



AT THE FOREFRONT

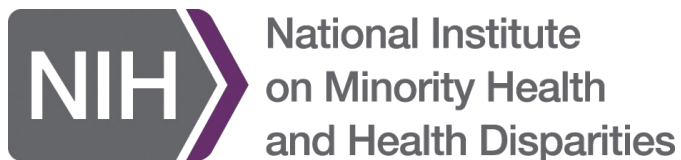
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Food insecurity and hospital-based discrimination among predominantly African American/Black parents and caregivers of children hospitalized during the COVID-19 pandemic

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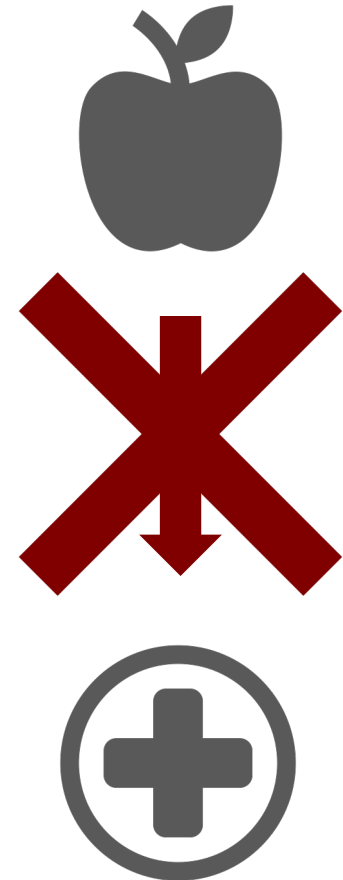
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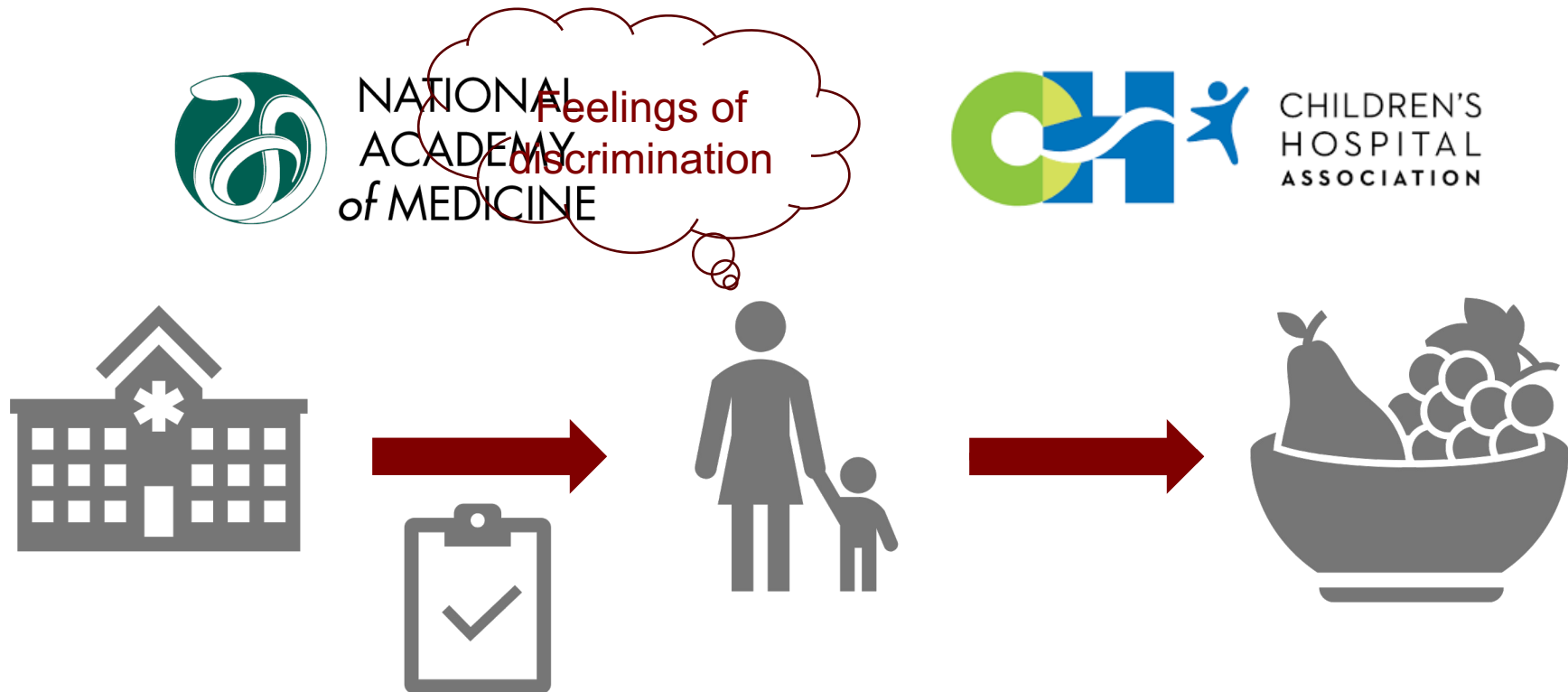


Background: food insecurity

- Defined as having limited or uncertain access to adequate food for an active and healthy lifestyle.²⁻³
- Disproportionately affects households with children, those who identify as African American/Black, and people living in poverty.²



Background: hospital-based intervention



How does food security status relate to parents' experiences of discrimination in the children's hospital setting?

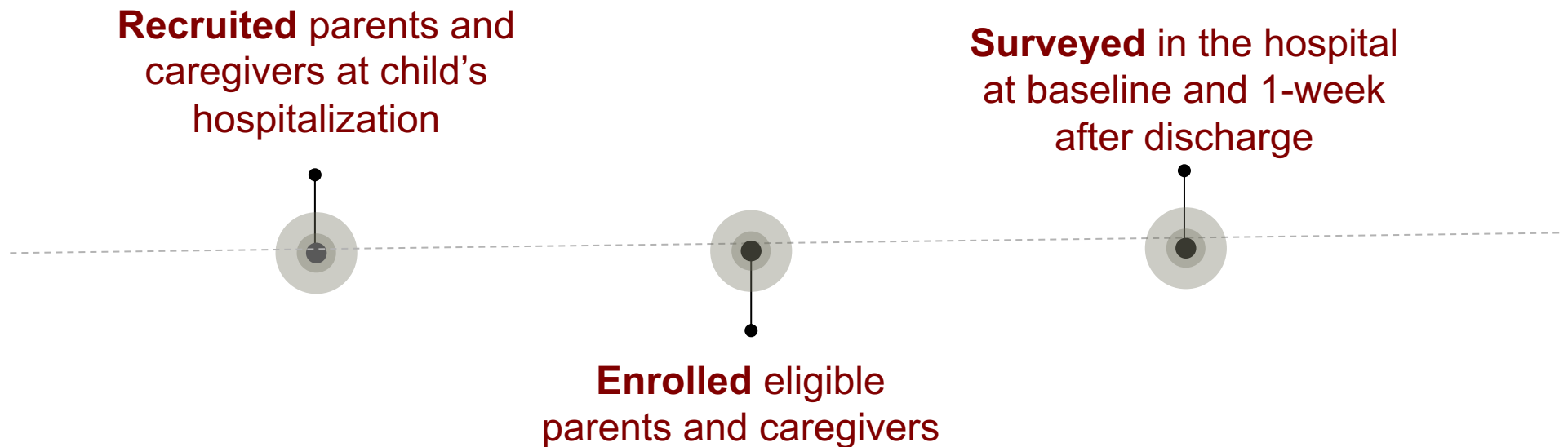
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Background: Hypothesis

Parents with food insecurity are **more likely** than those without food insecurity to **experience hospital-based discrimination** during their child's hospitalization.

Methods: Sample

- The control arm of the **CommunityRx-Hunger** trial, a randomized-controlled trial of an intervention to screen for and intervene on food insecurity among families with a hospitalized child.¹



Methods: Data collection and analysis

30-day food security status

- 18-item USDA Household Food Security Survey⁴
- Interviewer-administered in hospital
- Scale: 0-18
- Split into three groups: food secure (0), marginally food secure (1-2), and food insecure (≥ 3) statuses

Hospital-based discrimination

- 7-item Discrimination in Medical Settings (DMS) Scale⁵
- Self-administered 1-week after discharge
- 7 items (1-5 on a Likert scale) summed for overall DMS score (7-35)
- Higher scores indicate more frequent discrimination

Analysis

- Linear regression model of food security status (independent variable, using food secure as the reference group) and overall and per-item DMS score (dependent variable).
- Adjusted for race, income, gender, and marital status ($\alpha = 0.05$)

⁴ Bickel et al (2000). United States Department of Agriculture.

⁵ Peek et al (2011). *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*.

Figure 1: Sociodemographic, economic, and household characteristics (N = 301)



94% were mothers of the hospitalized child



25% food insecure and **15%** marginally food secure



Median age **33.6** years



79% reported an annual income of < \$50,000



81% African-American/Black



74% were insured through Medicaid/Medicare



54% were partnered



69% reported household receipt of SNAP

Figure 2: Frequency of hospital-based discrimination reported on DMS items by food security status

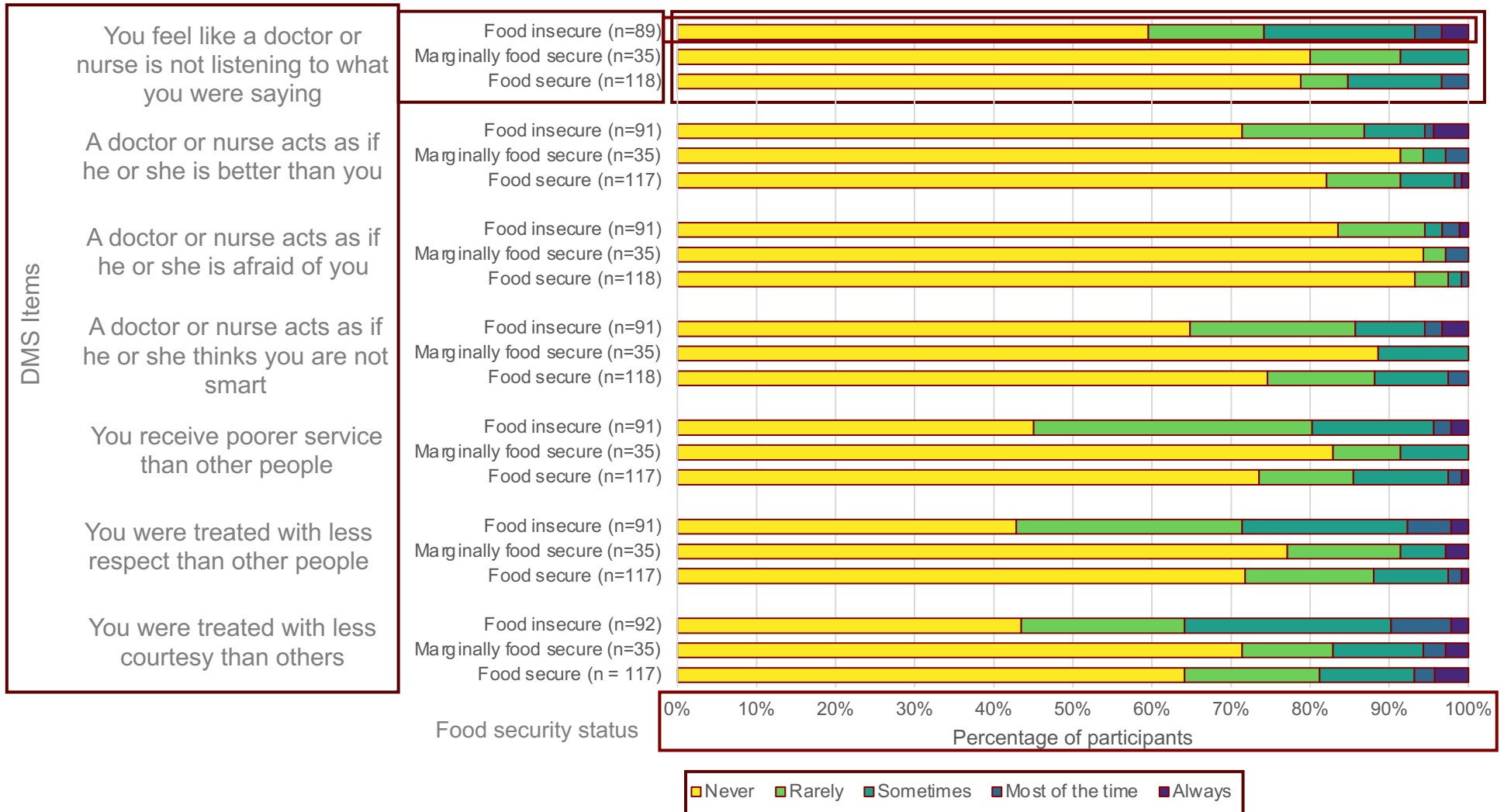


Table 1: Multivariable regression analysis

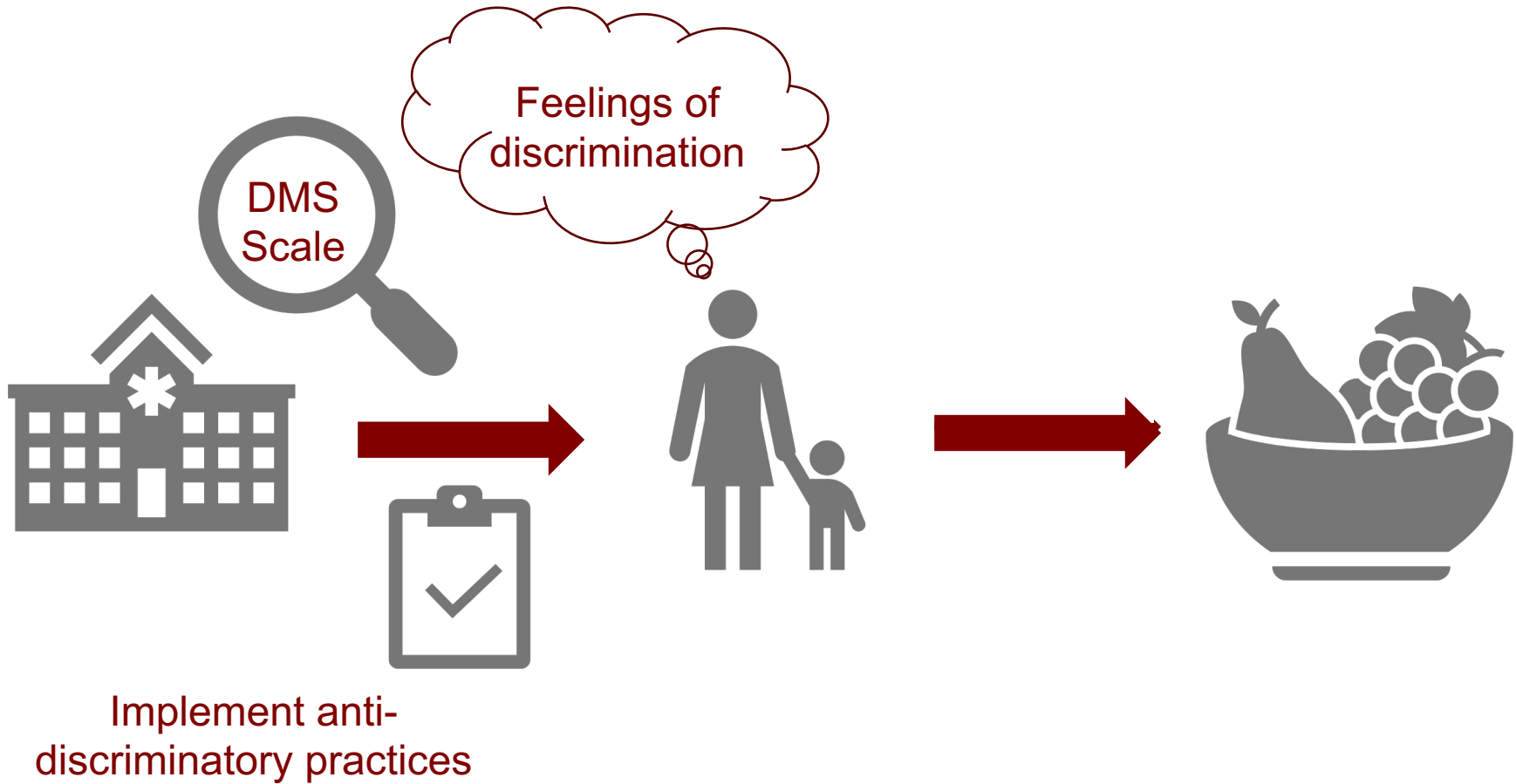
Sample Size	β (95% CI) Food Insecure vs. Food Secure	p-value
Overall DMS score		
n = 235	2.5 (1.0, 3.9)	< 0.01

Mothers **with food insecurity** experienced more discrimination in the hospital than mothers with food-security, **scoring on average 2.5 points higher on the overall DMS score (raw scores 7-35)**

Conclusion: Key findings

- 1 in 4 households was food insecure.
- Frequency and type of hospital-based discrimination differed by food security status.
- Food insecurity was positively and independently related to more frequent experiences of discrimination compared to food security.

Conclusion: Takeaways



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Limitations

1. Study was designed before COVID-19



2. Generalizability



3. Broad measures of discrimination





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