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# **SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH FOR THE INTERNIST: MAKING SENSE OF IT ALL**

***SONJA RAAUM MD FACP & ANDREA S. WALLACE RN PHD FAAN***

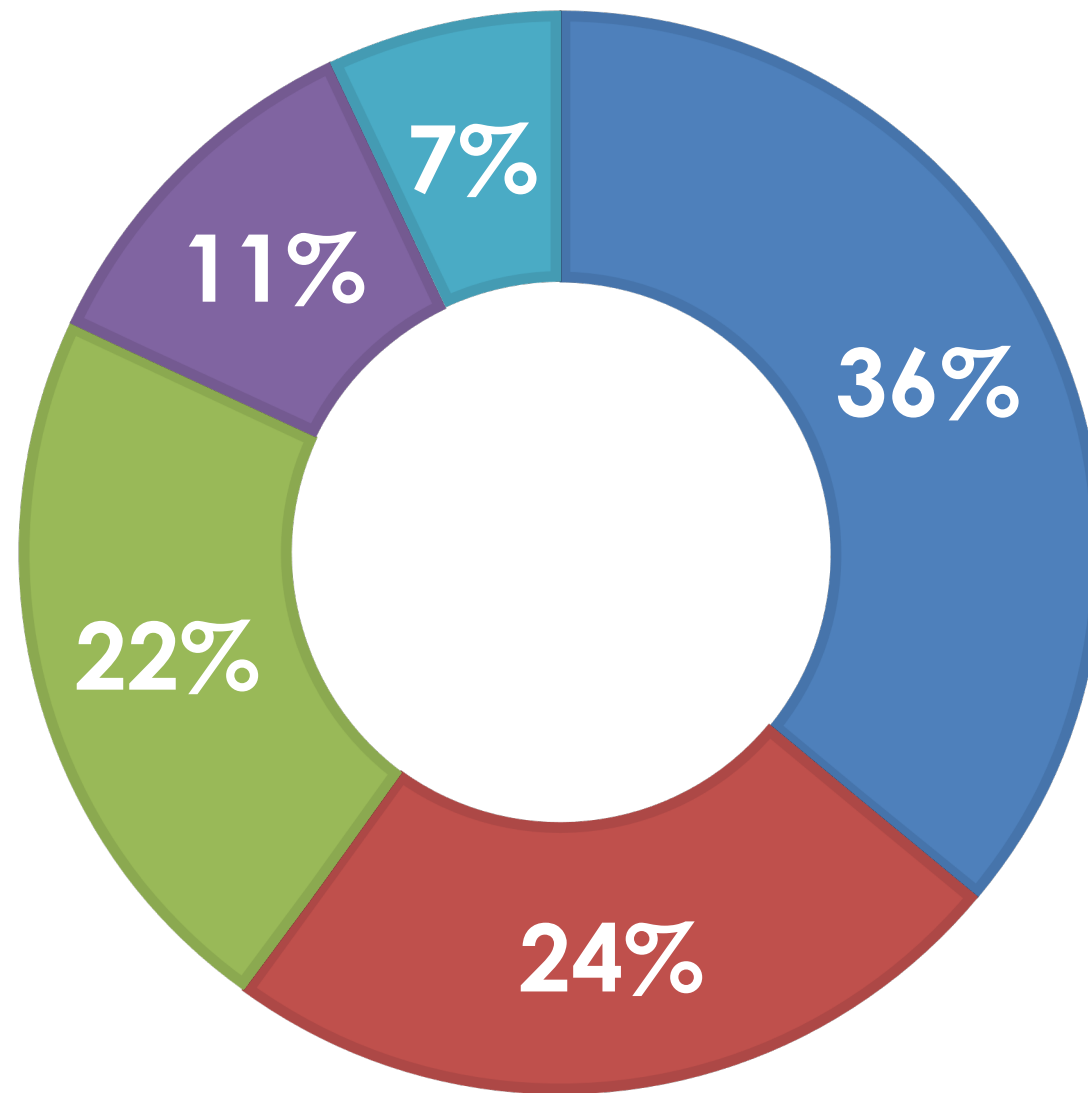
# OBJECTIVES

- Understand importance of SDOH
  - Identify the concept of social needs
- Review pearls/pitfalls from “Hotspotting”
- Apply framework to use SDOH at varying levels of care
- Empower you to ask about and document social needs!

# SDOH DEFINITION

- World Health Organization  
“The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.”
- “The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities - the unfair and **avoidable** differences in health status seen within and between countries.”

# HEALTH OUTCOMES

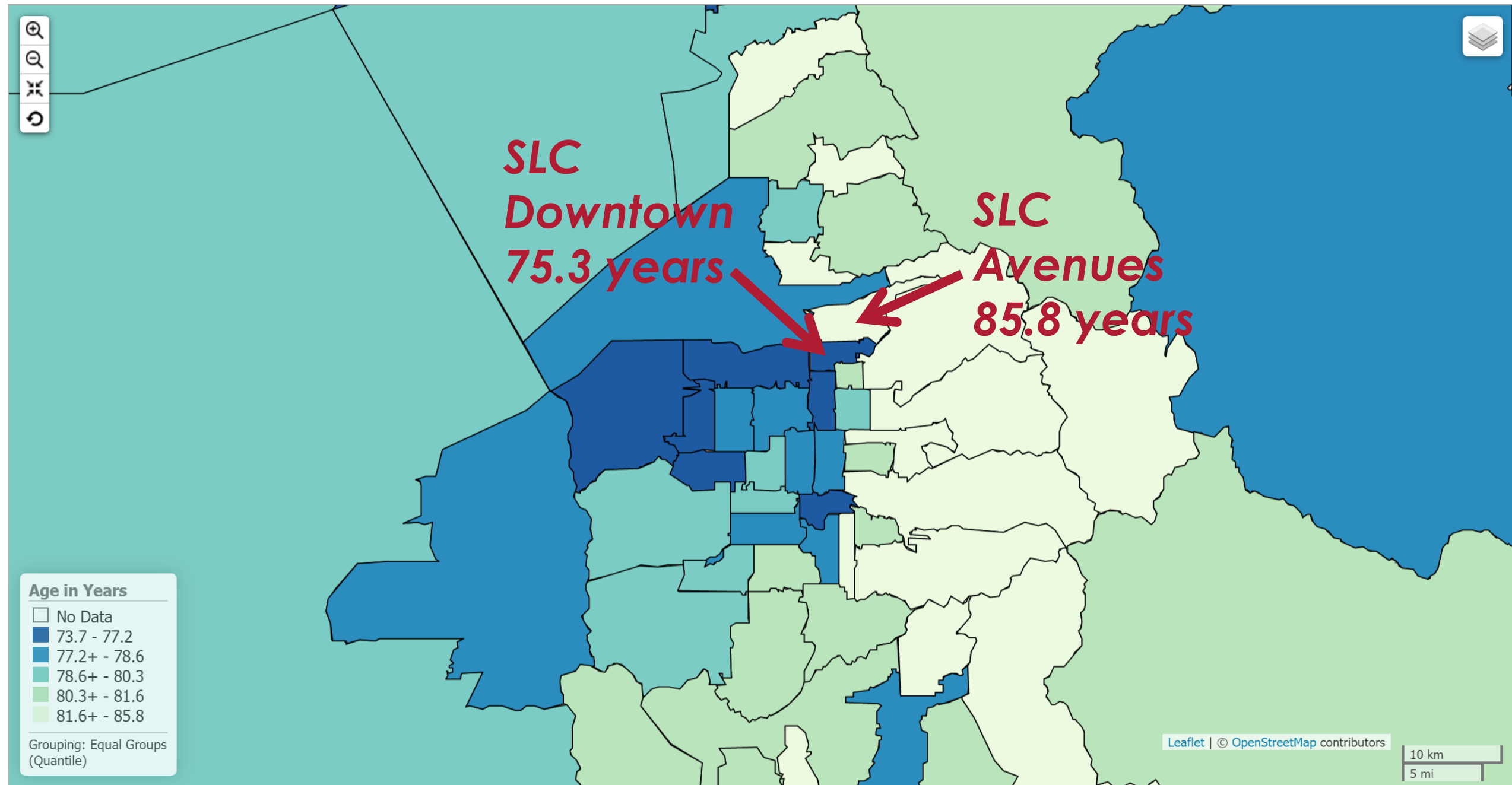


- Individual Behavior
- Social Circumstances
- Genetics & Biology
- Medical Care
- Environment

**SDOH matter because patients don't live in your clinic! (usually)**

[Determinantsofhealth.org](https://determinantsofhealth.org)

## Life Expectancy at Birth by Utah Small Area, 2014-2018, and U.S. 2017



Life expectancy by Utah Small Area was calculated using death counts over a span of 5 years (2014-2018).

<https://ibis.health.utah.gov/ibisph-view/indicator/view/LifeExpect.SA.html>



MEDICAL REPORT JANUARY 24, 2011 ISSUE

# THE HOT SPOTTERS

*Can we lower medical costs by giving the neediest patients better care?*



By Atul Gawande

January 17, 2011

If Camden, New Jersey, becomes the first American community to lower its medical costs, it will have a murder to thank. At nine-fifty on a February night in 2001 a twenty-



SPECIAL ARTICLE

# Health Care Hotspotting — A Randomized, Controlled Trial

Amy Finkelstein, Ph.D., Annetta Zhou, Ph.D., Sarah Taubman, Sc.D.,  
and Joseph Doyle, Ph.D.

## ABSTRACT

### BACKGROUND

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) and the National  
research (A.Z., S.T.)  
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There is widespread interest in programs aiming to reduce spending and improve health care quality among “superutilizers,” patients with very high use of health care services. The “hotspotting” program created by the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers (hereafter, the Coalition) has received national attention as a promising

NEJM 2020;382(2):152-162

# INTERVENTION

- Enrolled during hospitalization
- Multidisciplinary team
  - RNs, SW, LPNs, Community health workers, coaches
- Performed home visits
- Scheduled and accompanied patients to initial primary care and specialty care
- Coordinated follow-up care, medication management
- BP, blood sugar, coached patients
- Helped patients apply for social services, appropriate behavioral health programs.



**Table 4.** Effects of Intervention in the Treatment Group, 180 Days after Discharge.\*

Effect	No. of Patients	Control Group	Treatment Group	Unadjusted Between-Group Difference (95% CI)	Adjusted Between-Group Difference (95% CI)
<i>mean</i>					
<b>Readmission in total sample</b>					
Any (%)		61.70	62.34	0.64 (−6.17 to 7.46)	0.82 (−5.97 to 7.61)
No. of readmissions		1.54	1.52	−0.02 (−0.29 to 0.26)	0.01 (−0.25 to 0.27)
≥2 readmissions (%)		36.25	36.39	0.14 (−6.61 to 6.89)	0.27 (−6.22 to 6.77)
Days in hospital		9.95	9.36	−0.59 (−2.49 to 1.31)	−0.32 (−2.17 to 1.53)
Hospital charges (\$)		114,768	116,422	1,654 (−25,523 to 28,831)	3,722 (−23,438 to 30,882)
Hospital payments received (\$)		17,650	18,130	480 (−3,613 to 4,573)	680 (−3,415 to 4,775)
<b>Any readmission according to subgroup (%)</b>					
No. of admissions in previous yr					
2	336	52.12	52.63	0.51 (−10.2 to 11.22)	0.78 (−10.35 to 11.91)
≥3	446	68.75	69.82	1.07 (−7.51 to 9.65)	1.27 (−7.38 to 9.92)
Preferred language					
English	638	63.11	62.61	−0.49 (−8.01 to 7.02)	0.1 (−7.42 to 7.61)
Other	144	56.25	60.94	4.69 (−11.58 to 20.96)	8.49 (−9.08 to 26.06)

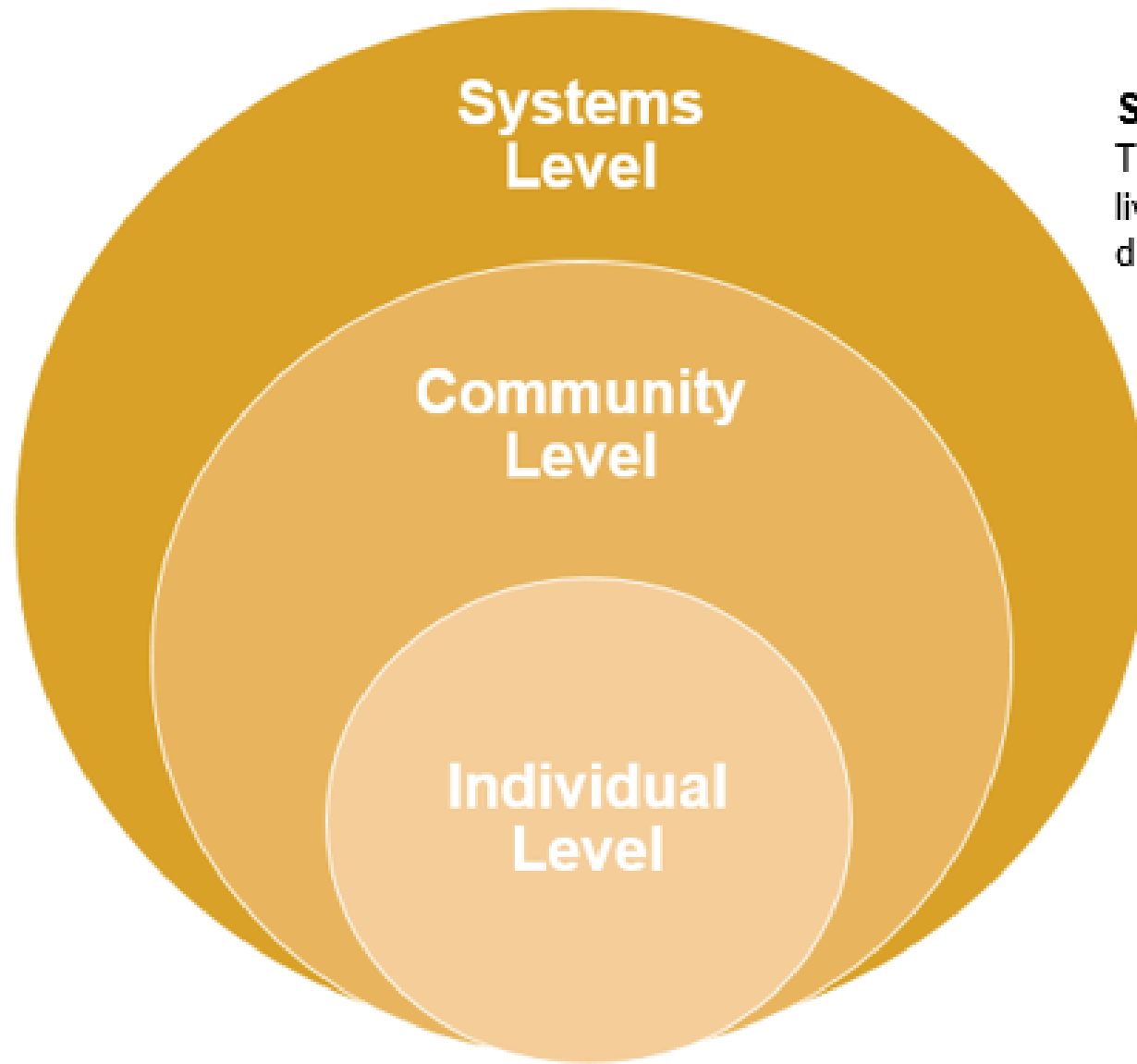
# CASE CLOSED. NEGATIVE RTC.

- NO!
- This leads us to a bigger discussion of how SDOH work
  - Specifically, how does this very large population level concept translate into clinical practice on an individual level?

# INTERVENTION

- Enrollment during hospitalization
- Multidisciplinary team
  - RNs, SW, PT

- **Majority of work was coordination within the healthcare system, for medical problems**
- **Connected to social programs, but unclear if these met needs**
- Education management
- Screened patients
- Patients apply for social services, appropriate behavioral health programs.



**Social Determinants of Health:**

The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, which are shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources.

← Description of the Problem

**Social Needs:**

- **Informed care** – information provided on a patient's social context to inform care
- **Targeted care** – information provided to address patients social needs directly

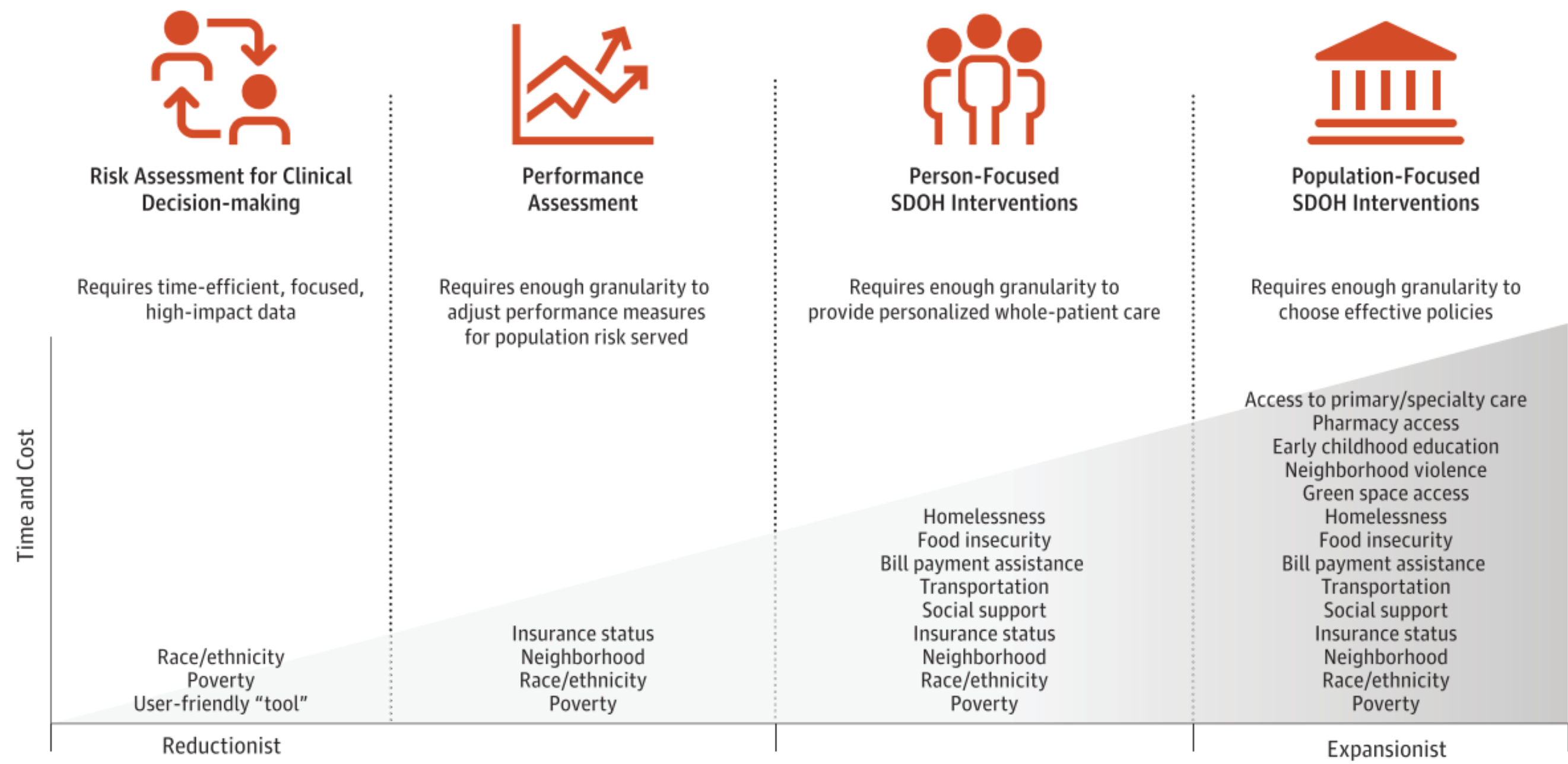
← How to use

# Models for Sense-Making

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Figure. Proposed Schematic for Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Data



# POPULATION FOCUS INTERVENTIONS

- Addressing clean water in Flint, Michigan

## Elevated Blood Lead Levels in Children Associated With the Flint Drinking Water Crisis: A Spatial Analysis of Risk and Public Health Response

*Mona Hanna-Attisha, MD, MPH, Jenny LaChance, MS, Richard Casey Sadler, PhD, and Allison Champney Schnepp, MD*

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*Objectives.* We analyzed differences in pediatric elevated blood lead level incidence before and after Flint, Michigan, introduced a more corrosive water source into an aging water system without adequate corrosion control.

*Methods.* We reviewed blood lead levels for children younger than 5 years before (2013) and after (2015) water source change in Greater Flint, Michigan. We assessed the

percentage of lead pipes and lead plumbing, with estimates of lead service lines ranging from 10% to 80%.<sup>7</sup> Researchers from Virginia Tech University reported increases in water lead levels (WLLs),<sup>5</sup> but changes in blood lead levels (BLLs) were unknown.

# PERSON FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS

- Community health workers, social workers, case managers, comprehensive care plans
- Very common – we are doing this every day!



# PERSON FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS

- Success depends upon measurement...

## Original Investigation

### Patient-Centered Community Health Worker Intervention to Improve Posthospital Outcomes A Randomized Clinical Trial

Shreya Kangovi, MD, MS; Nandita Mitra, PhD; David Grande, MD, MPA; Mary L. White; Sharon McCollum;  
Jeffrey Sellman, BA; Richard P. Shannon, MD; Judith A. Long, MD

**IMPORTANCE** Socioeconomic and behavioral factors can negatively influence posthospital outcomes among patients of low socioeconomic status (SES). Traditional hospital personnel often lack the time, skills, and community linkages required to address these factors.

← Invited Commentary  
page 543

Table 2. Outcomes in 446 Participants<sup>a</sup>

Outcome	Unadjusted				Adjusted <sup>b</sup>	
	No. (%)		Absolute Difference (95% CI)	NNT	P Value	Odds Ratio (95% CI) or $\beta$ Coefficient (SE)
Posthospital primary care	92 (47.9)	115 (60.0)	12.0 (2.0 to 21.7)	8	.02	1.52 (1.03-2.23)
High-quality verbal discharge communication	118 (78.7)	137 (91.3)	12.7 (4.5 to 20.5)	8	.002	2.94 (1.50-5.80)
Perfect medication adherence	115 (59.3)	123 (63.7)	4.5 (-5.2 to 14.0)	NA	.37	1.24 (0.82-1.87)
Any readmission	30 (13.6)	33 (15.0)	1.4 (-5.2 to 7.9)	NA	.68	1.13 (0.66-1.95)
Multiple readmissions	12 (5.5)	5 (2.3)	-3.2 (-6.9 to 0)	31	.08	0.40 (0.14-1.06)
Multiple readmissions among readmitted patients <sup>c</sup>	12 (40.0)	5 (15.2)	-24.8 (-44.5 to -2.8)	4	.03	0.27 (0.08-0.89)
Change in Patient Activation Score, mean (SD)	1.6 (17.2)	3.4 (17.5)	1.8 (0.8 to 4.0)	NA	.05	3.80 (1.50)
Change in Mental Health Score, mean (SD)	4.5 (12.2)	6.7 (14.0)	2.2 (0.4 to 4.8)	NA	.02	2.84 (1.20)
Change in Physical Health Score, mean (SD)	4.8 (10.4)	5.5 (10.4)	0.7 (-1.3 to 2.8)	NA	.62	0.64 (0.98)
Satisfaction with medical care, mean (SD)	3.4 (1.2)	3.4 (1.2)	0 (-0.2 to 0.3)	NA	.85	0.04 (0.12)

Abbreviations: NA, not available; NNT, number needed to treat.

<sup>a</sup> Denominators of unadjusted outcomes do not include missing data. Adjusted outcomes include imputed missing data.

<sup>b</sup> Outcomes adjusted for baseline number of usual care providers and insurance

status. Change in health and activation also adjusted for baseline health and activation scores.

<sup>c</sup> Among those readmitted, n = 63.

# PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

- Risk adjustment for patient populations

– Population level →

Adjusting for social risk factors impacts performance and penalties in the hospital readmissions reduction program

Karen E. Joynt Maddox MD, MPH<sup>1</sup>  | Mat Reidhead MA<sup>2</sup> | Jianhui Hu PhD<sup>3</sup>  | Amy J. H. Kind MD, PhD<sup>4</sup> | Alan M. Zaslavsky PhD<sup>5</sup>  | Elna M. Nagasako MD, PhD, MPH<sup>6</sup>  | David R. Nerenz PhD<sup>3</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Cardiovascular Division, Department of Medicine, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri

<sup>2</sup>Missouri Hospital Association, Hospital Industry Data Institute, Jefferson City, Missouri

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ORIGINAL RESEARCH | 20 JULY 2010

– Individual level →

**Contextual Errors and Failures in Individualizing Patient Care: A Multicenter Study**

Saul J. Weiner, MD; Alan Schwartz, PhD; Frances Weaver, PhD; Julie Goldberg, PhD; Rachel Yudkowsky, MD, MHPE; Gunjan Sharma, PhD; Amy Binns-Calvey; Ben Preyss, BA; Marilyn M. Schapira, MD, MPH; Stephen D. Persell, MD, MPH; Elizabeth Jacobs, MD, MPP; Richard I. Abrams, MD

[Article, Author, and Disclosure Information](#)

Health Services Research 2019;54(2):327-336. Annals of Internal Medicine 2010;153(2):69-75.

# ACP POSITION STATEMENT

- “8. *The American College of Physicians recommends adjusting quality payment models and performance measurement assessments to reflect the increased risk associated with caring for disadvantaged populations.*”

# RISK ASSESSMENT AND CLINICAL DECISIONS

- Social Needs Screeners

## CMS

### Box 1 | Accountable Health Communities Core Health-Related Social Needs Screening Questions

Underlined answer options indicate positive responses for the associated health-related social need.  
A value greater than 10 when the numerical values for answers to questions 7-10 are summed indicates a positive screen for interpersonal safety.

#### Housing Instability

- What is your housing situation today?  
☐ I do not have housing (I am staying with others, in a hotel, in a shelter, living outside on the street, on a beach, in a car, abandoned building, bus or train station, or in a park)  
☐ I have housing today, but I am worried about losing housing in the future.  
☐ I have housing
- Think about the place you live. Do you have problems with any of the following? (check all that apply)  
☐ Bug infestation  
☐ Mold

## PRAPARE



**PRAPARE: Protocol for Responding to and Assessing Patient Assets, Risks, and Experiences**  
Paper Version of PRAPARE for Implementation As of September 2, 2016

#### Personal Characteristics

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> I choose not to answer this question
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2. Which race(s) are you? Check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian
<input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American
<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native

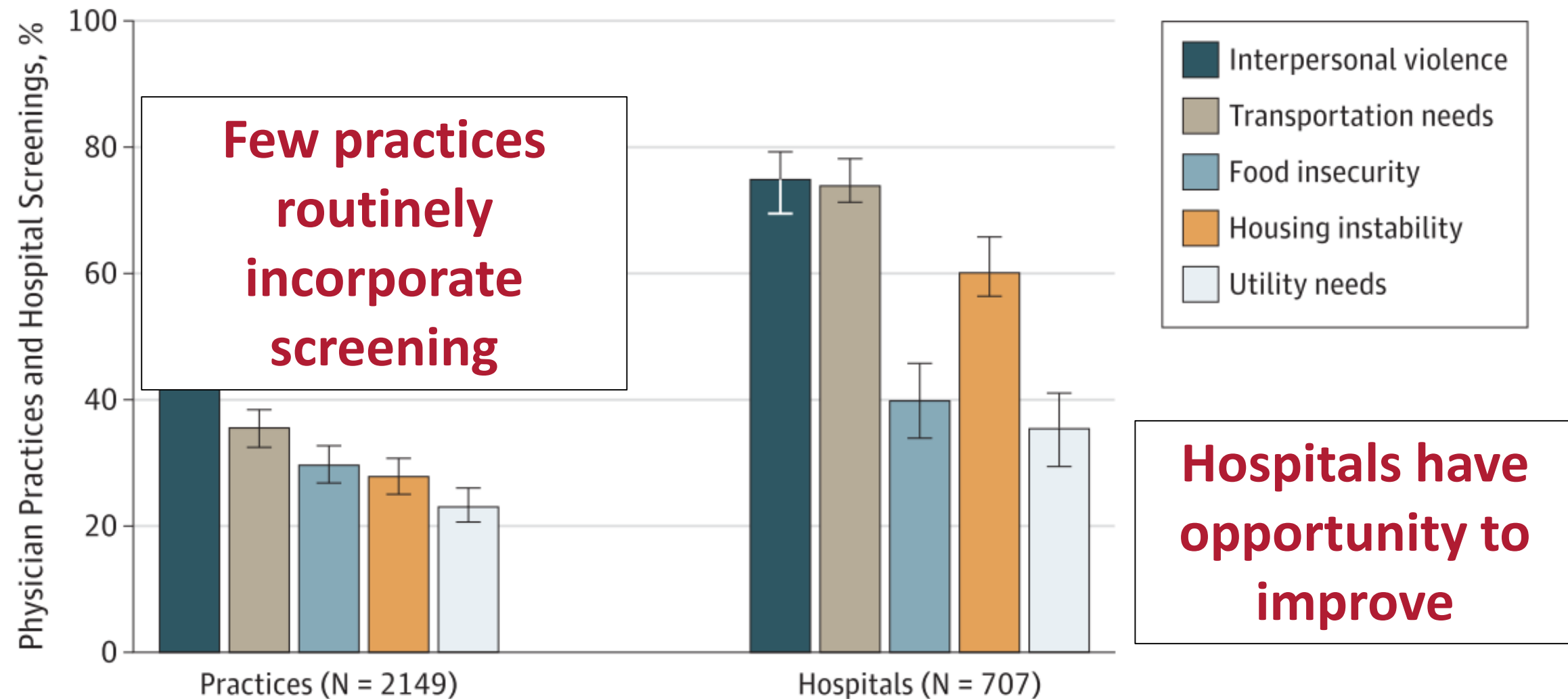
7. What is your housing situation today?

<input type="checkbox"/> I have housing
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not have housing (staying with others, in a hotel, in a shelter, living outside on the street, on a beach, in a car, or in a park)
<input type="checkbox"/> I choose not to answer this question

8. Are you worried about losing your housing?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> I choose not to answer this question
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Figure 1. Percentage of Physician Practices and Hospitals That Screen Patients for Each of 5 Social Needs



# ACP POSITION STATEMENT

- “9. *The American College of Physicians recommends increased screening and collection of social determinants of health data to aid in health impact assessments and support evidence-driven decision making.*”



# When the rubber meets the road

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# CHALLENGES OF CLINICAL CARE INTEGRATION

- Screening for social determinants during clinical encounter remains controversial
  - Whose responsibility is it to deal with?
  - Does it distract from other medical care?
  - Concern/Implementation barriers
    - 66% of 154 physicians did not feel confident in their capacity to address SDOH<sup>1</sup>
    - Lack of time, lack of resources to address cited as most significant barriers<sup>1</sup>

# WHAT DOES THE PATIENT THINK?

- 50 interviews of patients and caregivers
  1. Believe **screening for social risks is important**
  2. **Understand connections** between social risks and overall health
  3. Emphasized **importance of patient-centered implementation** of social risk screening
  4. **Recognize the limitations** of healthcare's capacity to address or resolve social adversity

American Journal of Preventive Medicine 2019;57(6 Supp 1):S38-S46.

# Example

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# EXAMPLE: THE UHEALTH ED

Clinical stakeholders communicated:

1. Concerns about assessing social needs without referral resources
2. Beliefs that “others” screen needs and refer patients to resources
3. Beliefs that support staff (e.g., registration vs nurses) can effectively screen, but need to be clinically integrated

**Agency for Healthcare Research and  
Quality R21 HS026505**

# EXAMPLE: THE UHEALTH ED

In the last month...

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1. Have you not seen a doctor because you did not have a way to get to the clinic or hospital?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer Not To Answer

---

2. Have you needed to see a doctor but could not because it costs too much?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer Not To Answer

---

3. Did you not take medications to save money?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer Not To Answer

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4. Did you feel there was not enough money for food?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer Not To Answer

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5. Did you feel there was not enough money for items like clothing or furniture?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer Not To Answer

# EXAMPLE: THE UHEALTH ED

- ED patients screened
- United Way's 2-1-1 service contacts patients within 48 hours
- Data from screening, 2-1-1 encounters, and the Enterprise Data Warehouse are compiled



# Moving Forward

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# CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Universal – consider bias
- Address Literacy and other barriers
- Links to services
- Careful consideration of training and receptivity



# Summary and Final Thoughts

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# CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop and participate in models that

- Universally screen, or carefully consider bias
- Consider literacy and language barriers
- Establish links to service providers with clear referral process
- Integrate thoughtful staff training and address patient receptivity



# Thank You!

