

Abstract

Perspectives of Green Prescription Personnel in Providing Nutrition Support for Clients [†]

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Abstract: Modifiable lifestyle factors, such as physical activity and diet, are proven to have a significant effect on chronic disease conditions. Over two decades ago, New Zealand implemented an initiative to support increasing physical activity to reduce chronic disease burden. This initiative, Green Prescription (GRx), continues to have a distinct focus on physical activity, however, over its history, nutrition support has also been included by some providers. GRx could be a vehicle for nutrition support delivery with a preventative focus in the community, but little is known about the current situation. The study aim was to survey GRx staff about the scope of nutrition support available, and develop a basis for future investigation on its provision in the community. An online survey was conducted among the GRx staff to investigate whether nutrition support is part of their program, who provides it, what it includes and whether there is sufficient qualification and support for the personnel. Respondent perspectives on benefits and concerns of nutrition support provision were included. Responses from 46 personnel, within 15 GRx providers, were received. Results indicated that physical activity makes up more than half of GRx program delivery, while nutrition support contributes to just under one-third, on average. Over twice as many qualifications held by the personnel specialised in physical activity as nutrition. Most respondents identified nutrition support as being of high importance and indicated that although there are professional development opportunities, resources and support were limited. Physical activity remains the key focus for GRx programs, however nutrition support is perceived as important, indicated by its inclusion in programs and number of personnel with nutrition qualifications. In the future, the opportunities for professional development need more clarification, and further investigation into resources and personnel support is warranted, in order to investigate the feasibility of nutrition support at a preventative level in the community.

Keywords: Green Prescription; GRx; nutrition support; perspective



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