth year students regarding the usefulness and application of the digital food photos resource in developing their food composition knowledge. The secondary aim was to identify and explore other potential applications of the resource and recommendations for future upgrades. Forty students completed an online survey and six took part in semi-structured qualitative interviews, which were facilitated by the same two researchers, before being digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Preliminary findings highlighted that students found the resource to be an interactive and valuable contributor to their knowledge, "I loved it. I absolutely loved it. Like I sat on it for hours going through it" (S1). All of the fourth year respondents said they would use the resource again, as did 83% of the first year students. A revised edition is currently being developed with 180 additional photographs and student feedback about further nutrients, symbols used and future commercial applications.

Keywords

enhances, knowledge, dietetics, novel, digital, students, food, photos, nutrition, resource

Disciplines

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