

# Implementing Food Insecurity Screening in the NICU at Maynard Children's Hospital



## INTRODUCTION

- Food insecurity (FI) is the lack of sufficient food for an active, healthy life; with the potential to impact health starting early in life
- An estimated 588,240 people live in food-insecure households in Eastern North Carolina.

#### AIM

To achieve 95% screening for FI amongst the families of neonates admitted to the Maynard Children's Hospital NICU within 6 months.

#### METHODS

- A multi-disciplinary team was formed
- A 2-question FI screening tool, recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, was added to the family social work interview on admission
- Intervention was carried out over 6 months with monitoring for a further 3 months

#### Measures

- **Process Measure** 
  - Percentage of families in the NICU screened for FI.
- Outcome measure
  - Percentage of families connected to resources after a positive screen for FI

KEY DRIVER DIAGRAM			
Project Aim	Primary Drivers	Interventions	
To achieve 95% screening for FI amongst families of neonates admitted to the Maynard Children's Hospital (MCH) NICU within 6 months.	Standardize process for screening for FI at MCH NICU Education regarding	Add dot phrase in EHR chart for standardization of FI screening	
		Train each social worker on process of incorporating FI screening questions	
		Physician-led discussions with nurses, social workers, IT personnel, and others regarding importance of FI screening	
	FI screening	Create resource list for families who screen positive for FI	
		Family education regarding importance of access to good food	

## 95% 90% screened for FI 85% 75% **bercentage** 60% 0 55% 50%

aid

for

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#### RESULTS







# **PDSA CYCLES**

PDSA 1	Social workers trained Two-question screening implemented Dot phrase added to EHR
PDSA 2	Train cross-covering social workers on incorporating screening
PDSA 3	Include language to inform families of screening rationale and assure families of the lack of adverse outcomes following a positive screen

# DISCUSSION

- We achieved our FI screening rate goal of 95%
- Identified 6.75% FI rate in NICU families and connected 91% to community resources for assistance
- QI Project is proving sustainable as social work intake interviews continue despite monitoring period ending
- Four social workers surveyed reported FI screening questions added less than 5 min to interview
- However, compiling a packet of resources for positive screen added 15 to 30 min to workflow
- This QI project is reproducible and may be adapted for other NICU settings to improve FI screening

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