



Sansum Diabetes Research Institute

Latino Diabetes Community Scientists

Location: US (California)

Target group: Hispanic/Latino families

Budget: \$100,000 a year (2020-2022).



selects the most relevant recent articles on clinical trial results and health guidelines on Diabetes and Covid, summarizes the research, replacing medical and technical jargon with accessible English and Spanish to mitigate the health literacy and numeracy barriers.

Activities and milestones

- Enrolment on a prospective longitudinal cohort of Hispanic/Latino families with at least one person living with a diagnosis of diabetes (Mil Familias).
- Continuation of Mil Familias through May 2022
- Participation in a food-as-medicine program (Farming for Life), a prospective observation study of the impact of providing access to fresh vegetables over 3 months on cardiometabolic and psychosocial outcomes including food security.

- Publication of 8 scientific articles with new insights into personal physiological data (e.g., glycemic profiles from continuous glucose monitors), which open opportunities for more personalized lifestyle and pharmaceutical interventions. The participants reported that participation in the vegetable prescription program was associated with clinically significant improvements in cardiometabolic (e.g., lowering of blood pressure) and psychosocial (e.g., lower burden of depression, anxiety and stress and less food insecurity) outcomes.
- Coverage of the issues the program addresses in the New York Times, “Pandemic puts new focus on diabetes”, April 5, 2022.

Sustainability and future plans

- The projects supported by the Elsevier Foundation at Sansum Diabetes Research Institute have been concluded. David Kerr is exploring how to continue this critical work in prevention through additional funding.

Primary outcome

Reduce the disproportionate burden of diabetes affecting Hispanic/Latino communities in the United States through research, education and care, including use of digital health technologies and the creation of *Especialistas*, a community health champion role.

Overview

U.S. Hispanics/Latinos bear a disproportionate burden of type 2 diabetes (T2D). Social and environmental factors (access to care, low rates of research participation and low health literacy) account for 90% of the risk for T2D progression. The aim of the [Sansum Diabetes Research Institute](#) (SDRI) is to develop community rapport to strengthen the health literacy and research expertise of *Especialistas* or Community Scientists and create an evidence-based, technology-diversity-health nexus.

Community Scientists. Hispanic/Latino adults make up almost 40% of California’s population, but only 8% of nurses and 5% of doctors. *Especialistas* are drawn from the local population and take lead roles in: establishing and maintaining community trust; participant recruitment and retention; removing barriers to participation in research and development; increasing self-efficacy; and providing cultural oversight to the creation of supporting materials.

Mil Familias. The Mil Familias study enrolled 400 individuals living with T2D. The primary objective of the study was to determine how genetic, biological, psychological, behavioral, and social environmental influences impacted the progression of T2D and associated cardiovascular complications over time. This includes the use of wearable technologies to measure health outcomes.

Accessible research findings. Hispanics/Latinos have less access to published research findings and “publicly available” diabetes information is not written at an appropriate health literacy level in English, let alone Spanish. To democratize research findings, SDRI

“For virtual health care, addressing trust, access, and self-efficacy will be catalysts for change, ensuring that every person with diabetes can attain their full health potential: the very definition of equity.”

— DAVID KERR, Director of Research and Innovation, SDRI. *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*, V. 9, I. 8, 2021, pp. 480-482.

