Nutrition assessment, initial and ongoing, for home parenteral nutrition (HPN) patients is necessary for optimal patient care and outcomes. A nutrition assessment tool that is multidisciplinary, clear in intent, effective and time efficient that can be used to collate and communicate patient care information and progress would be an ideal addition to the care management process.

This study reviews the development and implementation of an electronic nutrition assessment tool for HPN patient management and communication.

### Application
- The RD completes the nutrition assessment tool.
- The nutrition assessment serves as a communication tool for the Home Nutrition Support Team (HNST).
- The nutrition assessment is sent to the ordering physician for review. The nutrition assessment tool provides the HNST and physician with trended laboratory values and weights, update on the patient’s status along with the HNST recommendations to adjust the therapy to best meet the patient’s needs.

### Conclusion
Current healthcare economics require the most effective use of resources possible. In today’s homecare settings, the majority of patients are followed telephonically by a number of disciplines, including the home infusion RD. Communication of the patient’s response to therapy among members of the homecare team is critical to maintaining excellence in patient care.

For the homecare RD, this new nutrition assessment tool provides an electronic record of nutrition care with static patient care information retained for future nutrition interventions. Minimizing repetitive data entry, automating complex nutrition calculations and maintaining documentation of serial assessments in a professional, standardized, concise format makes this a powerful nutrition assessment tool for home infusion clinicians covering larger regional areas and multiple patients. In addition, physicians responsible for the patient’s overall care have a useful record of the HPN patient’s progress to goals at home.

### Process
Initially, an external software product was used to document the nutrition assessment. However, this program lacked:
- The ability to individualize the nutritional needs of the HPN patient
- The capability to trend response
- Pediatric functions

The nutrition assessment tool was revised by a group of registered dietitians (RDs) working for a large home infusion provider. The revised assessment tool incorporated the concept of a spreadsheet application and current, advanced medical nutrition therapy practice.

### Implementation
Prior to implementation company-wide, the nutrition assessment tool was reviewed and revised by a pilot group of RDs with their recommendations incorporated to make this a universal nutrition assessment tool.

To gain the most effective use of the nutrition assessment tool, it was necessary to provide hands-on training to assure that all clinicians had the necessary skills to fully utilize all features of the tool. Training and implementation was accomplished through:
- Web-based training for nutrition support clinicians
- Email
- Telephonic support