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Improving Behavioral Health and Social Determinants of Health Screening in Primary Care

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Purpose

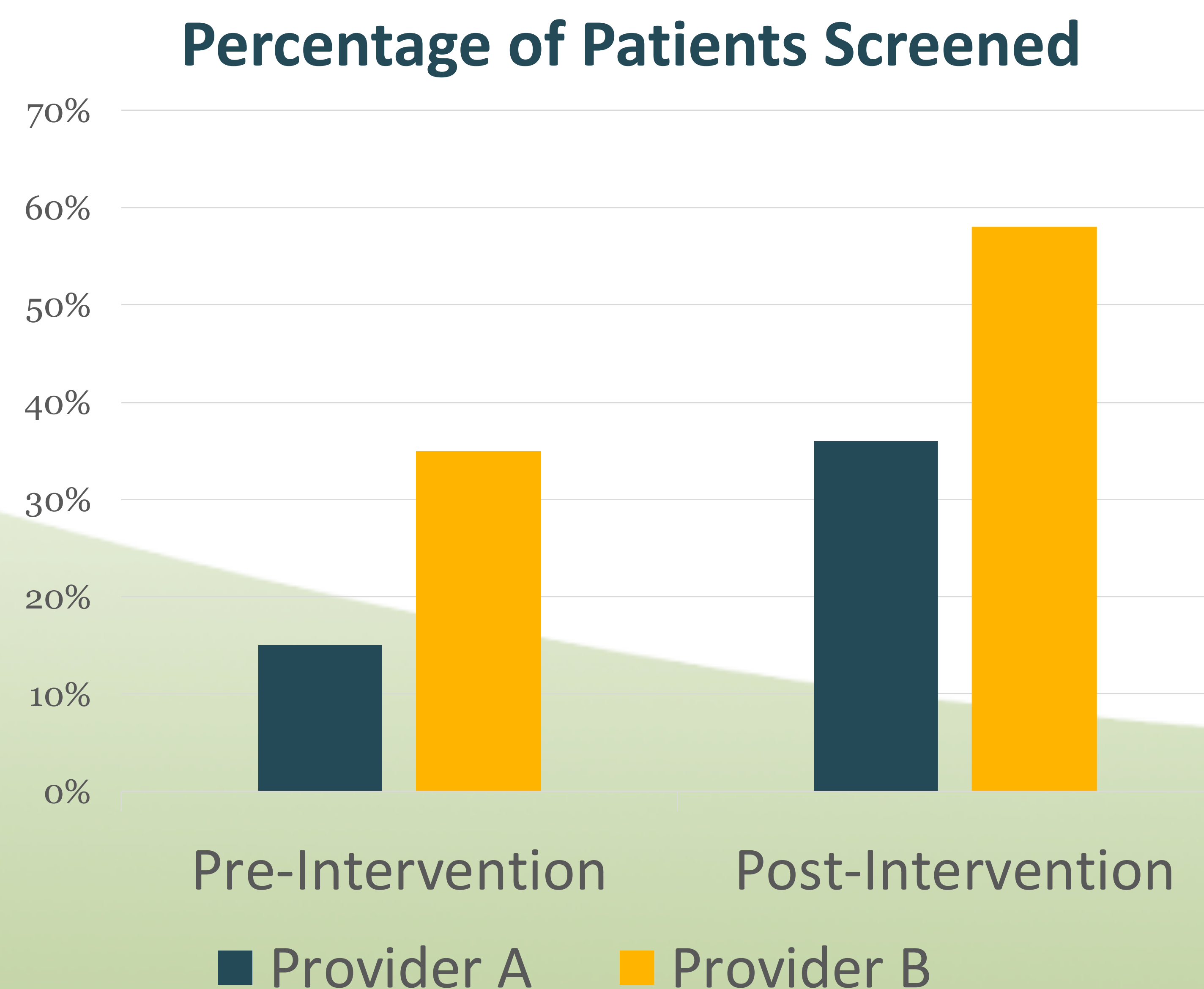
- Detection and intervention of depression, substance use disorder, and social determinants of health (SDOH) in primary care improves quality of life, prevents complications, reduces health care costs and inequities, and leads to health promotion^{1,2}.
- This project aimed to increase behavioral health and SDOH screening rates in primary care through implementation of a screening process utilizing validated patient questionnaires.

Methods

- A process was developed for screening patients at annual exam visits, utilizing the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ)-2, the Single Alcohol and Substance Abuse Screening Questions, and a SDOH Questionnaire.
- The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) method was used for implementing the process.
- Effectiveness was measured through electronic health record (EHR) reports of patients screened.

Results

- Pre-intervention, Provider A's screening rates for total patients (N = 696) were 15%; 6 months following implementation, rates increased to 42%.
- Pre-intervention, Provider B's screening rates for total patients (N = 755) were 35%; 6 months following implementation, rates increased to 58%.
- Data via staff interviews were collected each biweekly PDSA cycle, identifying areas needing clarification and improvement. The process was finalized after three cycles.



Conclusion

- Implementing a standardized process to screen patients for behavioral health and SDOH improved screening rates.
- The PDSA method allowed for an organized approach to implementation.
- Limitation of this intervention includes a small practice site.
- Further study at a larger practice would be recommended to determine impact on a larger scale.

References

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2. Mulvaney-Day, N., Marshall, T., Piscopo, K. D., Korsen, N., Lynch, S., Karnell, L. H., ... & Ghose, S. S. (2018). Screening for behavioral health conditions in primary care settings: A systematic review of the literature. *Journal of general internal medicine*, 33(3), 335-346.



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