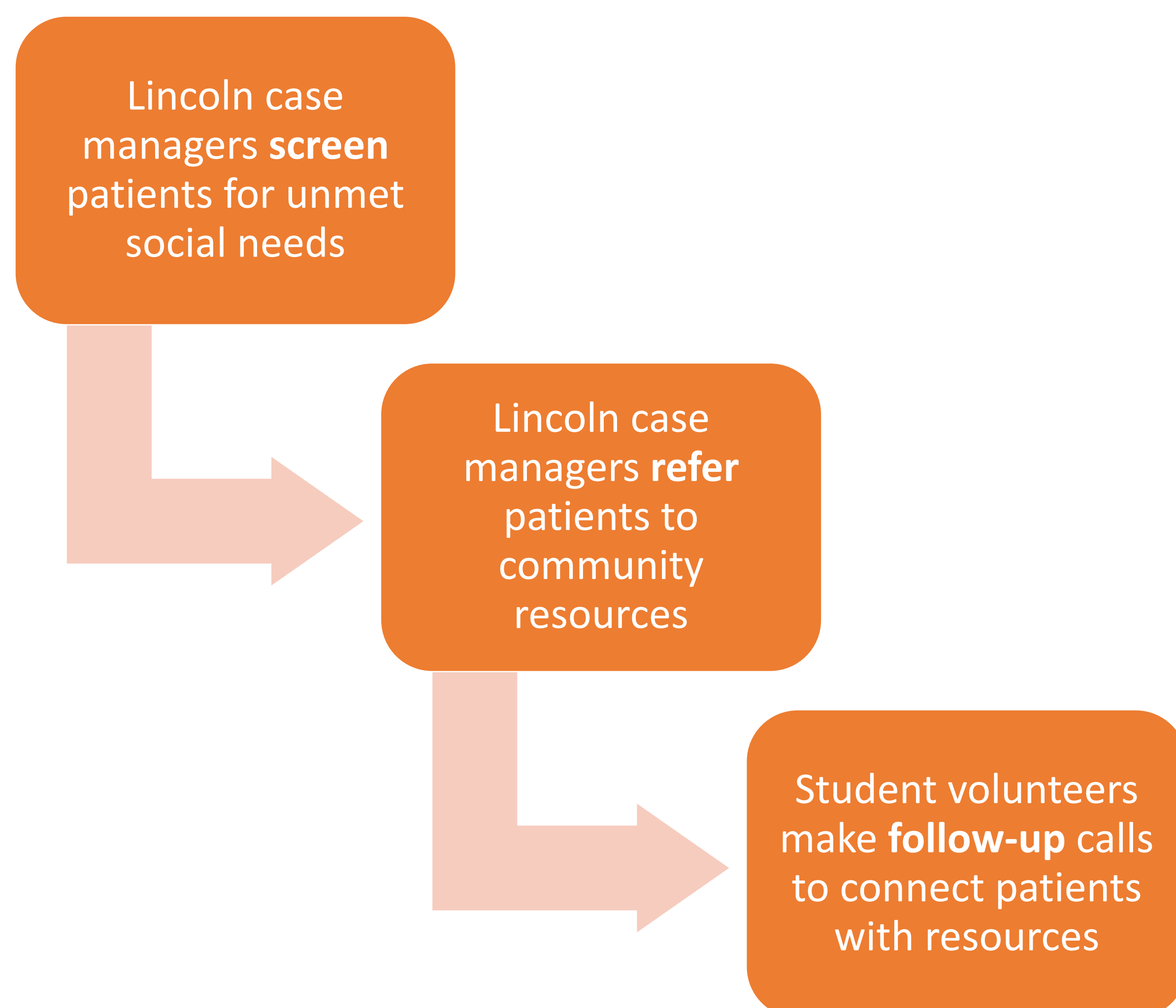




## Introduction & Background

- In areas that are predominantly non-Hispanic and English-speaking, people who are Hispanic and Spanish-speaking face cultural and language barriers with access to and quality of healthcare.<sup>1</sup> These barriers can lead to poor patient-provider relationships and can result in inequalities in care.
- “Help Desk” is a community resource navigation program in Durham, North Carolina that aids people in addressing their unmet social needs. Help Desk partners with Lincoln Community Health Center (LCHC).



### Overview of the Help Desk model

- Purpose:** To determine if patients who report as Hispanic and most comfortable speaking Spanish as their primary language are referred to the Help Desk program to support their unmet social needs compared with patients who report as non-Hispanic ethnicity and English-speaking.

## Methods

- 787 patients were screened at LCHC for unmet social needs and had the potential to be referred to the Help Desk program.
- These data are preliminary due to data cleaning.
- Language and Ethnicity were self-identified.
- Table 1* shows the breakdown of the population by ethnicity and language:

Table 1 – Breakdown of sample population by Ethnicity and Language

	N	English-speaking	Spanish-speaking
		N=442	N=315
All Hispanic	N=349	9%	99%
All Non-Hispanic	N=408	91%	1%

- Most Hispanic patients are Spanish-speaking.
- Most non-Hispanic patients are English-speaking.
- In order to understand the various subgroups involved in the study, patient characteristics were compared by:
  - Hispanic vs. non-Hispanic
  - Spanish-speaking Hispanic vs. English-speaking Hispanic
  - Spanish-speaking Hispanic vs. English-speaking non-Hispanic
  - These results are not presented*
- Then the data were analyzed to determine if there were any disparities in referral rates by language and/or ethnicity.

## Preliminary Results

Table 2 – Differences in Referral by Ethnicity and Language

	Referred	Not Referred	Refused
Comparison by Ethnicity			
Hispanic/LatinX	28%	65%	7%
Non-Hispanic	58%	33%	9%
Among Hispanic Patients, Comparison by Language			
Spanish-speaking Hispanic	28%	68%	4%
English-speaking Hispanic	32%	50%	18%

- A larger proportion of non-Hispanic patients were referred to Help Desk than Hispanic patients.
- Although most of both English and Spanish-speaking Hispanic patients were “not referred” to Help Desk, a larger proportion of English-speaking Hispanic patients were referred to the Help Desk program.

## Conclusions

- Hispanic and Spanish-speaking patients are disproportionately referred less to the Help Desk program.
- It is important to inform case managers of this disparity so that they are proactive about their choices/interactions with the disadvantaged patients.
- Implementing cultural literacy training for the case managers should help to improve patient-provider relationships and therefore eliminate the disparity.
- Developing clear guidelines for referral will decrease any ambiguity regarding who is eligible for Help Desk.

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