

As a RD working in home care, I have many difficulties in achieving optimal nutrition care for my patients. I will give an example of 1 episode which occurred 2 weeks ago. I was at an appointment with a paediatric patient when "mom" informed me of a change in formula. This child meets his total needs via tube feedings. He is at risk for CHF so I asked "mom" when did his status change (lab work or reports were not sent)? She reported she did not know. This was the formula the pharmacy sent home with her husband. I then tried to contact his paediatrician but was told that his paediatrician was on holiday. This would have been a disaster situation as "mom" would have continued the same rate and volume of formula as this client's current formula which would have lead to CHF. I could not order blood work immediately to confirm or to monitor this client's fluid status and I could not order formula that was appropriate. This was very frustrating and unfortunate as this 18 month child was at high risk. I tracked the error in formula to the pharmacy. The wrong formula was sent home. Dietitians are knowledgeable and willing to take responsibility for ordering lab requisitions and formula Rx's. We are the main source of knowledge regarding enteral formulas and patients' nutrition needs.