

## **Board of Dietetics / Nutrition**

Delaware Health Force Team

The primary objective of the Delaware Board of Dietetics/Nutrition is to protect the health of the public by broadening access to appropriate dietetic and nutrition therapy. The Board must also maintain standards of professional competence and service delivery. To meet these objectives, the Board

- evaluates the credentials of persons applying for licensure,
- promulgates rules and regulations,
- adjudicates complaints against professionals and, when necessary, imposes disciplinary sanctions.

The Board issues licenses to dietitian/nutritionists. The Board's statutory authority is in [24 Del. C., Chapter 38](#).

### **What is the Difference Between a Dietician and a Nutritionist?**

Although dietitians and nutritionists both help people find the best diets and foods to meet their health needs, they have different qualifications. In the United States, dietitians are certified to treat clinical conditions, whereas nutritionists are not always certified.

In the U.S., dietitians must receive certification from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in order to practice. Dietitians can treat specific health conditions, such as eating disorders, by providing food recommendations (see Figures 1-5 for Dietitians in Delaware). Some organizations also certify nutritionists, such as the Board for Certification of Nutrition Specialists (BCNS), however, nutritionist training can vary. Some states do not require certification, so it is possible for anyone in those states to offer nutrition advice.

Nutritionists may also have different areas of focus to dietitians. For example, nutritionists can pursue advanced qualifications in specific health areas, such as sports nutrition, digestive disorders, and autoimmune conditions. The BCNS also offer Certified Ketogenic Nutrition Specialist qualifications for those who want to understand the keto diet in more detail.

However, some nutritionists provide more general advice on healthful eating, weight loss, and reducing tiredness.<sup>1</sup>

### **What is a Dietician?**

Nutrition is a key element of good health. Registered dietitian nutritionists are the experts on good nutrition and the food choices that can make us healthy, whether it's a proper diet or eating to manage the symptoms of a disease or chronic condition. Registered dietitian nutritionists design nutrition programs to protect health, prevent allergic reactions and alleviate the symptoms of many types of disease.

Clinical dietitians provide medical nutrition therapy for patients in institutions such as hospitals and nursing care facilities. They assess patients' nutritional needs, develop and implement nutrition programs and evaluate and report the results. They confer with doctors and other healthcare professionals in order to coordinate medical and dietary needs. Some clinical

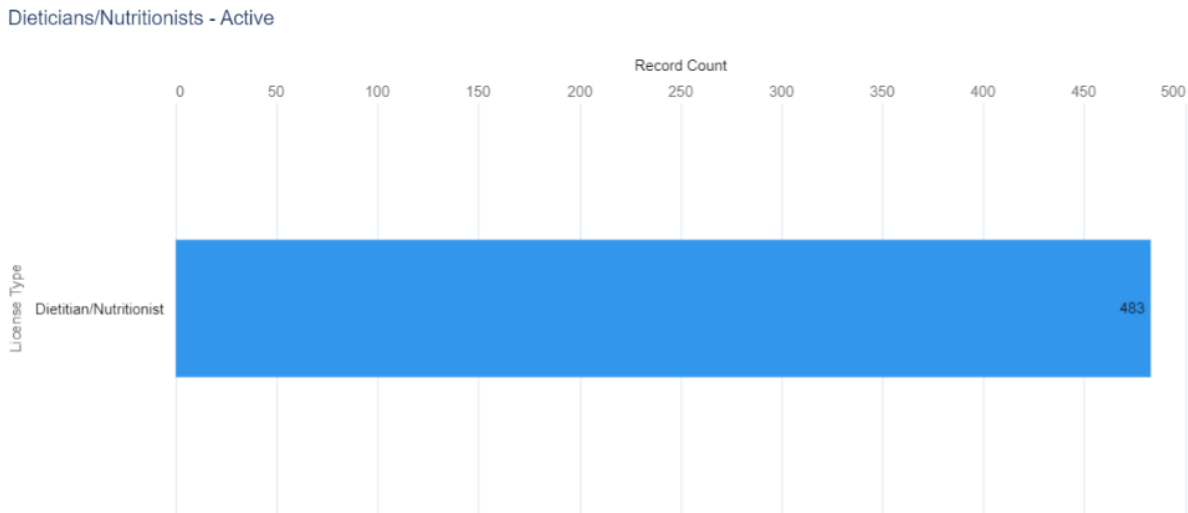
dietitians specialize in the management of overweight and critically ill patients, such as those with renal (kidney) disease and diabetes. In addition, clinical dietitians in nursing care facilities, small hospitals, or correctional facilities may manage the food service department.

Community dietitians develop nutrition programs designed to prevent disease and promote health, targeting particular groups of people. Dietitians in this practice area may work in settings such as public health clinics, fitness centers, corporate wellness programs or home health agencies.

Corporate dietitians work in food manufacturing, advertising and marketing. In these areas, dietitians analyze foods, prepare literature for distribution, or report on issues such as the nutritional content of recipes, dietary fiber or vitamin supplements. Management dietitians oversee large-scale meal planning and preparation in healthcare facilities, company cafeterias, prisons and schools. They hire, train and direct other dietitians and food service workers; budget for and purchase food, equipment, and supplies; enforce sanitary and safety regulations; and prepare records and reports.

Consultant dietitians work under contract with healthcare facilities or in their own private practice. They perform nutrition assessments for their clients and advise them about diet-related concerns, such as weight loss or cholesterol reduction. Some work for wellness programs, sports teams, supermarkets and other nutrition-related businesses. They consult with food service managers, providing expertise in sanitation, safety procedures, menu development, budgeting and planning.<sup>2</sup>

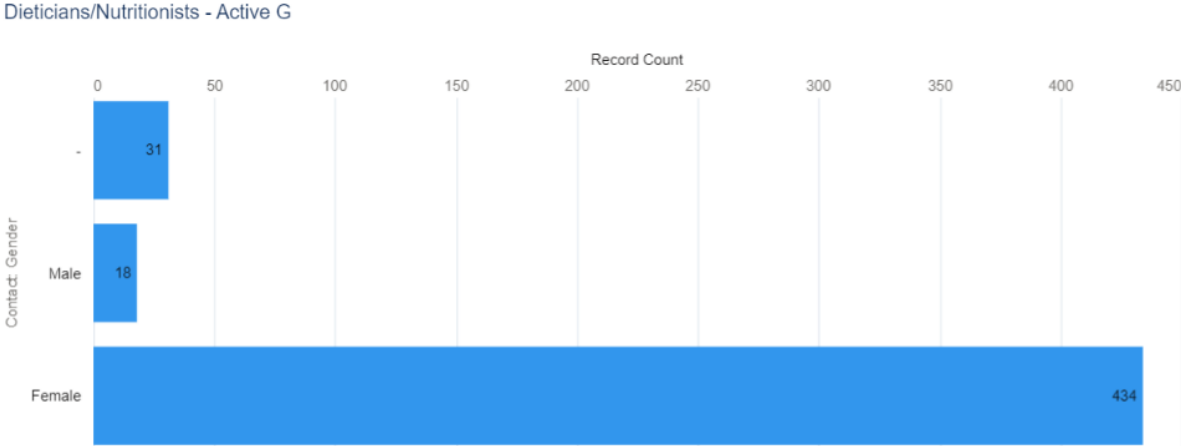
Figure 1. Active Dietician Licenses\*, N=483



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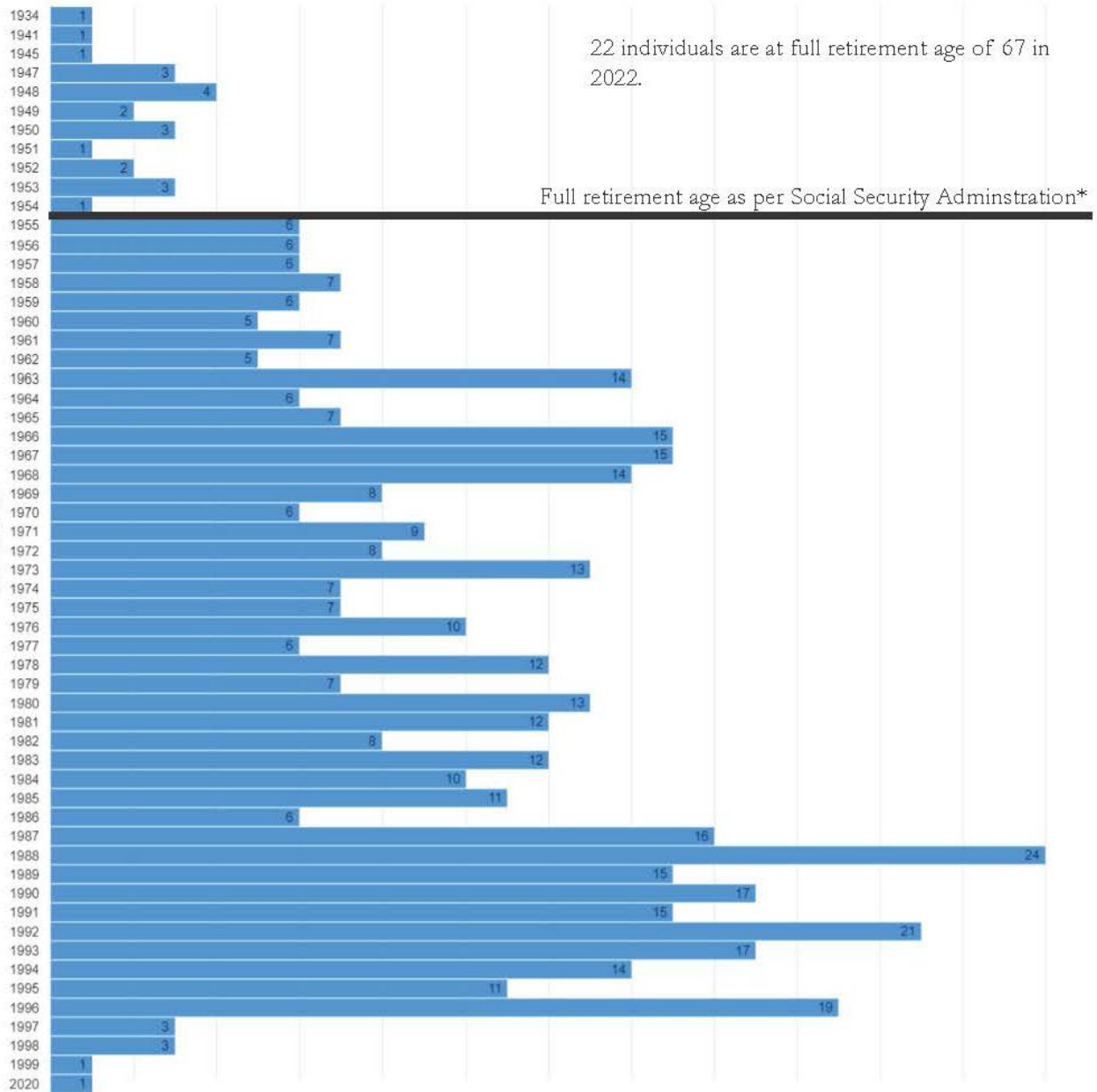
\* an active license does not guarantee an individual is actively seeing patients.

Figure 2. Active Dietician Licenses by Gender (when reported)



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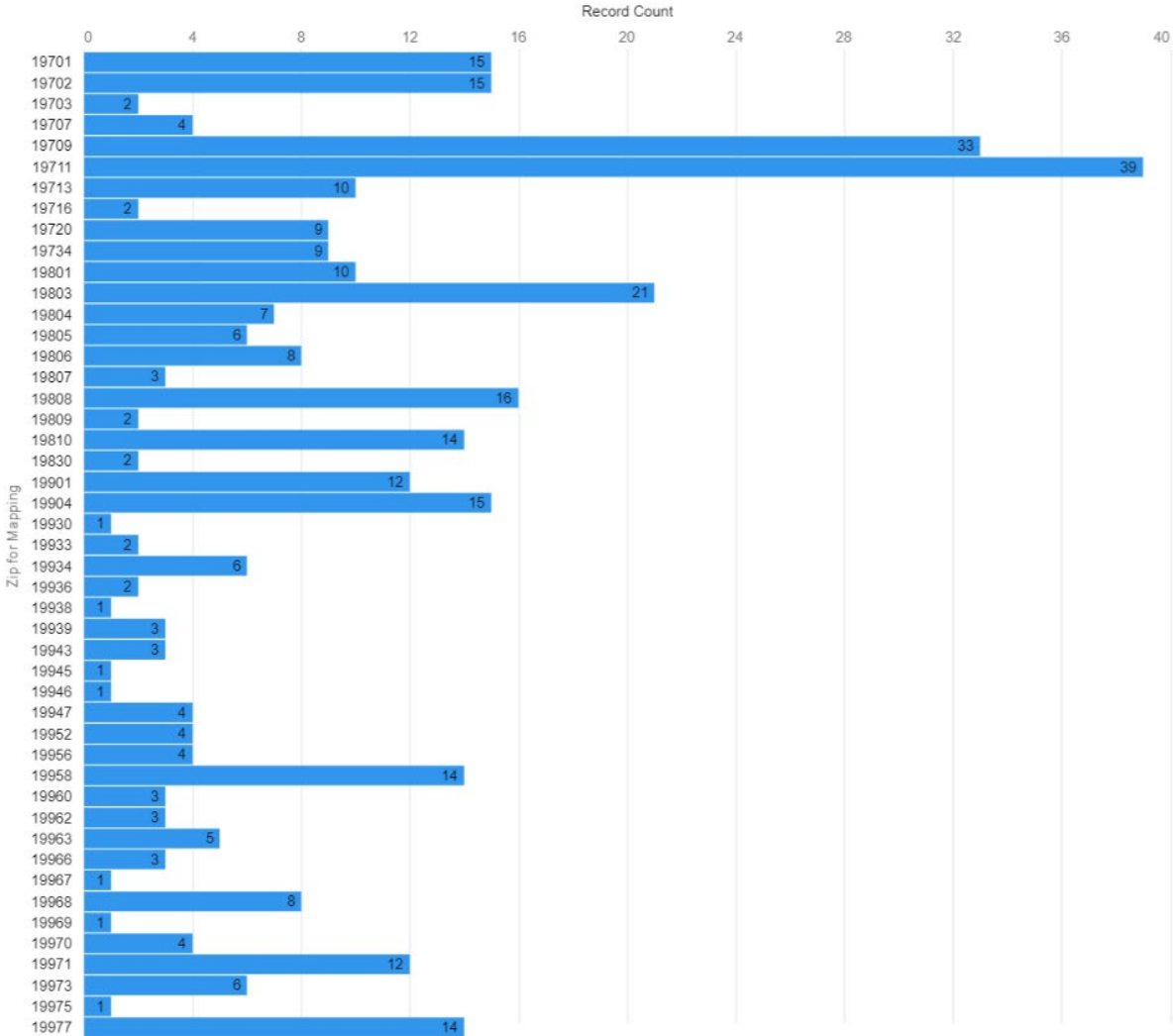
Figure 3. Active Dietician Licenses by Birth Year (when reported)



\* According to the Social Security Administration “Full retirement age is the age when you can start receiving your full retirement benefit amount. The full retirement age is 66 if you were born from 1943 to 1954. The full retirement age increases gradually if you were born from 1955 to 1960, until it reaches 67. For anyone born 1960 or later, full retirement benefits are payable at age 67.”

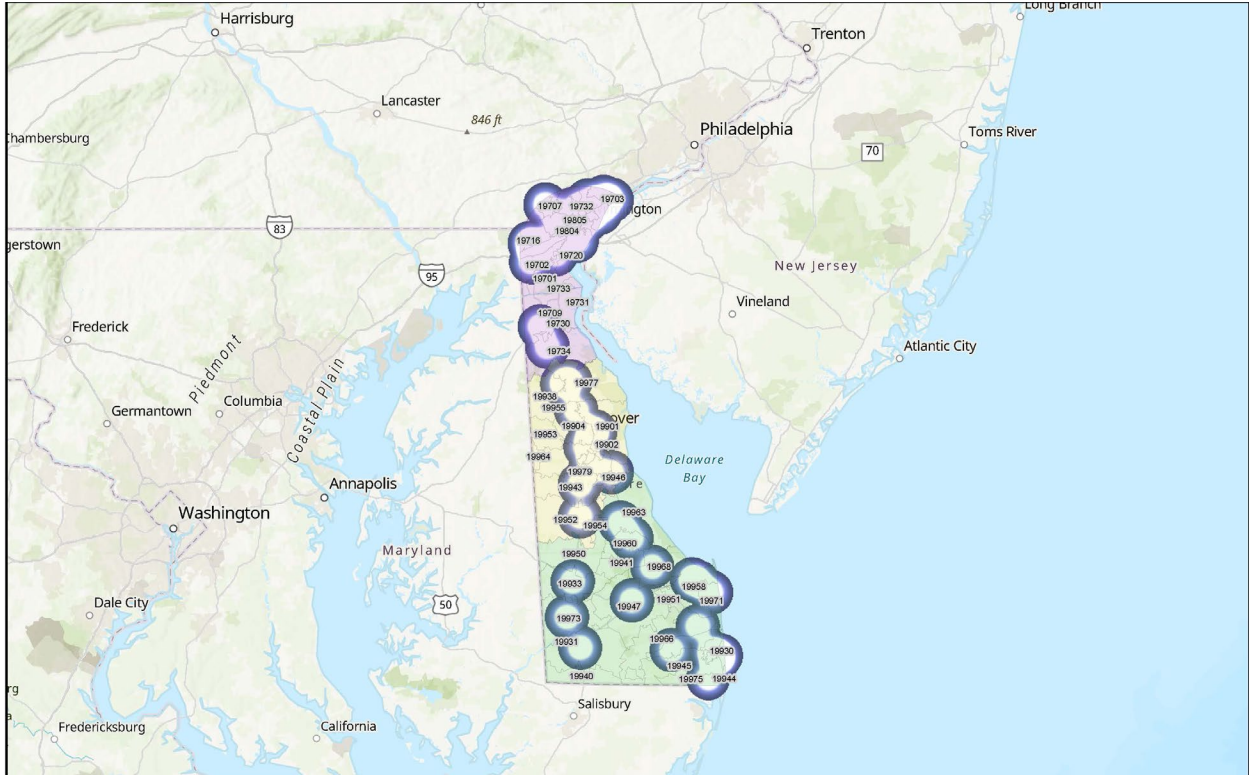
Figure 4. Numerical Distribution of Active Dieticians by ZIP code

License by Mapping Zipcode Diet ZIP



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Figure 5. Visual Distribution of Active Dieticians & Nutritionists by ZIP code



## References

1. Medical News Today. (2020, Aug). What is the difference between nutritionists and dietitians? Retrieved from <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/nutritionist-vs-dietician#training>
2. Healthcareers, E. (n.d.). Dietitian nutritionist. Retrieved from: <https://explorehealthcareers.org/career/nutrition-dietetics/dietitian-nutritionist/>

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