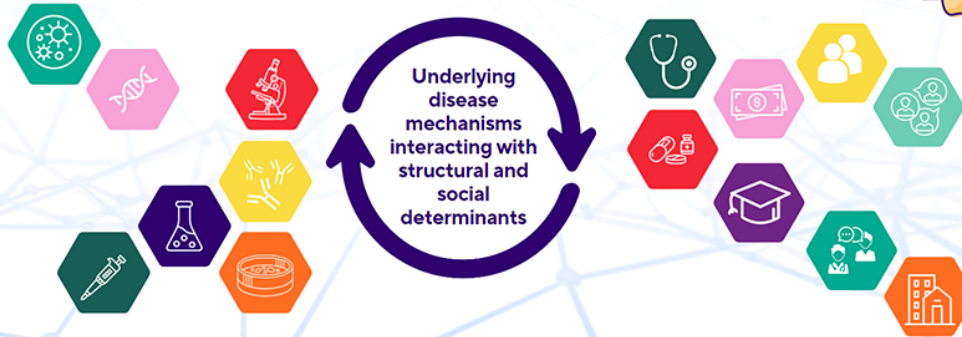




19TH ANNUAL CHILD HEALTH RESEARCH DAYS
Outcomes in Child Health



October 25 + 26, 2023 | RBC Convention Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Abstract Submission Form

CHRD 2023: Abstract Submission Form

Submitter Name

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Presenter Name

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Presenter Status

Undergraduate Students

Research Category

Community Health / Policy

Role in the project

Analyze Data
Write Abstract

Title

Novel allergy-friendly food subsidy perceived to reduce burden on families managing milk allergy

Background

Approximately 6-7% of Canadian children have food allergy. These families face substantial burdens due to the additional effort required for management and the disproportionate costs of allergy-friendly food products.

Objective

In this study, we aimed to qualitatively evaluate a milk allergy-friendly subsidy program for lower- and middle-income families in Winnipeg, Canada.

Methods

As part of an overarching mixed-methods intervention, families who lived or worked in Winnipeg, with an annual net household income of about \$70,000 or less, and a child age <6 years with a physician diagnosed milk allergy were recruited from a database maintained by the principal investigator, social media, and word-of-mouth. From March-August 2022, participating families received bi-weekly deliveries of subsidy kits containing ~\$50 worth of milk allergy-friendly foods. End-of-study semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically.

Results

Eight interviews, averaging 32 minutes (range 22-54 minutes), were completed with mothers from all different families. On average, mothers were 29.88 ± 4.39 years old and children were 2.06 ± 1.32 years old. All children had a physician diagnosed cow's milk allergy and reported additional allergies with the most prevalent being peanut and egg (each $n=4$). We identified three themes: food allergy poses a

substantial burden on families, parents prioritize their child's dietary needs before their own needs, and families perceived this allergy-friendly food subsidy to have emotional and financial benefits.

Conclusion

This subsidy was perceived to positively impact families' food costs and stress. Not only does this suggest a need for support for families managing food allergy, but also, the current findings provide valuable information to inform the development of programs focused on alleviating the burden of food allergy. Future programs should strive to incorporate a greater variety of foods to further the benefits obtained.

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