

Identifying and Addressing Food Insecurity Among College Students: A Quality Improvement Initiative



JOHNS HOPKINS
SCHOOL of NURSING

Patricia Jimenez, BSN, RN, CMSRN; Nancy Russell, DNP FNP-BC, CNE

Introduction & Background

- Food insecurity (FI) is defined as limited or uncertain access to adequate, nutritious food (USDA, 2024)
- FI affects college students and is often under-identified in clinical settings
- Lack of standardized screening leads to missed opportunities for intervention
- Evidence supports routine screening in clinical settings
- No standardized protocol existed across university student health primary care sites

Purpose & Aims

Purpose: Implement and evaluate a standardized food insecurity screening protocol in college health settings

- *Aim 1:* Determine prevalence of food insecurity
- *Aim 2:* Evaluate provider compliance with screening
- *Aim 3:* Assess provider satisfaction with implementation

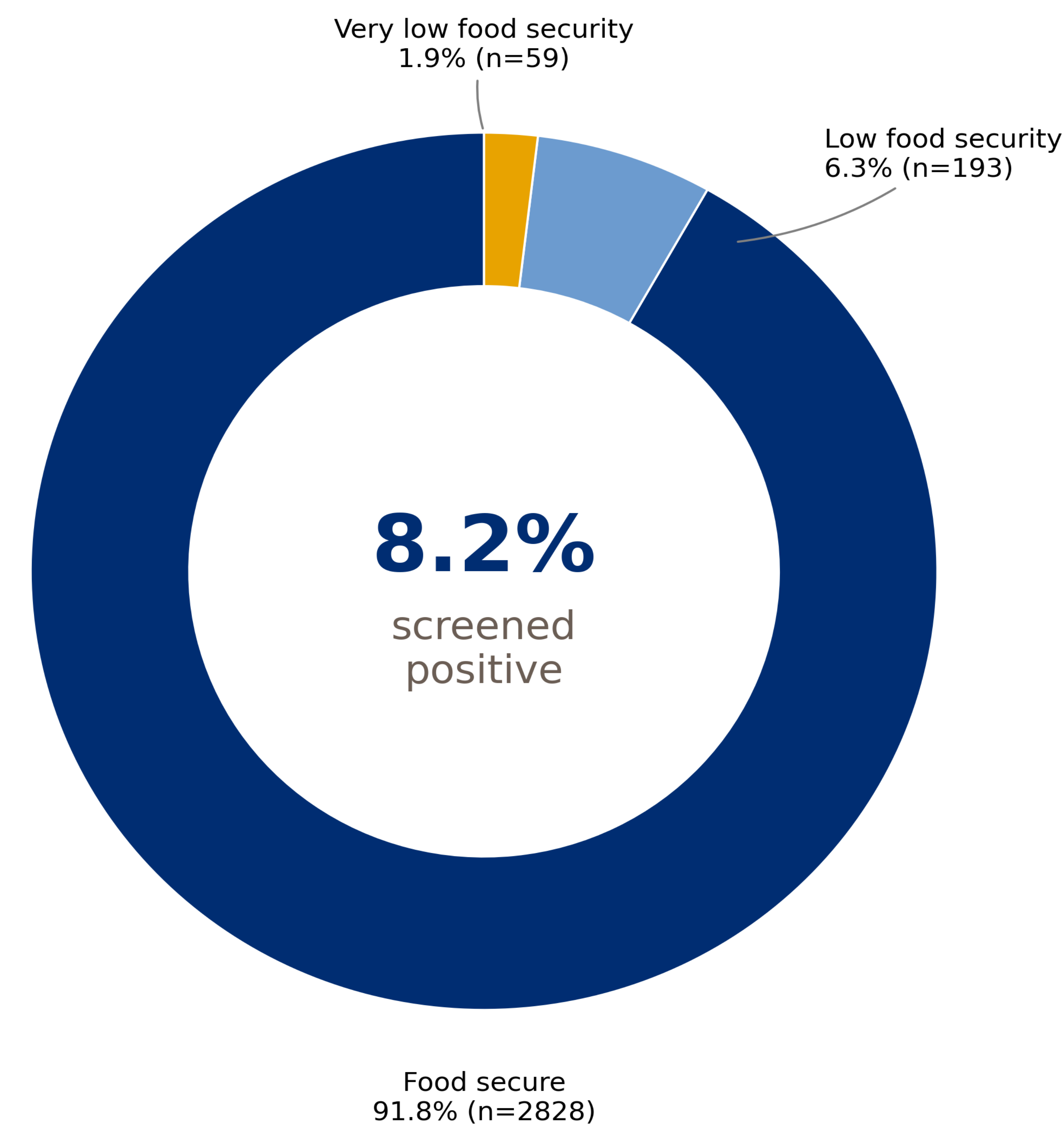
Methods

- Design: Quality improvement project
- Setting: University Student Health Primary Care Clinics
- Sample: 3,080 student encounters across three sites
- Tool: USDA 6-item Food Security Survey
- Implementation: Sept–Nov 2025
- Analysis: SPSS (descriptive + comparative analysis)

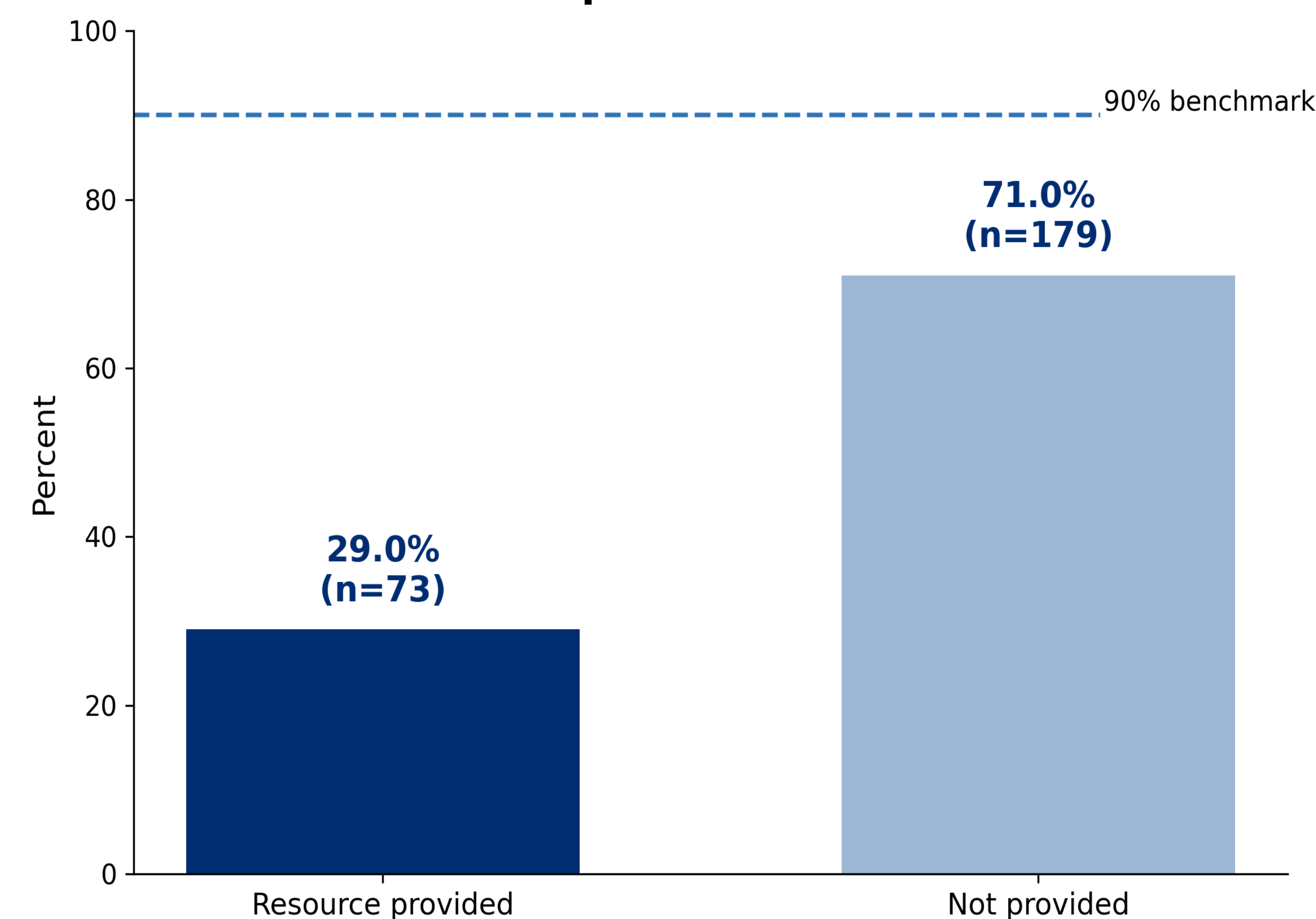
Intervention

- Standardized screening protocol integrated into workflow
- Staff education on food insecurity screening
- Screening conducted during primary care visits
- Positive screens triggered EHR-based resource provision
- Patients received targeted food access resources (campus, local, federal)

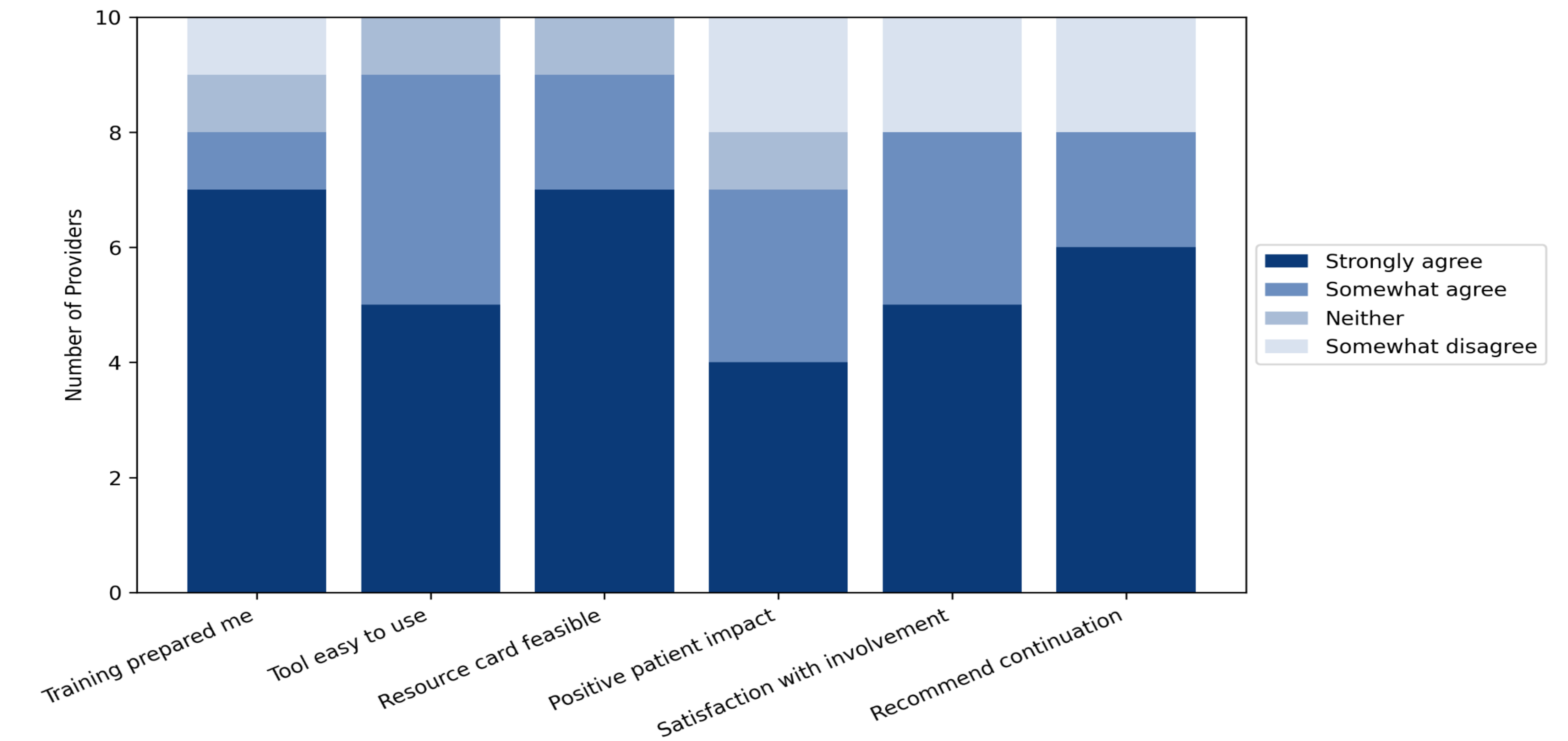
Aim 1: Prevalence of Food Insecurity



Aim 2: Provider Compliance with Resource Provision



Aim 3: Provider Satisfaction with Screening Workflow



Results

- 8.2% (n = 252) screened positive for FI (n = 3,080 encounters)
- 29.0% of FI-positive students received clinical resource referrals
- 42.5% of FI-positive students engaged with provided resources
- Providers reported high satisfaction with the screening workflow

Conclusion & Implications

- Standardized screening improves FI identification and management
- Feasible integration within college health workflows
- Opportunity to improve referral follow-through
- Adopted as standard practice across three clinic sites
- Directly impacts patient care by addressing an under-identified social determinant of health (SDOH)
- Next steps: enhance EHR prompts and increase referral completion

References

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