Produce Prescriptions and a Path Toward Food Equity for Children

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Despite scientific consensus that a whole, varied diet is important for health, few individuals in the US eat enough fruits and vegetables. While physicians have frequent interactions with patients who would benefit from increased fruit and vegetable intake, they lack systems and processes to effectively address this issue in clinical settings. For parents in low-income households, this is akin to the pediatrician diagnosing a child with an infection, recommending an antibiotic to treat it, and providing neither an antibiotic prescription nor an affordable way to fill it. Produce prescriptions provide this missing infrastructure in health care settings and are a broadly scalable, emerging strategy to address inequities in food access within the constraints of the existing food and health care systems. They complement numerous other programs and policies designed to support nutrition security and food equity.

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