

Positive Quality Intervention: Social Determinants of Health in Cancer

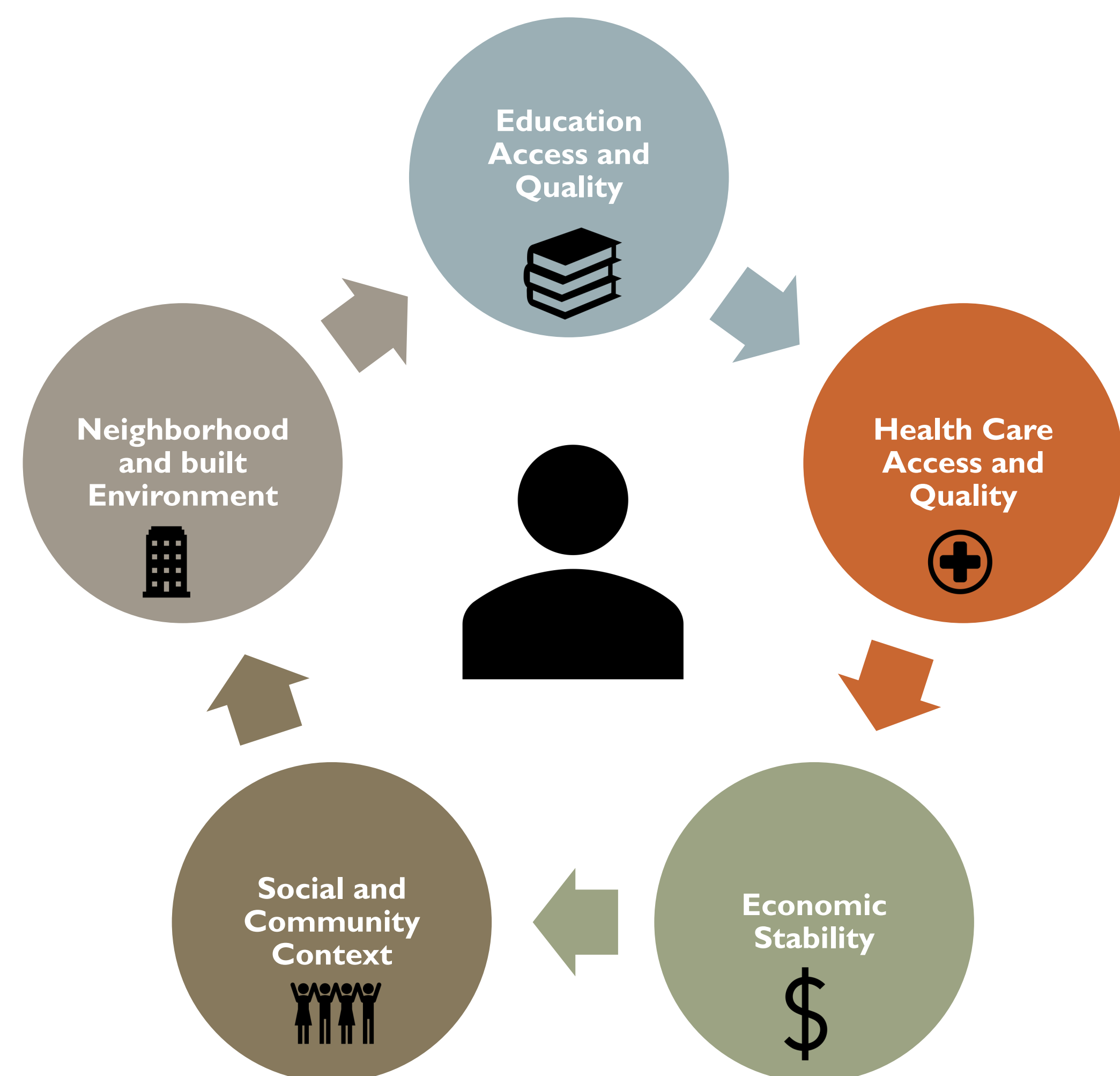
Dr. Tahsin Imam & Dr. Elizabeth Heard



PASSION FOR PATIENTS

Background

- Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environment where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age which have an impact on various healthcare matters.
- Economic stability; education; health and health care; neighborhood and built environment; and social and community context are the five domains of SDOH.¹
- The domains are interconnected, as patients with low economic stability (LES) may reside in environments with high air pollutants, food deserts and unsuitable housing. Patients with LES have increased odds of lacking health insurance, formal education and transportation to appointments which can exacerbate oncology outcomes from adherence to health literacy issues.²
- Lack of access to education and/or receiving poor quality of education may prevent cancer patients from achieving optimal health outcomes due to a lack of understanding of their care plan.
- To promote more equitable care for cancer patients, it is pivotal to understand different aspects of SDOH so that healthcare workers are better equipped to facilitate quality care.
- In a cross-sectional survey of 165 physicians in oncology and hematology, 93% agreed that SDOH had a significant impact on their patient's health outcomes. Additionally, 81% of physicians indicated that they and their staff had limited time to spend assisting patients with social needs and 76% reported that assistance programs (to help patients with social needs) were not readily accessible.³
- This PQI provides a social need screening assessment kit derived from the Health Leads Social Needs Screening Toolkit to assist all healthcare workers identify social needs for cancer patients and provide recommendations to address those needs.⁴



PQI Process

Table 1 below lists key questions for nurses/medical assistance to ask patients during the **pre-screening** stage of their appointment, in order to identify social needs

Question Number	Question	YES	NO
01	IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, DID YOU EVER EAT LESS THAN YOU FELT YOU SHOULD BECAUSE THERE WASN'T ENOUGH MONEY FOR FOOD?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
02	ARE YOU WORRIED THAT IN THE NEXT 2 MONTHS, YOU MAY NOT HAVE STABLE HOUSING?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
03	IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAS THE ELECTRIC, GAS, OIL, OR WATER COMPANY THREATENED TO SHUT OFF YOUR SERVICES IN YOUR HOME?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
04	IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU EVER HAD TO GO WITHOUT HEALTHCARE BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T HAVE A WAY TO GET THERE?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
05	DO YOU EVER NEED HELP READING HOSPITAL MATERIALS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
06	DO PROBLEMS GETTING CHILD CARE MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO WORK OR STUDY? (IF APPLICABLE)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07	DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU LACK COMPANIONSHIP?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
08	DO YOU EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE OR EMOTIONAL TRAUMA IN OR OUTSIDE OF HOME?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
09	AS OF TODAY, DO YOU HAVE A JOB?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU NEEDED TO SEE A DOCTOR, BUT COULD NOT BECAUSE OF COST?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Patient Centered Activities

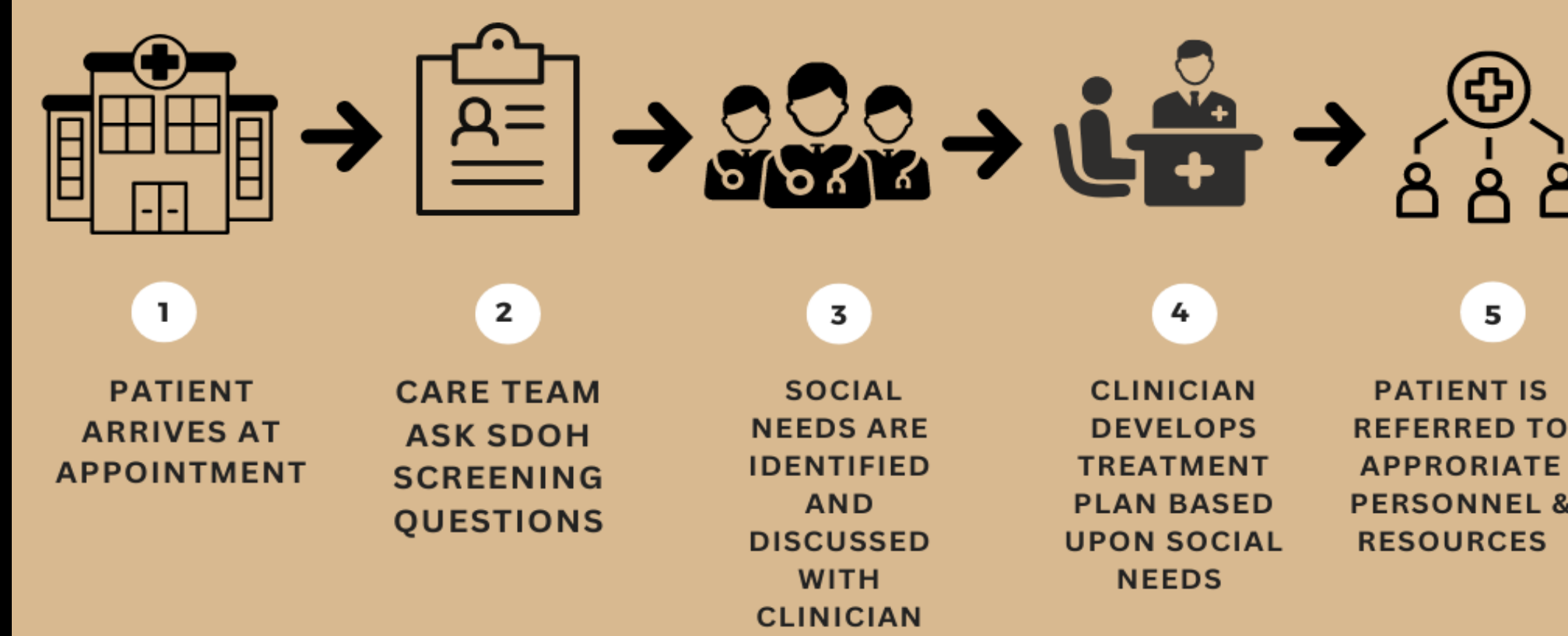
Table 2 provides recommendations/resources to address those needs **during** their care with the clinician. Refer patients to social work, counseling services, case management, and patient navigation as appropriate

Question Number	Social Need	Recommendation/Resources if patient answers "yes"
1	Food Assistance	Refer patients to the following resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA SNAP Program • Feeding America's Local Foodbank Locator • FindHelp.org
2	Housing Assistance	For local housing assistance, refer patients to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Resource Locator . HUD also provides numerous housing assistance resources on the Housing Assistance Exchange .
3	Energy Assistance	Those who may need assistance paying their home energy bills may be eligible to participate in the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Healthcare workers can help their patients assess general eligibility , or put them in contact with their local LIHEAP office
4	Transportation Assistance	Consider utilizing telehealth services if and when appropriate, especially for patients with barriers to transportation. To assist Medicaid patients with transportation concerns, utilize CMS' Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Booklet for Providers . For elderly patients or those with a disability affecting transportation, visit the Eldercare Locator , provided by the U.S. Administration on Aging, to locate local transportation services.
5	Reading Assistance	Provide patients with an NCODA OCE/IVE sheet specific to their cancer regimen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.ncoda.org/oce-sheets/ • https://www.ncoda.org/ive-sheets/ Healthcare workers can assess a patient's health literacy using the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's short assessment of health literacy . For patients with low health literacy, consider using USP pictograms to convey medication instructions, precautions, or warning to patients
6	Childcare Assistance	To help patients locate child care resources in their resources, refer them to ChildCare.gov's resource locator
7	Social Isolation Assistance	Recommend patients taking this three-minute assessment that assess social isolation risk level and provides information and local recommendations based upon results: Are You Affected by Social Isolation? - Connect2Affect
8	Mental Health Assistance	Assess patients for post-traumatic stress disorders, adjustment disorders, and acute stress disorders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate psychotherapy with or without antidepressants and/or an anxiolytic. • If there is a response: follow up and maintain communication with the oncology and primary care team as well as family/caregivers. If no response: re-evaluate psychotherapy, support, education, and consider adding on an antipsychotic (if appropriate). ⁵
9 & 10	Financial Assistance	Utilize the NCODA Financial Assistance Tool to search for the availability of copay cards as well as patient assistance and trial programs for prescribed drug(s). https://www.ncoda.org/financial-assistance/

HealthCare Providers Resources

Patient Action Plan

A 5-STEP PROCESS



Referral Flowsheet

Social Work Team

Questions 1-4

Question 6

Counseling Services

Questions 7-8

Question 5

NCODA Website

Questions 9-10

References:

1. Social Determinants of Health - Healthy People 2030 | health.gov [Internet]. Health.gov. 2022 [cited 2022 Jul 1]. Available from: <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>
2. Williams PA, Zaidi SK, Sengupta R. AACR Cancer Disparities Progress Report 2022. Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev. 2022 Jul 1;31(7):1249-1250.
3. Zettler ME, Feinberg BA, Jeune-Smith Y, Gajra A. Impact of social determinants of health on cancer care: a survey of community oncologists. BMJ Open. 2021 Oct 6;11(10):e049259.
4. Health Leads. Social Needs Screen Toolkit 2017. Available at: <https://healthleadsusa.org/resources/the-health-leads-screening-toolkit/>. Accessed July 8, 2022.
5. NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines®) for Distress Management V.2.2022
6. Kroenke, K., Spitzer, R. L., & Williams, J. B. (2003). The Patient Health Questionnaire-2: validity of a two-item depression screener. Medical Care, 41(11), 1284-1292.

Food

Housing

Energy

Transportation

Reading

Childcare

Isolation

Mental Health

Financial

The figure above illustrates the resources recommended in table 2