

Fostering Wellness: Exploring Food Insecurity and Healthy Food Accessibility in the Adelante Healthcare Patient Population

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BACKGROUND

- Food insecurity is a pressing public health issue characterized by limited access to nutritious food.
- In Maricopa County, Arizona, over 500,000 individuals, including vulnerable populations, experience food insecurity.^{1,2}
- The United States Department of Agriculture reported a 3% increase in individuals with limited access to grocery stores in Maricopa County between 2010 and 2015, with 17% experiencing food insecurity.³⁻⁵
- Addressing food insecurity and promoting healthier eating habits within the community served by Adelante Healthcare has the potential to improve medical conditions and enhance overall well-being.
- With this project we aim to:
 - Assess food insecurity within the Adelante Healthcare patient population.
 - Explore possible correlation between food insecurity, patient income, family dependents and medical conditions.
 - Identify resources and interventions that Adelante Healthcare can offer to address food insecurity.

METHODS

Survey Participants

Participants aged 18 years and older who received care within Adelante Healthcare Clinic sites in Maricopa County, Arizona

Survey Administration

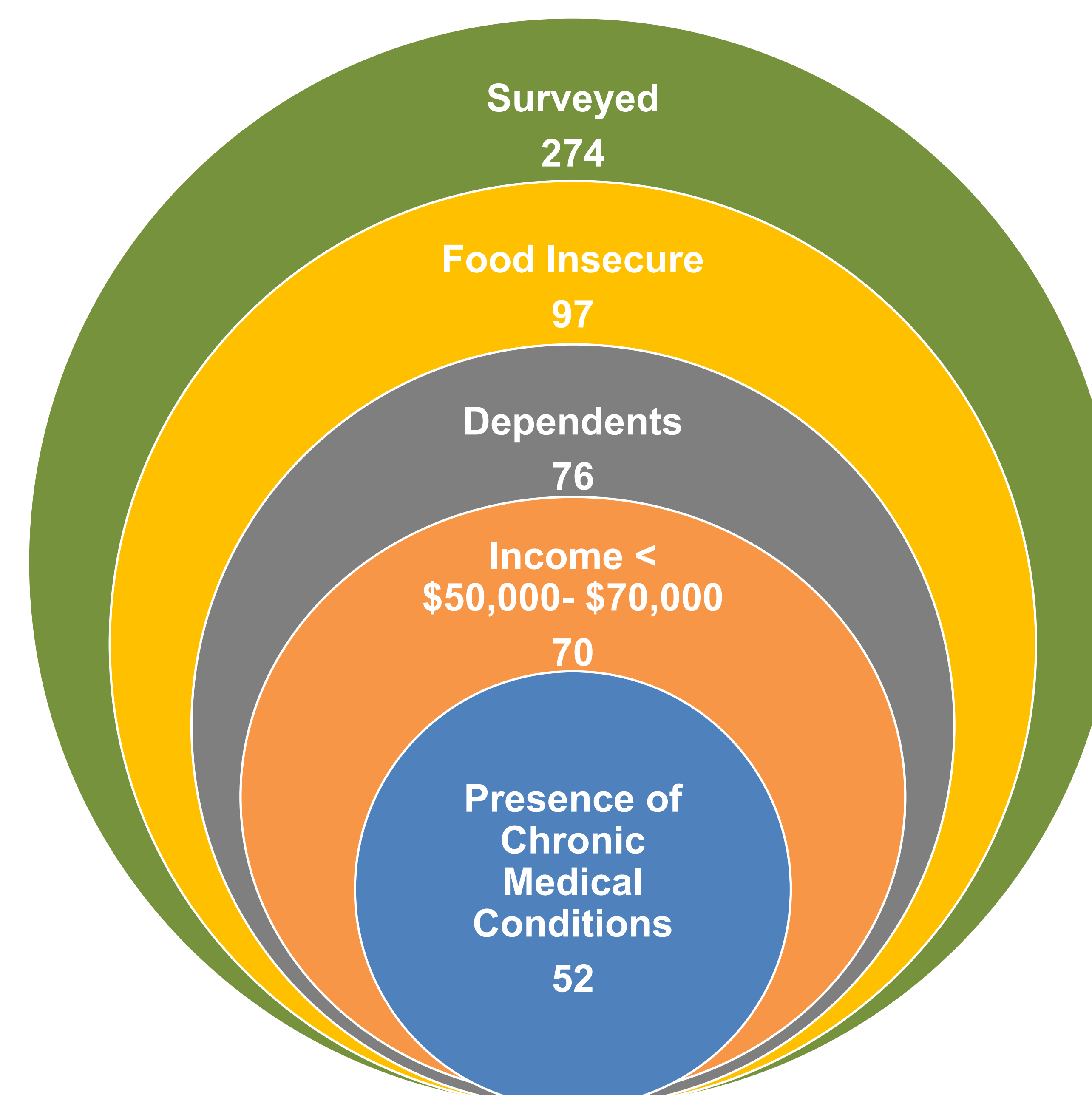
Administered via paper during the waiting period before patient medical appointment

Survey Content

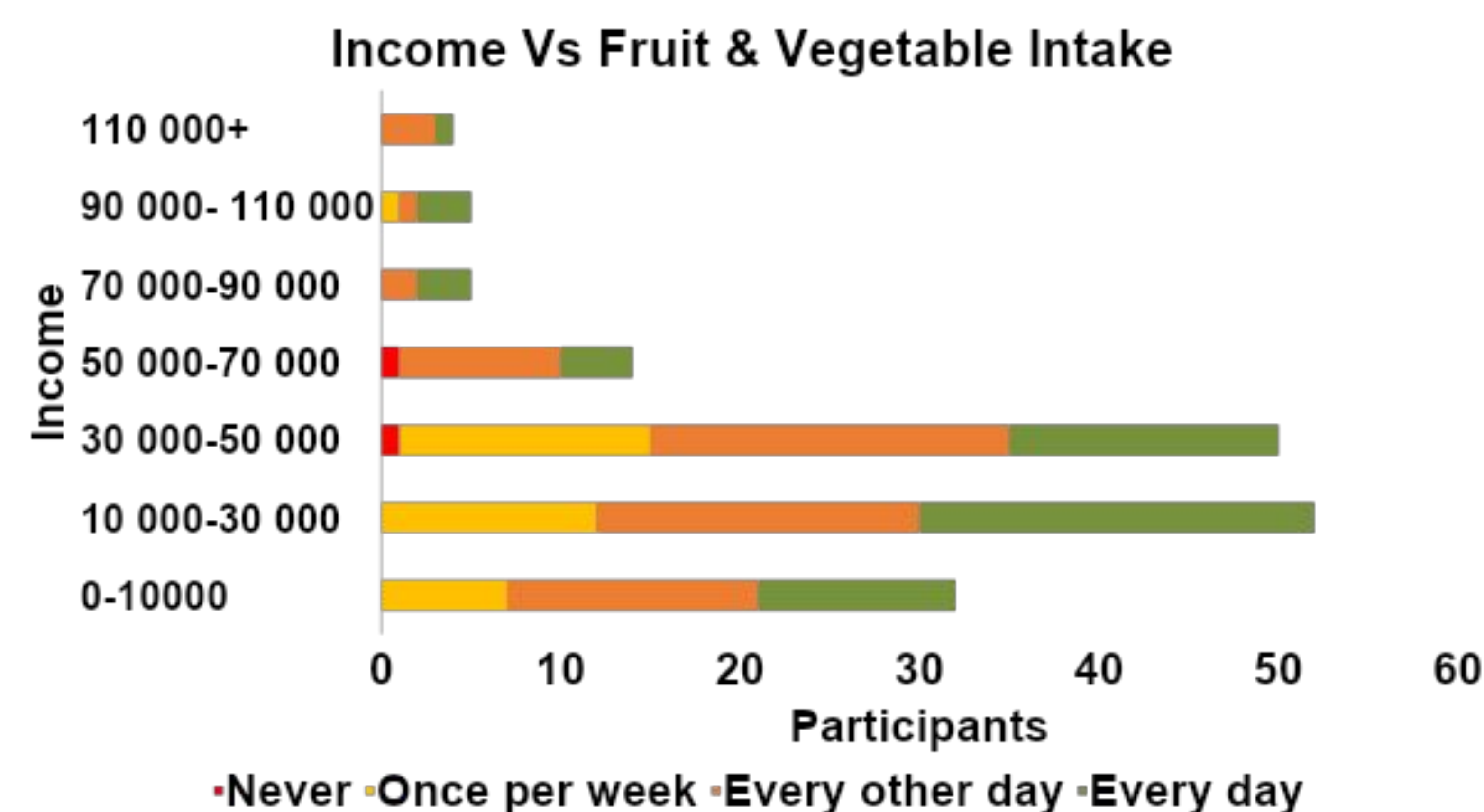
- Food Insecurity (The Hunger Vital Sign™, a validated 2-question food insecurity screening tool, was used to measure household risk of food insecurity)
- Attitudes towards food insecurity
- Coexisting medical conditions
- Perceived competence in purchasing and cooking healthy foods

RESULTS

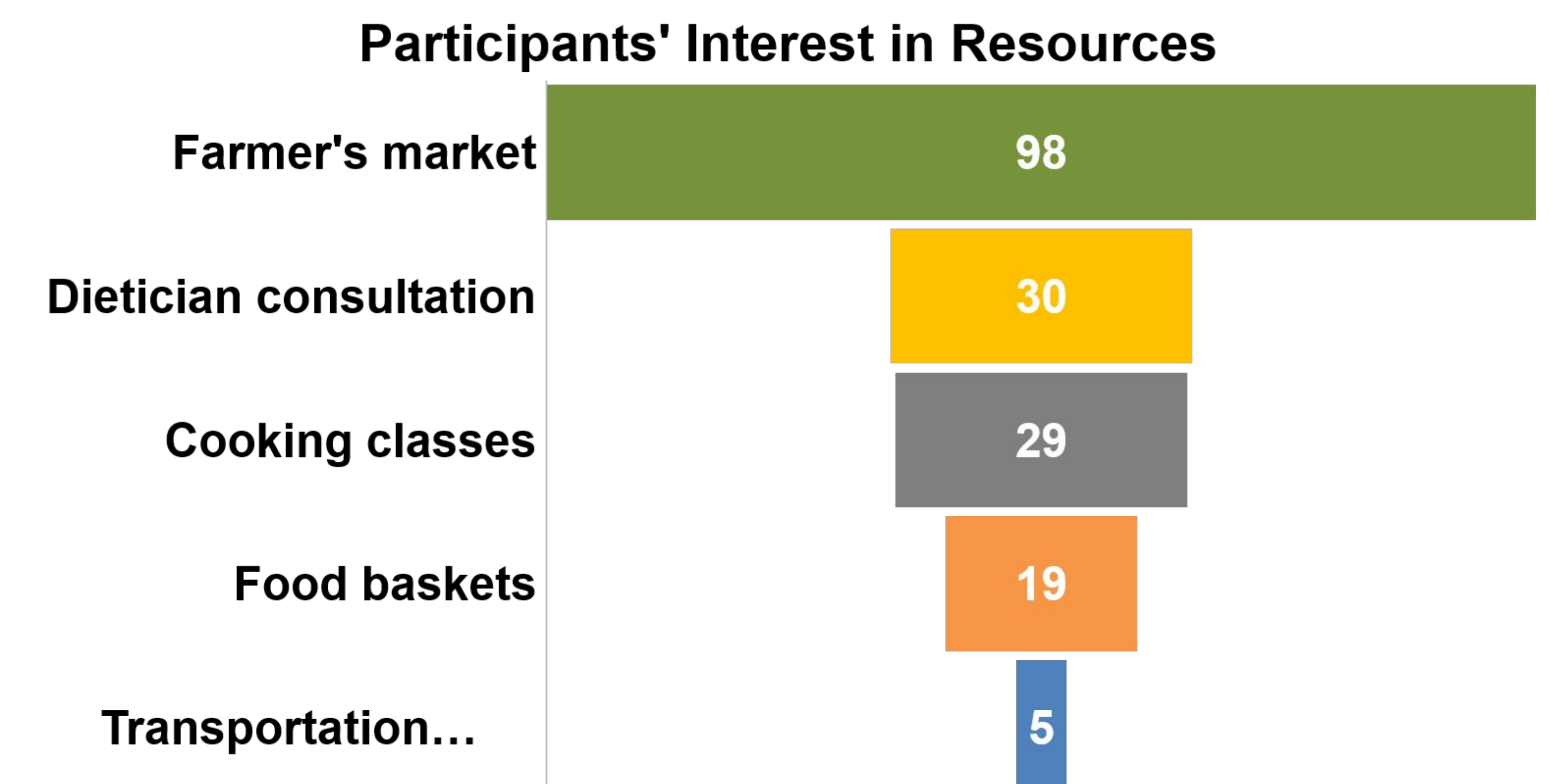
- Survey Responses:** n=274
- Prevalence of Food Insecurity:** 35% (n=97) of the patients who completed the survey were at risk for food insecurity
- Correlation with Household Dependents, Income & Medical Conditions:** Significant correlations ($p < 0.05$) were observed between food insecurity, income $< \$50,000$, presence of dependents in the household and presence of medical conditions



- Low intake of fruits and vegetables in participants with income $< \$50,000$**



- Robust Interest in Health Initiatives**



CONCLUSIONS

- We were able to identify the food insecure areas by zip code in Maricopa county, this will help the health center develop and implement targeted interventions.
- Patients with more dependents may face greater challenges in affording enough nutritious food for the entire family.
- Notably, 74% of participants with a medical condition reported an annual household income of less than \$50,000 and are food insecure, indicating a potential association between food insecurity, low income, and chronic medical conditions.
- Robust interest of survey participants in health initiatives by the health center highlights the potential effectiveness of these initiatives in addressing food insecurity and promoting healthier lifestyles among patients.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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