

Meeting Patient-Centered Standards: CancerSupportSource™ — A Community-based Distress Screening Program

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Introduction

- The Cancer Support Community (CSC) has developed CancerSupportSource™ (CSS), an evidence-based, psychosocial distress screening, referral, and follow-up program designed to meet screening standards established by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer.
- CSS was designed to target 7 key areas of psychosocial needs identified in the IOM Report (2007) and integrates a 25-item self-report measure with automated links to information and referral for support services.
- CSS is a web-based distress screening program that has been previously validated.
- CSC represents a network of over 50 non-profit affiliates dedicated to providing support and education to people affected by cancer.
- While distress screening is currently being integrated into care delivery, little research has been done to examine the impact of screening, referral and follow-up on patient-reported outcomes.

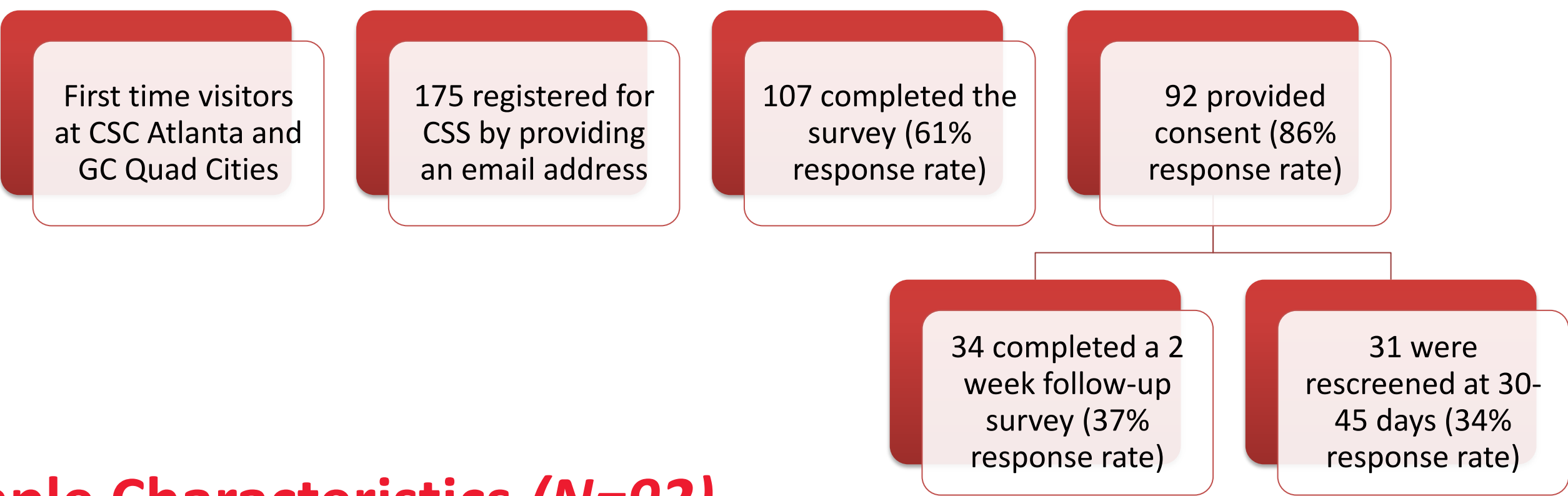
Study Objective

The objective of the present study was to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing CSS in 2 CSC sites (Atlanta, GA, Quad Cities, IA)

Methods

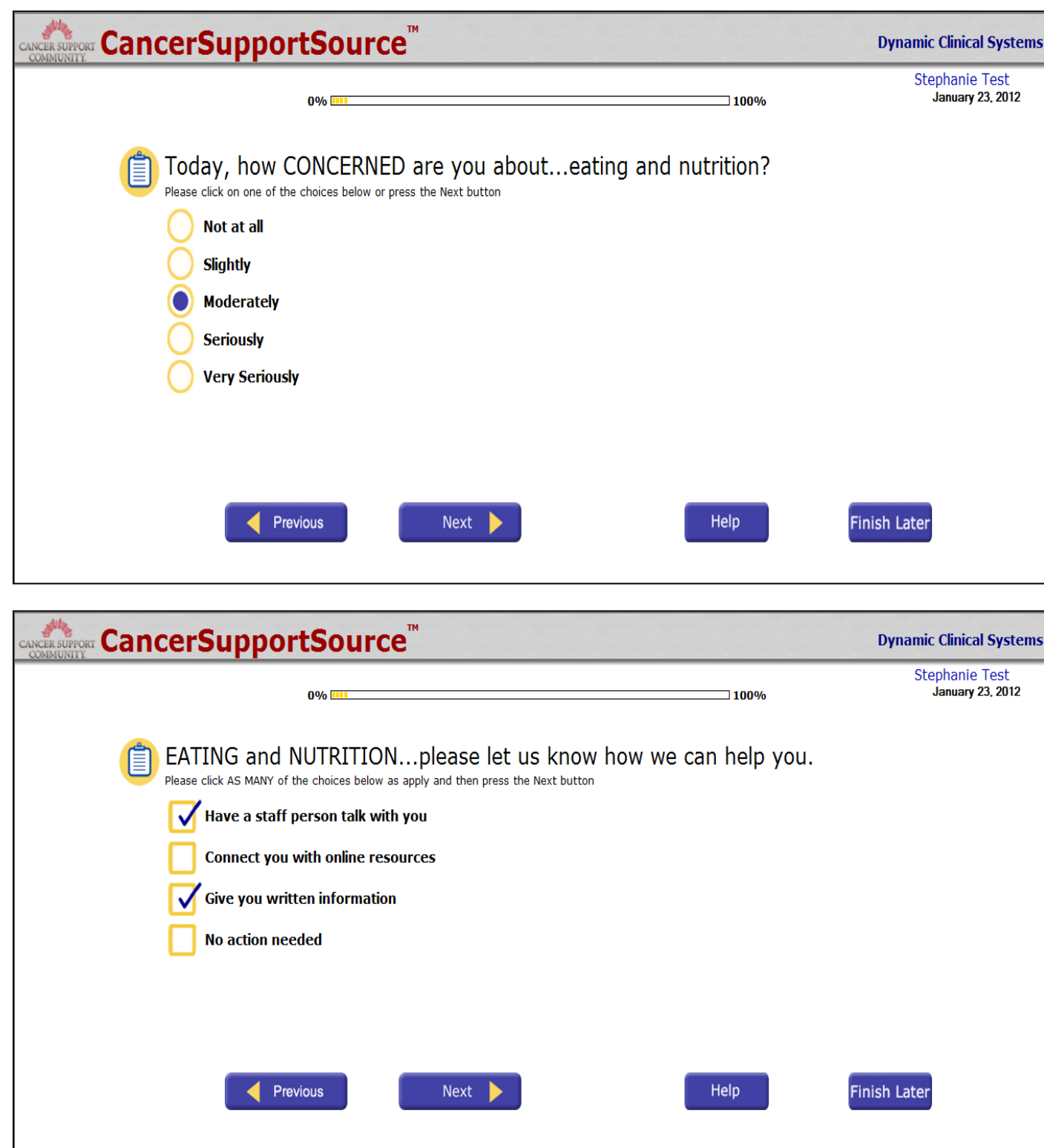
- Patients were asked to complete CSS at baseline and were rescreened at 30-45 days either at home or on site.
- Participants rated their current concerns and identified specific types of assistance they desired for each concern (talk to a staff member, online resources, and/or print information).

Figure 3: Flowchart of Participant Response Rates



Sample Characteristics (N=92)

Characteristic	Average
Age	55.7 (21-79 years)
	Percentage
Female	79%
Race	
White	88%
African American	8%
Annual Income	
<\$40,000	31%
Cancer Diagnosis	
Breast	40%
Gynecologic	11%
Colorectal	10%
Blood	8%
Lung	6%
Other	26%
Stage IV	27%



The image shows two screenshots of the CancerSupportSource™ (CSS) web application. The top screenshot shows a question: "Today, how CONCERNED are you about...eating and nutrition?" with radio button options: "Not at all", "Slightly", "Moderately", "Seriously", and "Very Seriously". The bottom screenshot shows a question: "EATING AND NUTRITION...please let us know how we can help you." with checkboxes for: "Have a staff person talk with you", "Connect you with online resources", "Give you written information", and "No action needed". Both screenshots include "Previous", "Next", "Help", and "Finish Later" buttons.

Results

Figure 1. Top Concerns at Baseline

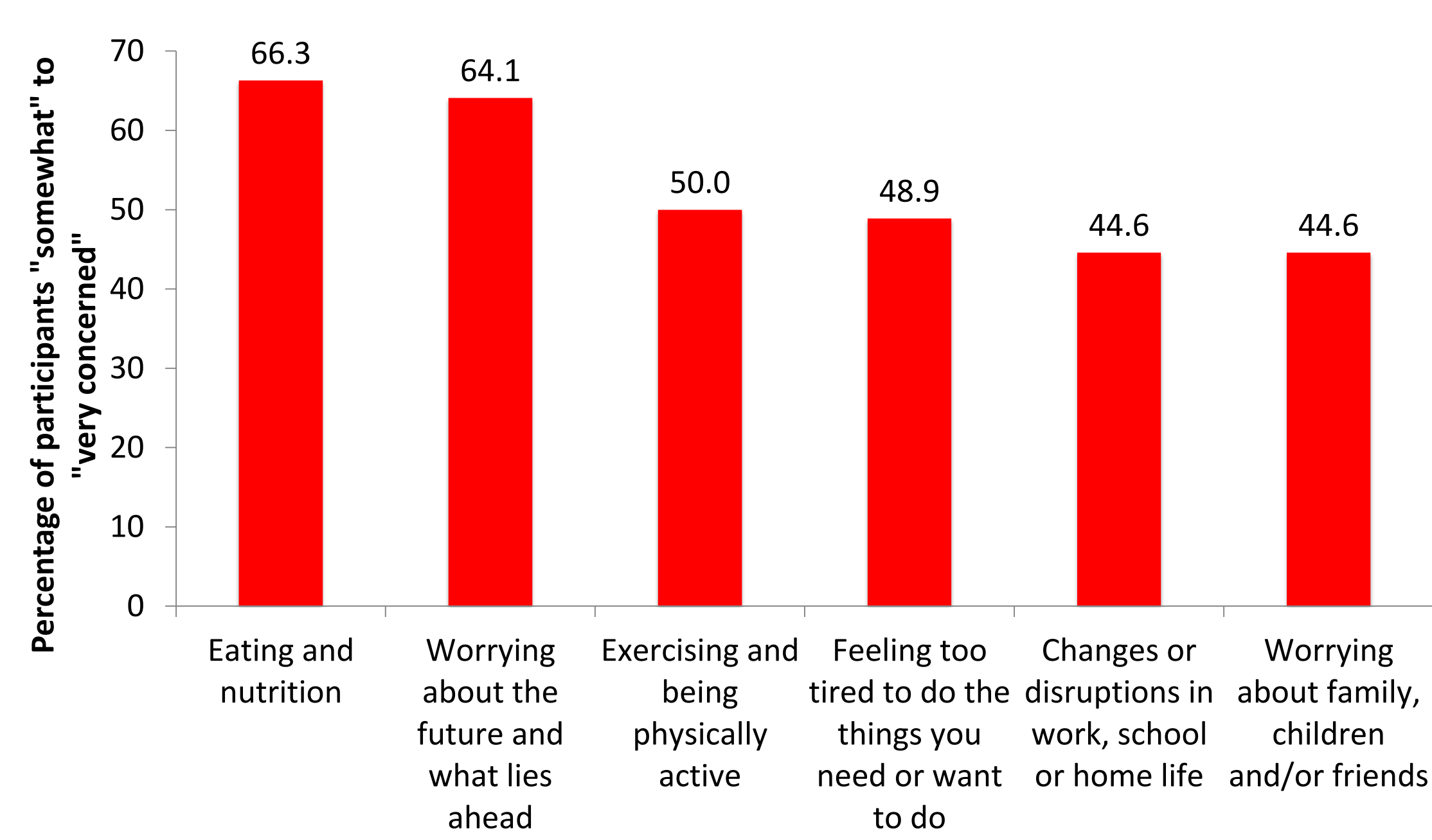


Figure 2. Top Five Requests for Assistance at Baseline by Type of Assistance Requested

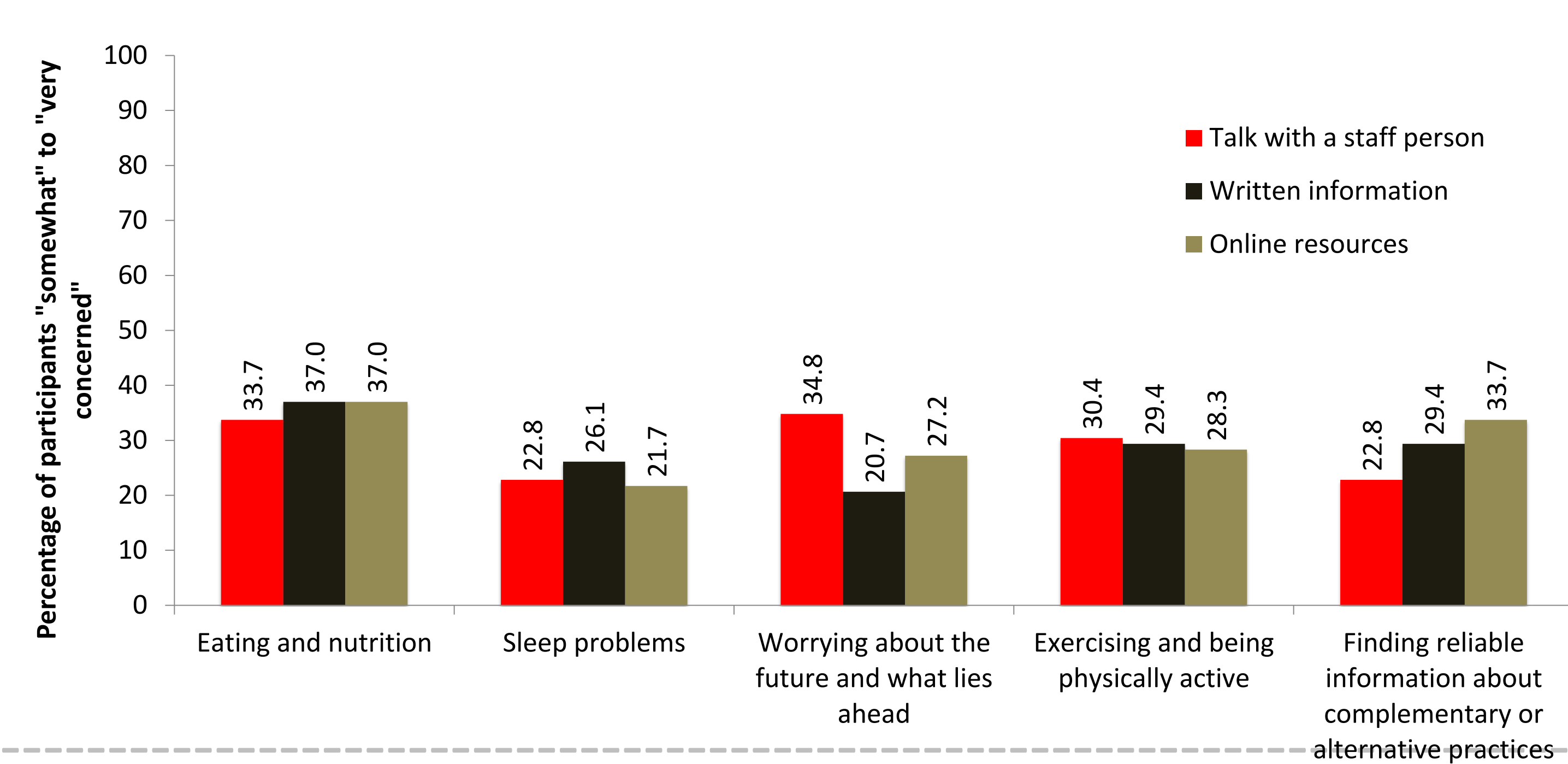


Table 1. Changes in Proportion of Participants "Seriously Concerned"

Screening Item	Baseline (n=92) (n)	Baseline (n=92) (%)	Rescreen (n=31) (n)	Rescreen (n=31) (%)	p-value for 2 sample test of proportion	p-value from McNemar's chi-square test (n=31)
Home life	41	45	6	19	0.011	0.07
Worry about the future	59	64	12	39	0.013	0.016
Relationship problems	18	20	1	3	0.033	0.50

Note: Exact wording of items was as follows: 1. changes or disruptions in work, school or home life; 2. worrying about the future and what lies ahead; 3. problems in relationship with spouse/partner

Table 2. Changes in Proportion of Participants "Seriously Concerned"

CSS Summary score	Baseline (n=92) Mean±SD	Rescreen (n=31) Mean±SD	Kruskal-Wallis equality-of-populations test p	Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test p
Sum of 25 problem ratings	28.7 ± 17.4	22.3±16.4	0.040	0.033
Count of items rated "somewhat" to "very seriously concerned"	14.6±5.0	12.1±6.0	0.036	0.102
Count of items rated "seriously" to "very seriously" concerned	8.3±5.8	6.2±5.6	0.050	0.030

Additional Results

- Anxiety was significantly lowered as a result of completing CSS (5.3 ± 0.30 vs. 5.1 ± 0.31 , $p=0.036$).
- Usability: 90% of participants indicated the instructions were easy to follow; 99% reported the amount of time it took to answer the questions was acceptable; 97% indicated that the screening items were not upsetting.
- **Anecdotal Evidence:**
 - "One participant started to cry specifically when he answered the question about worry about family. He said that this was his biggest concern but that he hadn't been able to talk about it to anyone. He thanked us for allowing him to talk about his concern."

Key Features of CancerSupportSource™ (CSS):

- CSS targets 7 key areas of psychosocial needs identified in the IOM Report:
 - 1) Getting cancer-related information
 - 2) Coping with emotions
 - 3) Managing illness and treatment
 - 4) Changing lifestyle behaviors
 - 5) Managing life disruptions
 - 6) Material/logistical concerns
 - 7) Financial concerns
- CSS asks survivors to rate their concerns today **and** to identify the type of support (talk with a staff person, online resources, written information) they want to receive for addressing their specific concerns
- Reports are instantly generated including fact sheets and email alerts that can be customized for any institution
- CSS is HIPAA compliant and can be linked to the EHR using HL7 and web services interface
- CSS screening can be completed by the patient from home or on-site, using any type of browser

Conclusion and Implications

- In sum, this study demonstrated the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing a distress screening program in a community-based setting.
- Findings suggest distress screening can lead to positive patient-centered outcomes (i.e., reduced distress/anxiety).
- Implications suggest that CSS can lead to improved access to psychosocial services within a community-based setting.

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