



# EDGAR DIABETES & OBESITY RESEARCH

A UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO RESEARCH CENTRE

10  
YEARS  
2003-2013



"To make a significant contribution to reducing the global burden of diabetes and obesity through research and dissemination of knowledge."

## OUR RESEARCH CENTRE

Edgar Diabetes and Obesity Research (EDOR) was formed in 2003 in response to the sharply increasing health burden of diabetes and obesity in New Zealand. We aim to reduce the prevalence, and to improve the management, of diabetes and obesity by finding new ways to prevent and treat these conditions.

## OUR PEOPLE



Our directors from left to right: Associate Professor Rachael Taylor, Professor Jim Mann, Dr Kirsten Coppell.



Sir Eion Edgar, Advisory Board Chair and founding benefactor of EDOR.

Our Centre includes four core staff and 14 members from eight different departments on the Dunedin and Wellington campuses.



## OUR LANDMARK STUDIES

### Ngati and Healthy: Prevent diabetes project



This 2006 Whanau Ora supreme award winner and Health Innovation Award finalist was a collaborative community intervention between Ngati Porou Hauora and EDOR.

Two years participation in our community diabetes intervention appeared to reduce the prevalence of insulin resistance, specifically in those with the highest level of participation and most marked lifestyle changes.

### BLISS: Baby-led introduction to solids



A baby-led approach to introducing solids involves bypassing purees, introducing whole foods right from the start of complementary feeding, and having the baby feed themselves.

Proposed advantages of this baby-led approach include improved energy self-regulation, greater family interaction (as the baby joins in family meals), and convenience.

We are following 100 families who are using this approach, compared with 100 families using spoon-fed purees.

We will study:

- What these children eat
- How their families function
- How this affects their weight

We will also investigate what happens to their iron status and choking risk during the first two years of life.

### LOADD: Lifestyle over and above drugs in diabetes

This research examined if an intensive dietary intervention can further improve glucose, blood pressure, and lipids levels, over and above the effects of recommended drugs.

Patients with established type 2 diabetes, who were on appropriate diabetes and cardiovascular medication, were randomised to receive either intensive evidence-based dietary advice or 'usual' dietary advice. All participants continued to receive their usual medical care.



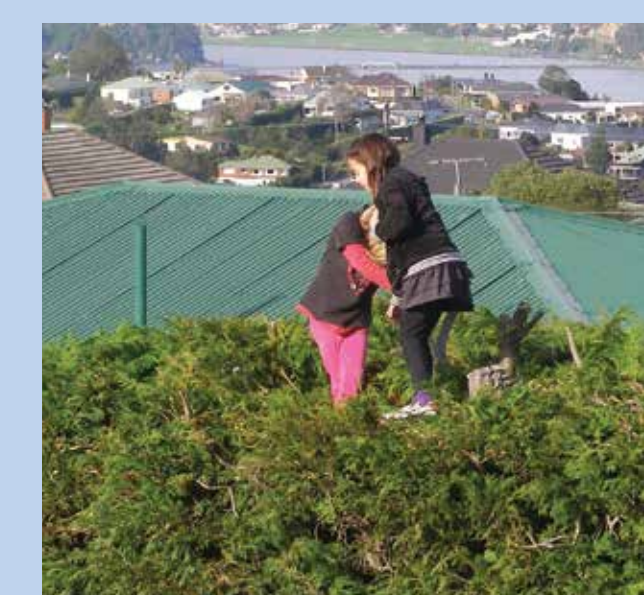
Intensive nutrition treatment achieved an improvement in both glycaemic control and anthropometric measures, in the patients with type 2 diabetes who were at high risk of cardiovascular disease.

### APPLE and PLAY: School intervention programmes for lifestyle and exercise

The APPLE study was the first in New Zealand, and one of the first internationally, to show that community-based initiatives could successfully reduce the rate of excessive weight gain in primary school-aged children.

The current PLAY study aims to increase activity and decrease bullying, by providing environments that encourage explorative play (rolling hills, fallen logs), and allow children to experience reasonable levels of managed risk during play (climbing trees, contact games).

Sixteen schools and more than 900 primary-school aged children are involved in the randomised controlled PLAY study.



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

In the fields of diabetes and obesity we have:

- Undertaken excellent research, with national and international recognition of our studies
- Promoted and facilitated national and international collaboration amongst researchers
- Published more than 120 papers in leading, high impact scientific journals, such as the British Medical Journal
- Written invited editorials and commentaries for leading journals, and presented keynote lectures at major international conferences
- Taken a lead role in guideline policy development at local, national, and international levels, including the World Health Organization
- Shared our knowledge and skills at community, teaching, and professional levels, and have organised several high-profile public events attended by health professionals, senior politicians, and academics

## OUR FUTURE

Many of the same challenges that we faced a decade ago are still here.

With 10 major studies behind us and another 10 currently underway, we are in a stronger position to further inform the public, policymakers, and the government about what works in tackling diabetes and obesity in New Zealand.

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