In Australia, nutrition advice from general practitioners (GPs) is held in high regard by the general public. GPs are ranked by consumers as one of the most trustworthy sources of diet information. Literature investigating the role of GPs in the provision of nutrition care is limited. This qualitative research investigated the perceptions of general practice medical educators concerning the role of GPs in nutrition care provision. Twenty medical educators from fourteen universities participated in an individual semi-structured telephone interview. Participants were prompted to discuss their perceptions of the role of GPs for nutrition care provision. Data recordings were transcribed and thematically analysed. Medical educators identified that nutrition was important in general practice. However, many barriers to providing nutrition advice were identified. These included lack of time; lack of nutrition education at university; lack of GP nutrition education and counselling skills; low self-efficacy; poor attitudes and differing perceptions about the role of GPs in nutrition care. Patient care may be compromised and inconsistent because of these barriers. The role of GPs in nutrition care needs further investigation, as well as the development of nutrition-related competencies for GPs and medical nutrition education in Australia.

Contact author: Lauren Ball – lauren.ball@student.griffith.edu.au