



# **Community Needs Assessment: Determining Resources, Needs, and Desired Services in Northside**

Community Partner: Churches Active in Northside (CAIN)

UCCOM Learning Community 7



# Introduction

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# The Northside Community and Food Insecurity

- Northside resides in the 45223 zip code
  - Population: 12,000 people
  - $\frac{1}{3}$  of individuals live below the poverty line
- Community of families and people with diverse backgrounds that have a lower economic profile than many surrounding zip code
- We examined the role of food insecurity in Northside and current methods to combat it
- Food insecurity correlates with negative health outcomes
  - Weight abnormalities
  - Type 2 diabetes
  - Vitamin and mineral deficiencies





## How We Could Help



- Worked with CAIN leaders to assess community resources and help determine what could be incorporated into their practice to best serve the Northside Community
- Our team worked to assist CAIN by
  1. Compiling data on the availability of food, health, and financial resources in Northside
  2. Survey CAIN guests on their utilization of the current resources that CAIN provides and potential areas for improvement
  3. Survey Northside community members on what resources they would like to see CAIN offer in the future

## Churches Active in Northside (CAIN)

- CAIN works to alleviate food insecurity in Northside
- 3 main services offered
  - Rainbow Food Choice Pantry
    - Supplies healthy, high quality, and safe food 3 days a week
  - Grace Place
    - Women's shelter located next to the food pantry
  - Phil's Place
    - A free community meal offered once a week
    - Emphasis on community building and strengthening social connections
- CAIN is continuing to grow and wanted to explore the needs of their community to see where their next expansion could have the maximum benefit





# Methods



# Needs Assessment

- **Goal: multi-disciplinary approach, combining epidemiological, sociological, and health econometric viewpoints**
- Conducted assessment of the needs and resources of the CAIN zip code and 6 surrounding zip codes
  - Data sources included **US Census, American Community Survey**, etc.
  - **Variables** of interest were plotted on zip code maps in Excel to **compare the status of zip codes**
  - Compiled a list of **shelters, pantries, utility support services, health services, employment, etc.** and manually plotted on zip code maps using Adobe Photoshop
- Provided context for the survey assessment of CAIN patrons and Northside community members



# Survey Assessment

- **Goal: develop community needs assessment for CAIN guests including info on:**
  - **Demographics of the guests**
  - **Utilization and satisfaction with current services**
  - **Interest in additional services**
  - **Barriers to accessing current and prospective services**
- Total transit time, measured as greater or less than 15 minutes, was examined with respect to accessing CAIN and the nearest grocery store
- All CAIN guests were invited to participate in the survey on days of food pantry operation by our LC group members
  - All willing guests were entered for a chance to win one of ten Kroger gift cards

# CAIN Survey:



- Likert scale → satisfaction with hours of operation, number of permitted visits, and quantity of food received
- Multiple choice component → allowed guests to select from new services being considered by CAIN's board of directors:
  - Nutrition counseling
  - flu shots
  - mental health services
  - addiction services
  - homelessness services
- Free response section → identify barriers to each current and prospective service

## CAIN: Community Needs Survey

We want to better understand what community resources are available to you. Please take a moment to complete this ANONYMOUS survey. Do not put your name on this survey.

What zip code do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your age group? (circle one) 18-25 26-35 36-50 51-65 66-older

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? (circle one) Yes / No

How would you describe yourself? (circle those that apply)

American Indian/Alaska Native Asian Black Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander White Prefer not to say

What gender do you identify with? (circle those that apply)

Female Male Transgender Female Transgender Male Not listed \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to say

What is your primary means of transportation? (circle one)

Own Car Family/Friend Car Bus Walk Other \_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to get to a grocery store within 15 minutes of your home? (circle one) Yes / No

How did you hear about Churches Active in Northside (CAIN)? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been a guest with CAIN? (circle one)

0-6 months

7-12 months

Longer than a year



# Data Analysis

- Barriers reported as free responses were assigned to one of four categories:
  1. Transportation
  2. Inconvenience
  3. Awareness
  4. Cost
- All survey responses were recorded in Google Forms™ survey administration software, and was transferred to Microsoft Excel™ for data analysis
- An analysis of frequencies was conducted in accordance with the aforementioned considerations of CAIN service offerings
- Differences between Northside (45223) and non-Northside resident responses were investigated to better understand the current and future implications of CAIN's recent decision to remove the zip-code restriction



# Results



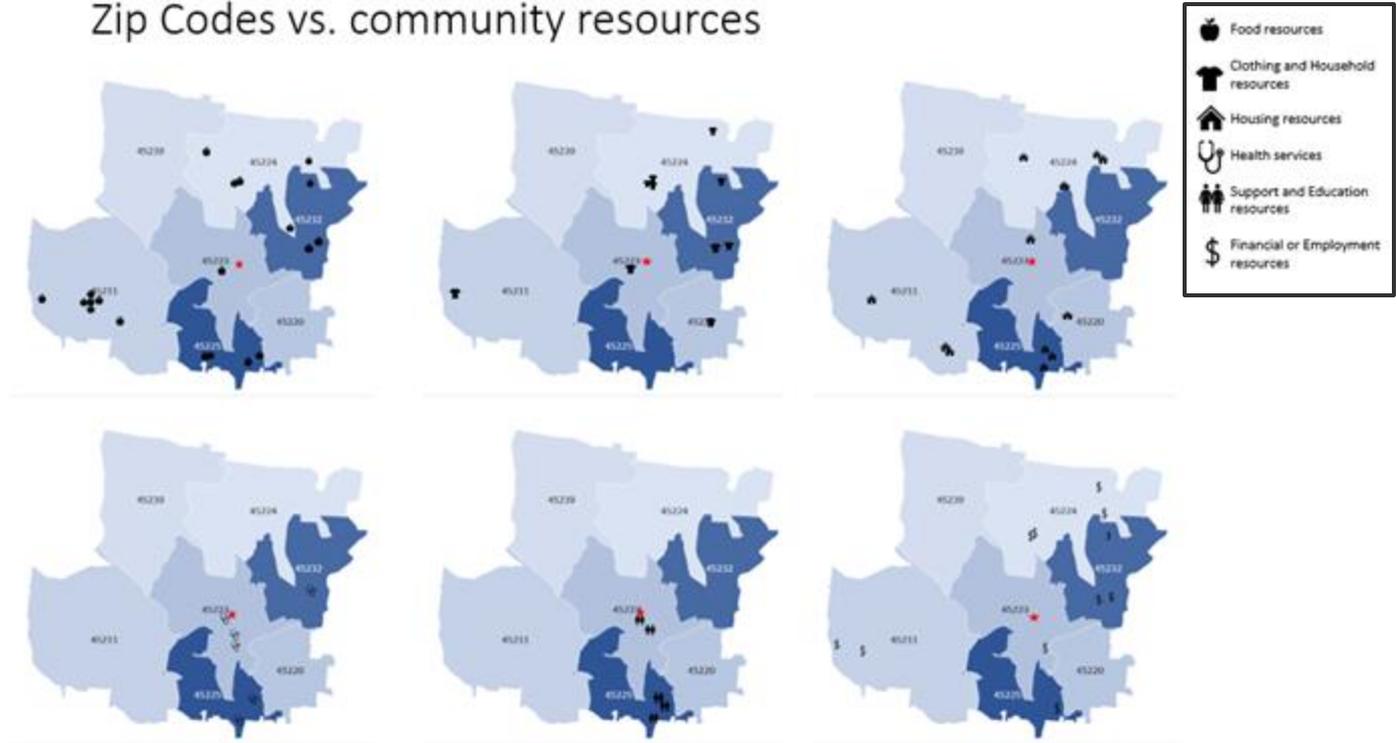
## Needs Assessment

- “Neediest” zip codes identified as 45232 and 45225
  - Highest percentage of tax returns under \$25,000
  - Highest percentage of residents living below poverty line
  - Lowest median home values
- Zip codes with higher rates of chronic medical conditions weakly correlated with increased poverty. No  $R^2$  crossed 0.7

Health Condition	Correlation	$R^2$
Arthritis	0.04	0.03
Hypertension	0.18	0.32
Cancer	-0.03	0.11
Asthma	0.09	0.69
COPD	0.06	0.38
Chronic Kidney Disease	0.02	0.48
Mental Health	0.16	0.54
Obesity	0.26	0.59

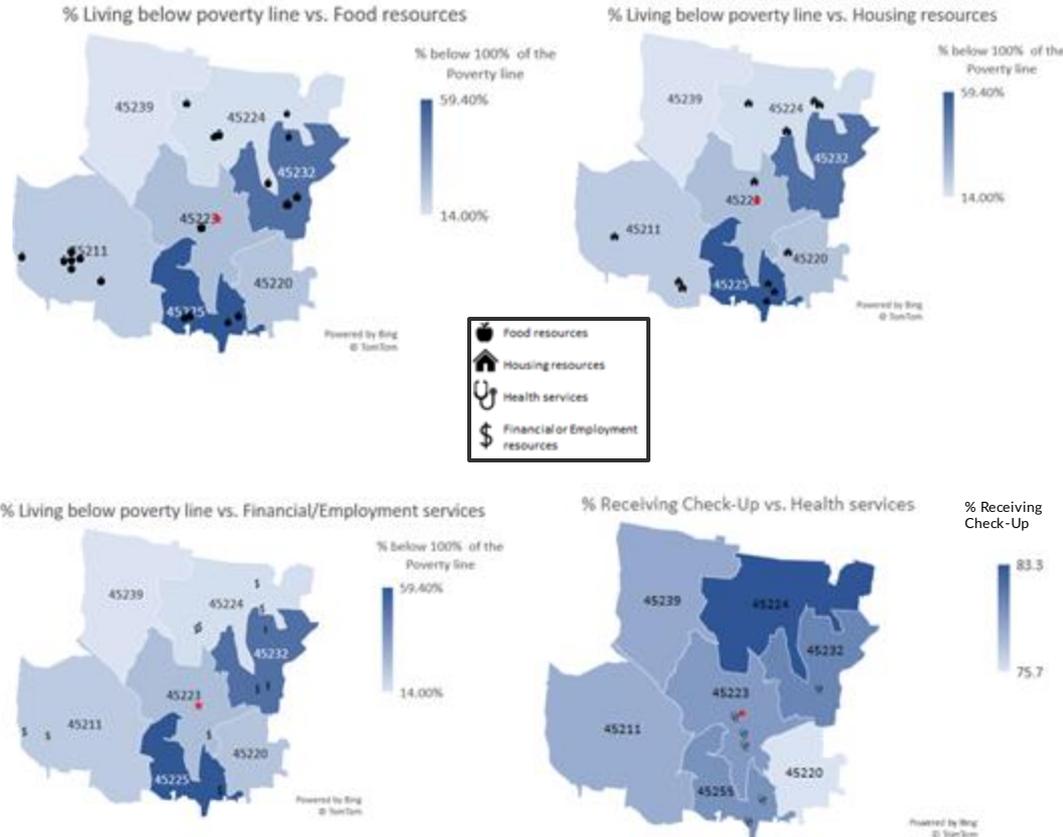
# Resources Assessment

## Zip Codes vs. community resources



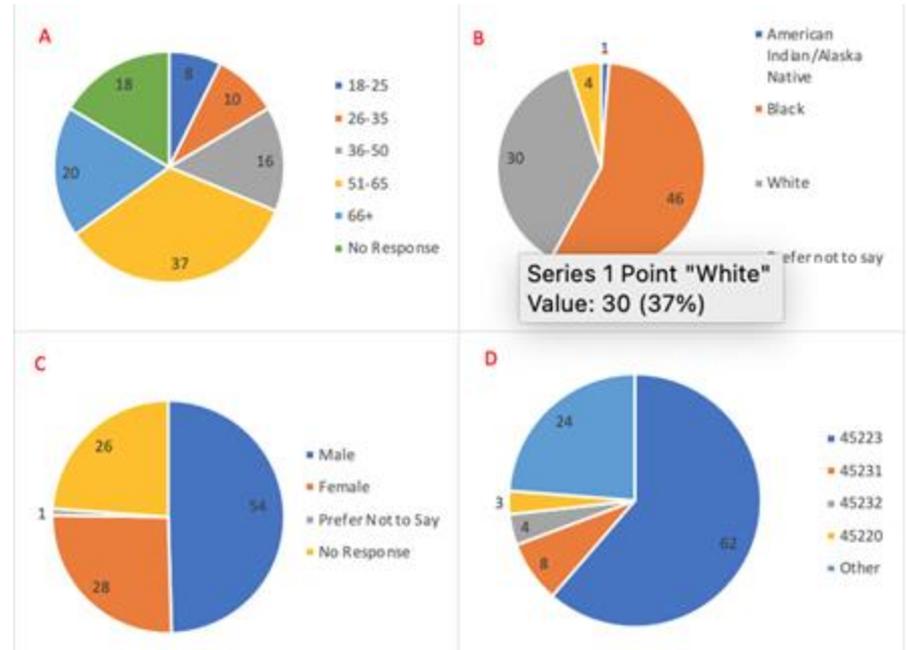
# Resources Assessment

- Food pantries and distribution programs were present in all communities, mostly associated with religious institutions
- 45225 and 45232 were associated with higher poverty rates, yet had fewer of some programs compared to some others
  - 45239 and 45220 the least
  - 45225 multiple housing programs, none in 45232
  - Both have health services, unlike most others, and higher wellness checks than expected
- 45220 was found to have the lowest % of the population receiving wellness checks



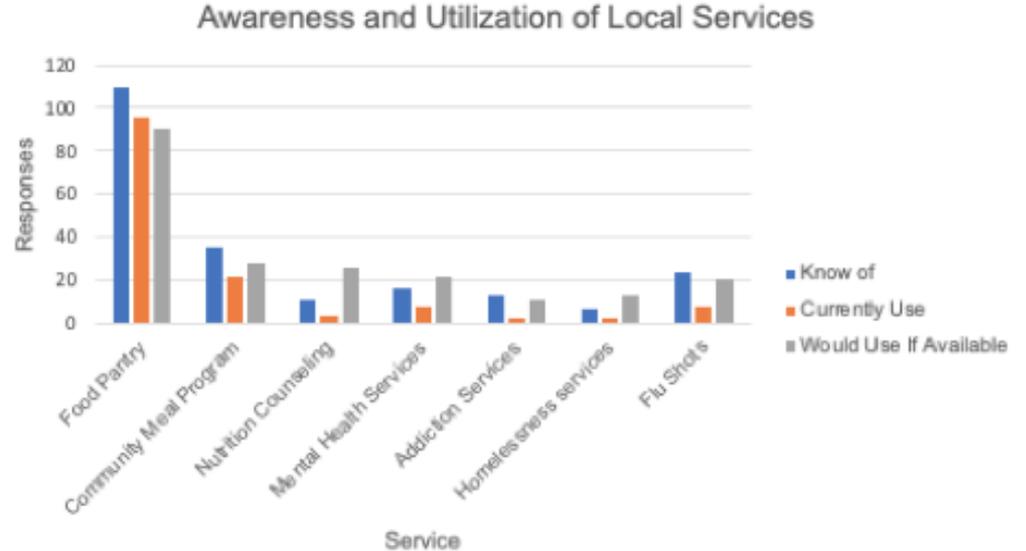
# Survey Assessment - Demographics

- Survey responses were collected during pantry hours from January 2021 to March 2021
- Total responses: n=109



# Survey Assessment - Desired Services

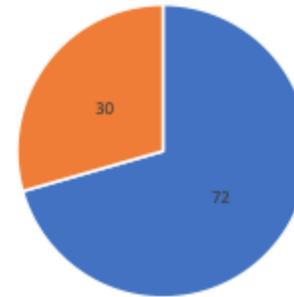
- Community meal n=28
- Nutrition Counseling n=26
- Mental Health n=21
- Flu Shots n=20



# Survey Assessment - Healthy Food

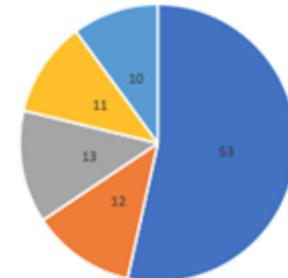
- 95.9% indicated that eating healthy was important to them
- 29.4% state that they don't live within 15 minutes of a grocery store
- 46.5% do not have their own vehicle and use other means of transportation
- 74.2% report that they would find healthy recipe cards useful

Live Within 15 Minutes of Grocery Store



■ Yes ■ No

Primary Method of Transportation



■ Own Car  
■ Bus  
■ Walk  
■ Family/Friend Car  
■ Combination of Options



# Discussion



## Food and Nutrition Services



- High satisfaction with CAIN food services
- **Low awareness** of Phil's Place - only 32% of guests indicated awareness of a free community meal program
- An **overwhelming** percentage (95.9%) of respondents indicated their desire for nutrition counseling
  - Interest in recipe cards to alleviate waste of Pantry products

## Medical and Mental Health Services



- Mental Health and Flu Shots
  - 19.3% of respondents expressed an interest in mental health services, while another 18.3% were interested in CAIN providing community health services (ie **flu shots**)
  - Within Northside, **5 health clinics** exist and only **14.8%** of CAIN guests stated they were aware of these services.
- Direct referrals to these current health clinics Northside could address the community interest in these services.

## Barriers

- **Transportation** served as a primary barrier and social health determinant contributing to food insecurity in the CAIN population
  - 27.5% of guests travel more than 15 minutes to grocery store
- Low awareness
  - Phil's place
  - Possibly due to "word of mouth" (72.5%)



# Poverty and Health Outcomes

- Poverty in all 7 zip codes exceeds national average
- Diabetes, arthritis, hypertension, obesity
- Focus: 45225 and 45232 zip codes
  - Fewest services and highest poverty rate



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## Study Limitations

- Needs Assessment
  - Broadness of zip code level data
- Population of survey responses
  - Phil's place guests
  - non-CAIN residents
  - Low sample size
- COVID-19
  - Many first time food pantry guests





# Conclusion



# Lessons Learned and Best practices

## What we learned:

- Localizing needs of a community
  - Survey
  - Resource assessment
- Survey creation and implementation

## Best Practices:

1. Likert and multiple choice Q's on surveys
2. Avoid free response Q's
3. Organize focus groups
4. Utilize a geographical information systems approach

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# Recommendations and Next Steps for CAIN



## What Now?

- Based on the results from the pantry guest survey, we recommend that CAIN focuses on the promotion of their existing services
- Next steps for CAIN also include:
  - Assist pantry guests with transportation barriers
  - Develop a nutrition education program
  - Raise awareness for additional resources that are already present in the Northside community and connect pantry guests to these resources
  - Consider financial literacy classes or another housing resource as a possible next step



# Reflection

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- Community partner feedback
    - Project was led by community partner
    - Successfully met expectations and brought CAIN's vision to live
    - Melissa excited to show research to her board to guide their decision for their next community resource
  - Community and Health
    - Intersectionality of health and community especially revealed by correlations between poverty data and health outcomes
  - Physician and Society
    - Challenged the idea of scope in being a physician and the need to advocate for health through all facets of community → housing, education, financial services, access to nutritious foods
  - Outcome of service and learning objectives
    - Identified key areas for growth through needs assessment
    - Listened to the community to discover services they would like and barriers to accessing resources



# Sources



# Needs Assessment Data

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