



Produce Prescription: Improving blood glucose control, diet and health of adults with type 2 diabetes and food insecurity in Australia – September 2024

FACTS:

- The global prevalence of type 2 diabetes is expected to rise to one in eight (783 million) adults by 2045.
- The Foodbank 2023 Hunger Report revealed that 3.7 million households in Australia experienced food insecurity in the previous 12 months.

PROJECT CYCLE:

2024–2026

PARTNERS:

The George Institute for Global Health
UNSW Sydney, Australia
Canterbury Hospital, Australia
Campbelltown Hospital, Australia
Liverpool Hospital, Australia
RPA Hospital, Australia

SUPPORTERS:

The George Institute for Global Health
National Health and Medical Research Council, Australia
Hort Innovation, Australia

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Prof Jason Wu

BACKGROUND:

- Healthy eating is a standard therapy for adults with type 2 diabetes. However, providing dietary counselling is inadequate if individuals are unable to access the food recommended.
- 'Food is Medicine' programs aim to integrate nutrition interventions into the health care system to improve diets and support their medical treatments.
- 'Produce Prescription' is one such approach, whereby clinicians and other health professionals prescribe free or subsidised healthy foods to people who experience food insecurity as part of their treatment

AIM:

- To evaluate whether a 'Produce Prescription' intervention improves blood glucose control (HbA1c), compared to a control (usual care) group, in adults with type 2 diabetes and food insecurity.
- To generate evidence for the integration of 'Produce Prescription' into the healthcare system to support this population.

METHODS:

- This project will recruit adults with type 2 diabetes and food insecurity from multiple Sydney hospitals.
- Those randomised to the intervention group will receive a box of fresh produce each week for 6 months and three consultations with dietitians.
- The primary outcome will be change in blood sugar control measured as HbA1c, comparing intervention to control.
- Secondary outcomes include changes in blood pressure, body weight, blood lipids, medication use, food insecurity, diet quality and patient-reported outcome measures.
- A process evaluation and economic analysis will determine the intervention's feasibility, acceptability, scalability, and cost-effectiveness.

IMPACT

- This is the first 'Produce Prescription' randomised control trial for people with type 2 diabetes in Australia.
- Findings will inform how 'Produce Prescription' could be integrated into the healthcare system in Australia to support the care of people with type 2 diabetes and food insecurity.

CONTACT:

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