

Developing items on health-related social needs—going beyond screening

**Presentation at the 77th Annual Conference for the
American Association for Public Opinion Research**

May 12, 2022

Charlene Kemmerer • Elena Moroz • Kenneth Lim
Karen Bogen • Nancy Duda



There is a growing trend among primary care practices to screen for health-related social needs



Comprehensive Primary Care Plus (CPC+) patient survey overview

Purpose	Evaluate the differences between the experience of patients in treatment (CPC+) and matched comparison practices
Content	Different kinds of care the patient received from the primary care practice
Look-back period	6 months
Length	15-20 minutes
Population	Medicare beneficiaries, primarily age 65 or older
Sample size	36,000+
Collection mode	Mail
Incentive	None



New concepts to measure

About the
respondent

Has a health-
related social
need?

About practice
processes

Practice asked
about health-
related social
need?

Yes

Practice tried
to facilitate
help?

Yes

Practice
followed up
on help?



Challenges we anticipated

- / **Asking about processes that are emerging in primary care**
- / **New items are about sensitive content**
- / **Recruiting participants with social needs to test new items**





Pretest summary

Participant criteria	Age 65+ (45+ for Round 2)
Number of rounds	3
Participant source	Round 1 (n=6)
	Round 2 (n=8)
	Round 3 (n=9)
Interview type	Cognitive (n=20) and full survey debrief (n=3)
Look-back period	12 months
Length	45 minutes
Incentive	\$100 check or gift card



New concepts to measure

About the
respondent

Has a health-
related social
need?

About practice
processes

Practice asked
about health-
related social
need?

Yes

Practice tried
to facilitate
help?

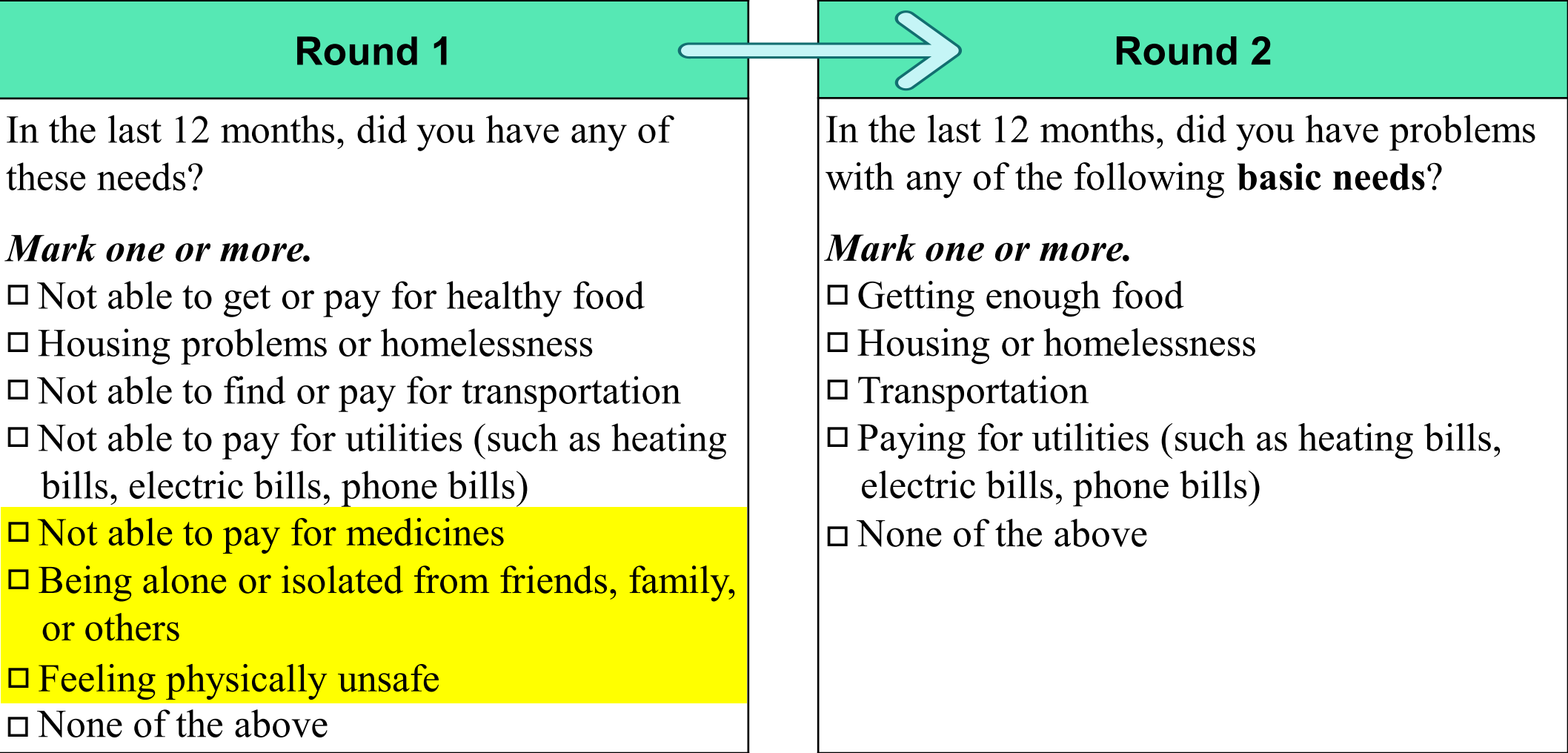
Yes

Practice
followed up
on help?



Item development:

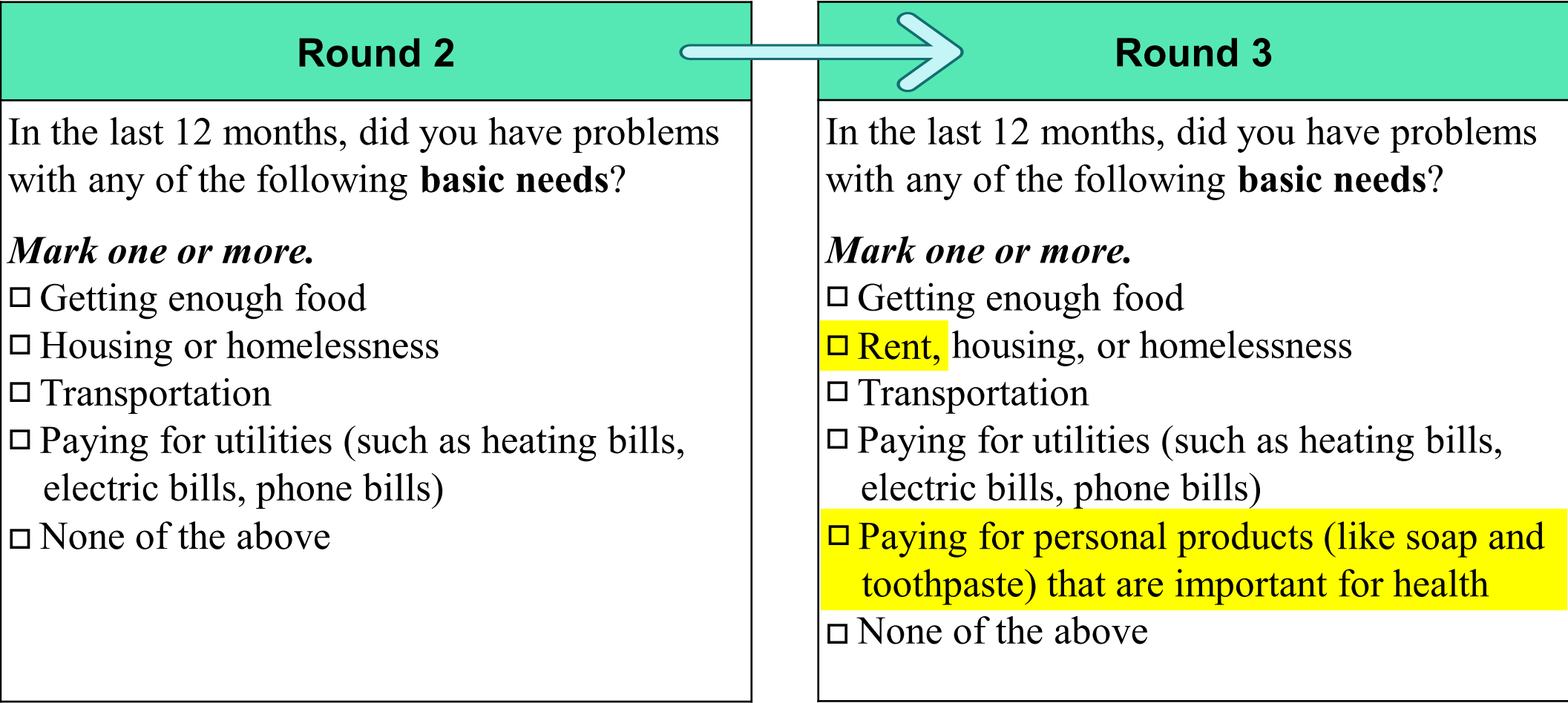
Respondent has a health-related social need?






Item development:

Respondent has a health-related social need?





Item development: Respondent has a health-related social need?

Round 3	Final wording
<p>In the last 12 months, did you have problems with any of the following basic needs?</p> <p><i>Mark one or more.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Getting enough food<input type="checkbox"/> Rent, housing, or homelessness<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation<input type="checkbox"/> Paying for utilities (such as heating bills, electric bills, phone bills)<input type="checkbox"/> Paying for personal products (like soap and toothpaste) that are important for health<input type="checkbox"/> None of the above	<p>In the last 12 months, did you have problems with any of the following basic needs?</p> <p><i>Mark one or more.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Getting enough food<input type="checkbox"/> Rent, housing, or homelessness<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation<input type="checkbox"/> Paying for utilities (such as heating, electric, or phone bills)<input type="checkbox"/> None of the above 



New concepts to measure

About the
respondent

Has a health-
related social
need?

**About practice
processes**

**Practice asked
about health-
related social
need?**

Yes

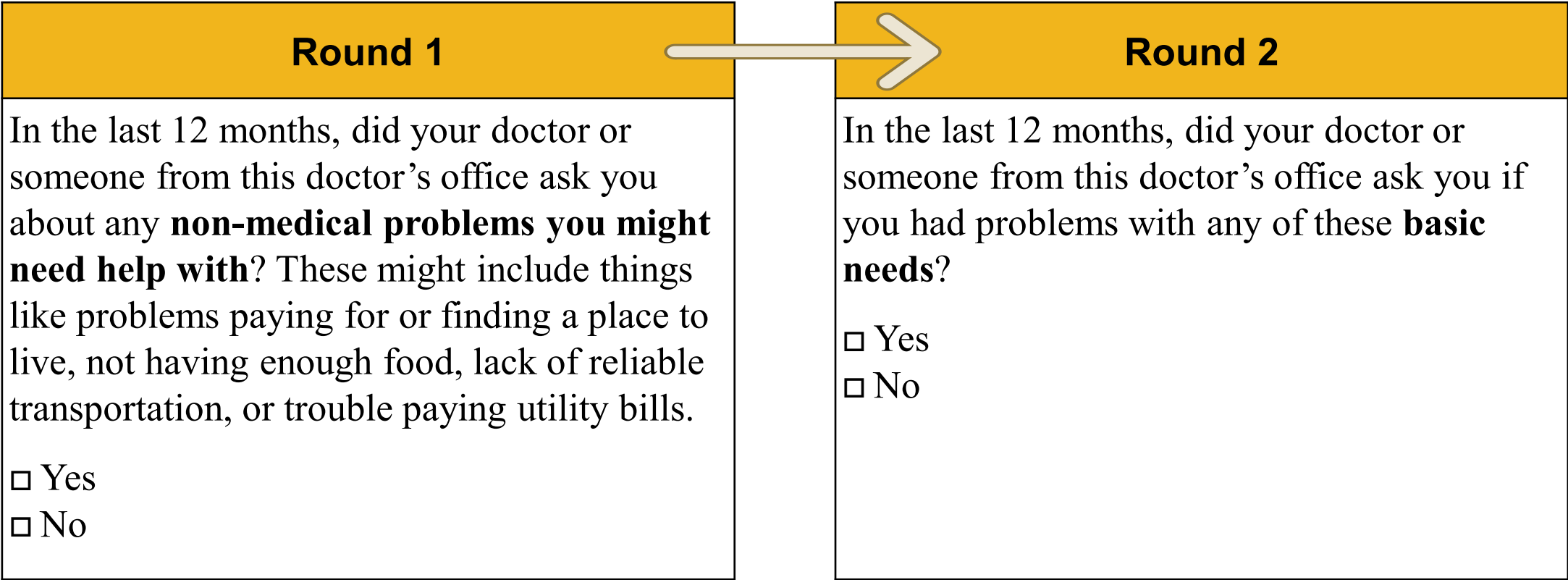
Practice tried
to facilitate
help?

Yes

Practice
followed up
on help?

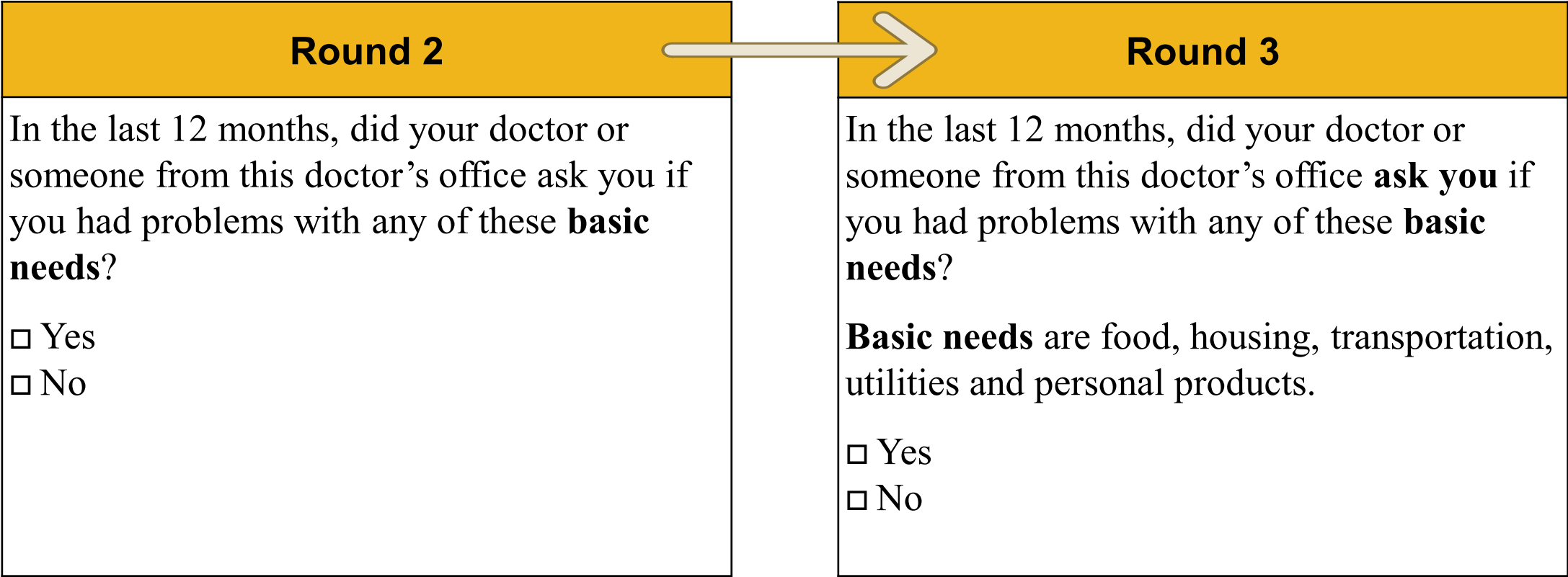


Item development: practice asked respondent about health-related social need?



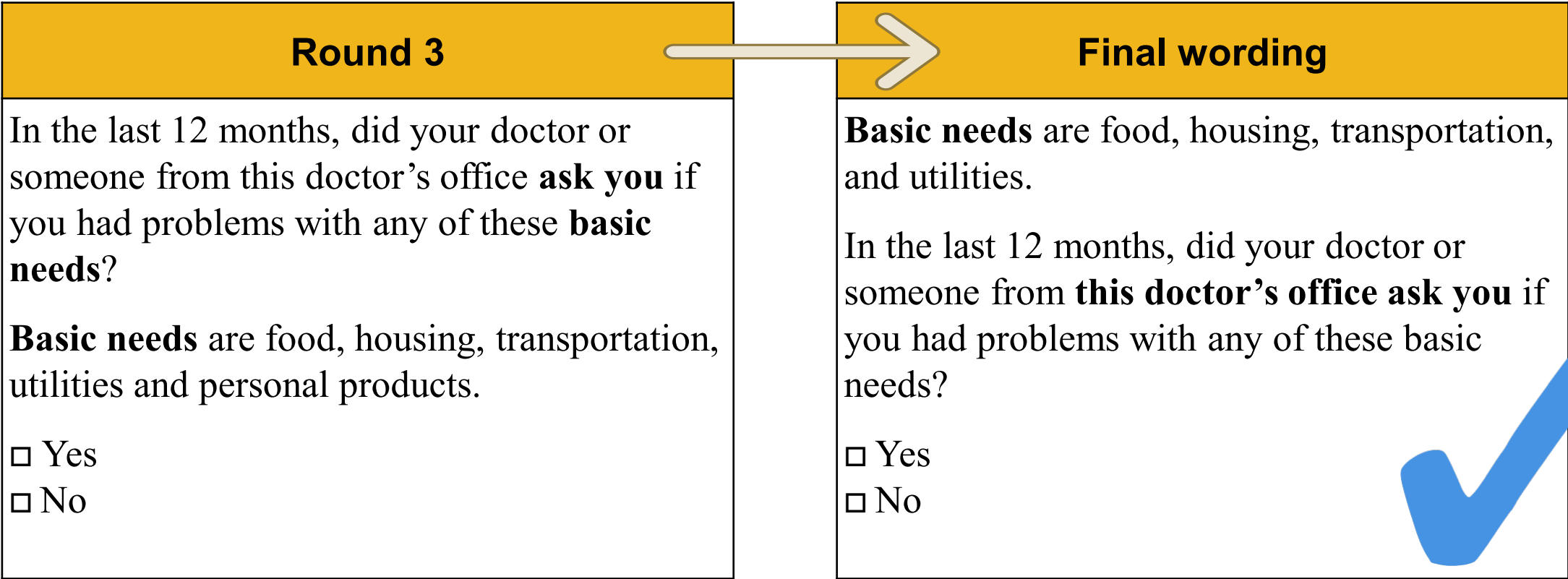


Item development: practice asked respondent about health-related social need?





Item development: practice asked respondent about health-related social need?





New concepts to measure

About the
respondent

Has a health-
related social
need?

**About practice
processes**

Practice asked
about health-
related social
need?

Yes

**Practice tried
to facilitate
help?**

Yes

**Practice
followed up
on help?**



Item development: did the practice try to connect respondent to help and follow up?

/ Initial draft:

In the last 12 months, did your doctor or someone from this doctor's office try to **find a place or person to help you with safety or non-medical needs**? These needs might include things like safety concerns, or problems paying for housing, food, transportation, utilities, or medicine.

☐ Yes

☐ No → **If No, go to [question #]**

&

In the last 12 months, did your doctor or someone from this doctor's office **ask you if this place or person helped you with these needs**?

☐ Yes

☐ No



Item development: did the practice try to connect respondent to help and follow up?

/ Final wording:

Did your doctor or someone from **this doctor's office** try to find a place or person to help you with any of these basic needs?

☐ Yes

☐ No → If No, go to [question #]



&

Did your doctor or someone from **this doctor's office** ask you if this place or person helped you with these **basic needs**?

☐ Yes

☐ No





Key takeaways

"Basic needs" can be a comprehensible stand-in for "health-related social needs"

**Item layout
is critical**

Even if not applicable to the patient, items did not seem unusual in a survey about primary health care experiences



- / Funding for this evaluation was provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (HHSM-500-2014-00034I/HHSM-500-T0010).**
- / The contents of this presentation are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or any of its agencies.**



Contact information



Charlene Kemmerer

`ckemmerer@mathematica.org`