New Research On Abbott's Healthy Food Rx Program Shows 'Food Is Medicine' Approach Helps People Living With Diabetes Eat Better And Feel Healthier

- Randomized, controlled clinical trial presented as a late-breaking poster at ADA's Scientific Sessions shows people participating in Abbott's Healthy Food Rx ate more vegetables and fruit, and reported significantly improved health status.
- Abbott's Healthy Food Rx community-focused "food is medicine" program provides home-delivered healthy food boxes and nutrition education in Stockton, Calif., where 60% of the population has diabetes or pre-diabetes.

CHICAGO, June 20, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Late-breaking research presented at the American Diabetes Association's 85th Scientific Sessions showed that Abbott's (NYSE: ABT) Healthy Food Rx "food is medicine" program helped people living with diabetes to eat better and feel healthier, with participants reporting improved diet quality and health status.

This study is one of the few randomized controlled clinical trials examining the impact of food is medicine programs. Conducted by the Public Health Institute Center for Wellness and Nutrition (PHI CWN), this clinical trial assessed the impact of Abbott's Healthy Food Rx in a highly food insecure, low-income, community-based setting of 364 people living with diabetes over a six-month period. The Healthy Food Rx program provides home-delivered, meal-based healthy food boxes accompanied by nutrition education to help address diabetes.

Key study results include:

- **Improved diet quality:** Healthy Food Rx participants reported significantly increased vegetable consumption compared to the control group (0.37 vs. 0.03 increased servings per day; $p = 0.007$), and increased fruit consumption compared to control group (0.3 vs. 0.2 increased servings per day, $p = 0.232$).
- **Improved health status:** Healthy Food Rx participants reported significantly greater improvements in self-reported physical health status over six months (from 38% to 63%, $p < 0.001$), compared to the control group (from 47% to 50%, $p=0.453$; between group $p<0.001$).
- **Lowered A1C levels in both groups:** A1C levels significantly improved for both Healthy Food Rx participants and the control group. A1C is a test that reflects average glucose levels for the past three months; levels decreased by 0.7% and 1.2%, in the intervention group and control group, respectively. Both values exceeded the widely accepted 0.5% benchmark that is considered a clinically significant change and is associated with improved health outcomes in people with diabetes.
- **Participants were strongly satisfied with Healthy Food Rx, and shared with family and friends:** Participants in Abbott's Healthy Food Rx reported strong satisfaction – 98% were satisfied with the program and 97% used all or most of the food. Two-thirds of participants (67%) shared the food with two or more people, and 99% were likely to recommend the program to others.

"Living with diabetes in an economically underserved community can present numerous challenges, from limited access to affordable, healthy foods to a lack of appropriate health services," said Erika Takada, Executive Director, Public Health Institute Center for Wellness and Nutrition. "Even with a program that reaches participants just twice a month, we are seeing benefits in people with diabetes eating better foods and feeling healthier. This underscores the foundational role that good nutrition can play in helping to address the impact of diabetes and other chronic diseases on our families and communities."

Launched in 2021, Abbott's Healthy Food Rx is one of the largest community-focused food is medicine programs in the country, reaching more than 1,700 participants to date. These clinical trial findings build on results of an earlier 12-month study that showed clinically important benefits among Healthy Food Rx participants living with diabetes.

"Programs like Abbott's Healthy Food Rx are critically important in communities likeStockton where diabetes incidence and risk are significantly higher," said Kwabena O. Adubofour, MD, FACP, Internal Medicine Specialist and a Board Certified Diabetologist at Community Medical Centers (CMC) in Stockton. "From results like A1C reduction to even personal well-being, participants from the CMC clinic benefited greatly from access to healthy foods and nutrition resources. It will be important to see how these benefits translate into long-term improvements in diabetes outcomes so people can lead healthier, fuller lives."

"We're pleased that results from Abbott's Healthy Food Rx can contribute to a better understanding of the impacts that programs like this can have for people living with diabetes," said Melissa Brotz, president of Abbott Fund and senior vice president of Global Marketing and External Affairs at Abbott. "By integrating healthy food and nutrition education as part of a broader effort to remove barriers to care, we're helping people to feel more in control and take an active role in managing their health."

About the Clinical Trial
A delayed intervention randomized clinical trial design was used. Participants were recruited by health educators and randomized into two groups: the intervention group received home-delivered, meal-based food boxes once every other week for six months with nutrition education in the form of recipes, cooking videos and text messages; the control group received the intervention after the six-month study period. All participants received usual care, including potential medication prescriptions and optional diabetes education and social needs referrals.

Participants were administered surveys at enrollment and after six months, with hemoglobin A1C assessed as the primary outcome, and secondary outcomes including fruit and vegetable intake, food security and health status. Study results can be found here.

About Abbott's Healthy Food Rx

Abbott's Healthy Food Rx program is part of the company's *Future Well™* Communities initiative, a multi-year effort to advance health access by removing the barriers that prevent people with diabetes from living healthy lives.

Abbott partnered with PHI CWN to design and implement Healthy Food Rx with Stockton-based organizations, with funding support from Abbott's foundation, Abbott Fund. CMC, a local federally qualified health center in Stockton, identified potential Healthy Food Rx participants. Program participants received food boxes from the Emergency Food Bank Stockton/San Joaquin (EFB), delivered directly to their home every other week for six months. The boxes included ingredients for a family-sized healthy meal with lean protein, vegetables and fruits, as well as pantry staples such as beans, rice and nuts. The box also contained a recipe card and link to an optional online cooking class with EFB, which provided additional guidance and diabetes education.

About the Public Health Institute and the Center for Wellness and Nutrition

The Public Health Institute, an independent nonprofit organization, advances wellbeing and health equity with communities around the world. PHI develops research, leadership and partnerships to build strong public health policy, programs, systems and practices. For more information, visit phi.org. The Center for Wellness and Nutrition (CWN, centerforwellnessandnutrition.org), a program of the Public Health Institute, is a national leader in developing campaigns, programs and partnerships to promote wellness and equitable practices in the most vulnerable communities in California and across the country.

About Abbott and Abbott Fund

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Abbott Fund is a philanthropic foundation established by Abbott in 1951. Abbott Fund's mission is to create healthier global communities by investing in creative ideas that promote science, expand access to healthcare and strengthen communities worldwide. For more information on Abbott Fund, visit www.abbottfund.org.

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