



A Scoping Review of Prescription Produce Programmes and Glycaemic Control in Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus: A Cape Town Perspective

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Abstract

Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) is a major public health challenge in South Africa, with Cape Town experiencing a high prevalence. ‘Food is Medicine’ strategies, such as prescription produce programmes (PPPs) that supply fruits and vegetables, are potential complementary interventions for improving diet and glycaemic control. The specific evidence base within Cape Town requires synthesis. This scoping review aimed to map and synthesise literature on the impact of PPPs on glycaemic control in adults with T2DM, focusing on evidence relevant to Cape Town, South Africa. A scoping review was conducted using established frameworks. A systematic search was performed across multiple electronic databases and grey literature sources. Studies focusing on PPPs for T2DM management were included. Data were charted and analysed thematically. The search identified a limited number of studies directly relevant to Cape Town. Available evidence, primarily from international settings, indicates a generally positive association between PPP participation and improved glycaemic outcomes. A recurring theme was enhanced patient engagement in dietary self-management. A common finding was a reduction in HbA1c levels, though the effect size varied. PPPs show promise as a complementary intervention for T2DM management. However, there is a notable lack of locally generated evidence within Cape Town to robustly inform programme design and policy for this specific setting. Further primary research, including pilot interventions and robust evaluations, is needed in Cape Town to assess the feasibility, cultural acceptability, cost-effectiveness, and health impacts of PPPs. Collaboration between public health authorities, healthcare providers, and local agricultural initiatives is recommended. prescription produce programme, Food is Medicine, type 2 diabetes, glycaemic control, scoping review, Cape Town, South Africa. This review consolidates the existing evidence on PPPs and T2DM, highlighting a critical gap in local research and providing direction for future investigation and potential implementation in Cape Town.

Keywords: *Type 2 diabetes mellitus, glycaemic control, prescription produce programmes, Food is Medicine, South Africa, scoping review*

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