



## PURPOSE

OgdenCAN commissioned me to research public health interventions that address obesity and food insecurity in demographics similar to those in the East Central neighborhood.

I researched Produce Rx programs to understand their effectiveness in combatting obesity and food insecurity. I determined which implementation methods would be most successful for the target population.

## PROBLEM

Obesity and food insecurity are pressing local health concerns. Food insecurity leads to unhealthy eating habits that perpetuate obesity.

- In 2017, 29% of low-income residents in Weber and Morgan County were obese (“Utah Health”)

## METHODS

- Qualitative analysis of nine Produce Rx programs
- Focus on success rates, patient outcomes, community outcomes, and successful implementation methods

## INTERVENTIONS

- OgdenCAN has not implemented a Produce Rx program yet, but the proposal was well received
- There are plans to implement a Produce Rx program in Ogden City by OgdenCAN or Utah State Board of Health



# Produce Rx

## A Community Health Intervention Program

By Bethany West

## Literature Review

A review of best practices and outcomes

## Best Practices

The most successful programs integrated these elements into their intervention.

### Cultural Appropriateness

- Used markets that contained familiar produce
- Ensured patients could communicate with staff

### Market Choice

- Used markets with convenient operating hours
- Used markets within walking distance

### Provider Training and Education

- Trained physicians to administer nutrition education

### Preparation for Food Insecure Behaviors

- Encouraged patients to try new produce and recipes

### Patient/provider Surveys

- Distributed surveys to assess produce consumption, program satisfaction, and suggestions for improvement



## Program Outcomes

Produce Rx programs were highly successful in addressing food insecurity and obesity in at-risk populations.

### Patient Outcomes

- Weight loss
- Decreased blood pressure and blood glucose levels
- Improved unhealthy eating behaviors long-term
- High satisfaction rates with the program

### Provider Outcomes

- Improved provider-patient relationship and communication
- Integrated nutrition counseling into their regular practice

### Community Outcomes

- Increased customer traffic to local and farmer’s markets



## SUMMARY

Produce Rx programs are health interventions that address obesity and food insecurity in low-income, at-risk populations.

In the intervention, a physician provides nutrition education to a patient and prescribes them fresh produce. The prescription is a produce voucher that is redeemable at local markets.

Produce Rx programs were successful because they provided low-income patients with the means to purchase fresh produce while simultaneously educating them on proper nutrition. Patients who participated in the programs lost weight and improved food insecure behavior.

## Implications for the Community

A Produce Rx program may benefit populations in Ogden City’s East Central Neighborhood.

- The program would increase nutrition understanding and access to fresh produce

## Professional Implications

As a student researcher, this project contributed to my professional growth.

- I expanded my research and writing skills
- I developed project management skills
- I increased my professional network

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