

Social Support and your Health: What WHI has Taught Us



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Overview

Ver. 1
OMB #0925-0414 Exp. 07/13

Form 155 - Lifestyle Questionnaire

Now some questions about your social activities. How often, if at all, do you do any of the following activities? (Mark one circle on each line.)

	At least once a week	Several times a month	Once a month	Rarely or never
32. Eat out of the house	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. Go shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. Go to a cultural event such as a movie, concert, play, or lecture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. Meet with family or friends who do not live with you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36. Communicate with family or friends by phone or email	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37. Go to a church or other religious center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Definitions and surveys

WHI data

What next?

Definitions and survey questions



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Social networks (*structural social support*) is the web of social relationships that surround an individual

Social ties (and frequency of contact)



- Family
- Friends
- Religious
- Community
- Work, Online, etc.



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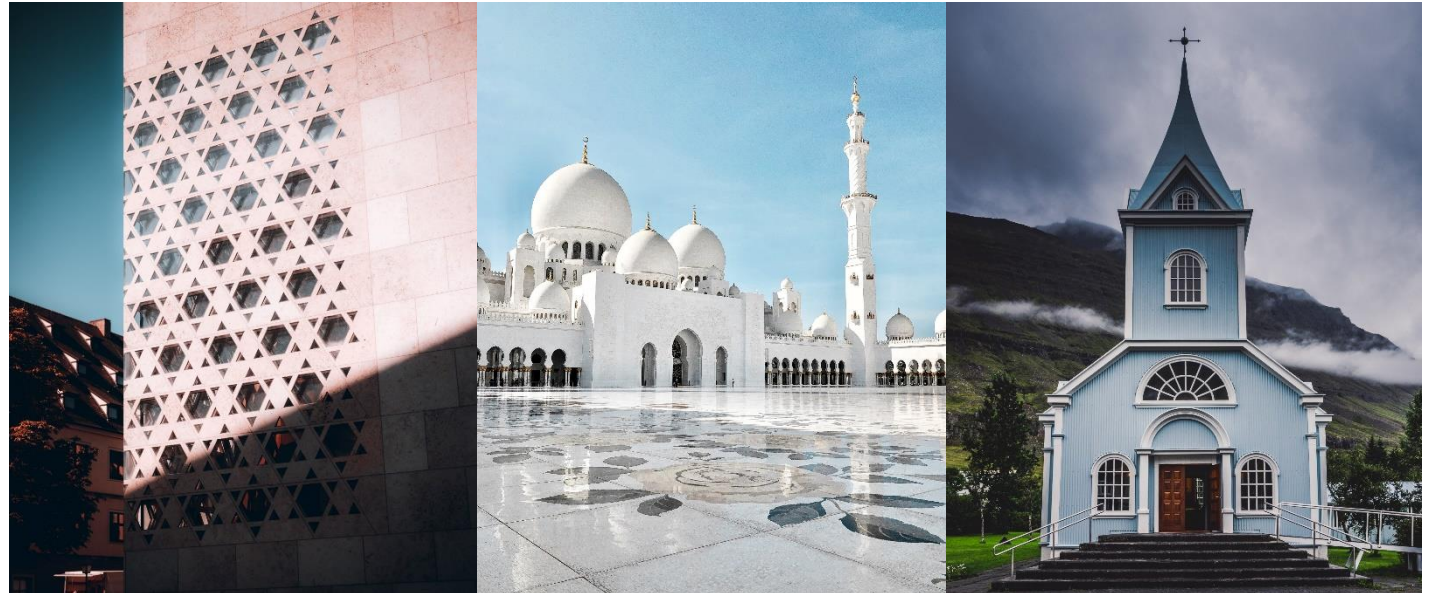


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Social networks (*structural social support*) is the web of social relationships that surround an individual

Social ties (and frequency of contact)



- Family, spouse*
- Friends*
- Religious*
- Community*
- Work, Online, etc.



Objective measure of social isolation, integration

Social support (*functional social support*) is the perception and reality of the exchange of assistance through social relationships



**Tangible/instrumental
support**

Sherbourne and Stewart, 1991

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**Tangible/instrumental
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**Emotional/
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Affectionate

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Tangible/instrumental support*

Emotional/informational*

Affectionate

Positive interaction*
(the availability of someone with whom to have fun, relax, and get one's mind off things for a while)

Sherbourne and Stewart, 1991

*Assessed in WHI

Questions on social support in WHI

Form 155 - Lifestyle Questionnaire

Ver. 1

People sometimes look to others for help, friendship, or other types of support. Next are some questions about the support that you have. How often is each of the following kinds of support available to you if you need it? (Mark one circle on each line.)

	None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
38. Someone you can count on to listen to you when you need to talk	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
39. Someone to give you good advice about a problem	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
40. Someone to take you to the doctor if you need it	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
41. Someone to have a good time with	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
42. Someone to help you understand a problem when you need it	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
43. Someone to help with daily chores if you are sick	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
44. Someone to share your most private worries and fears	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
45. Someone to do something fun with	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
46. Someone to love you and make you feel wanted	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5



WHI data

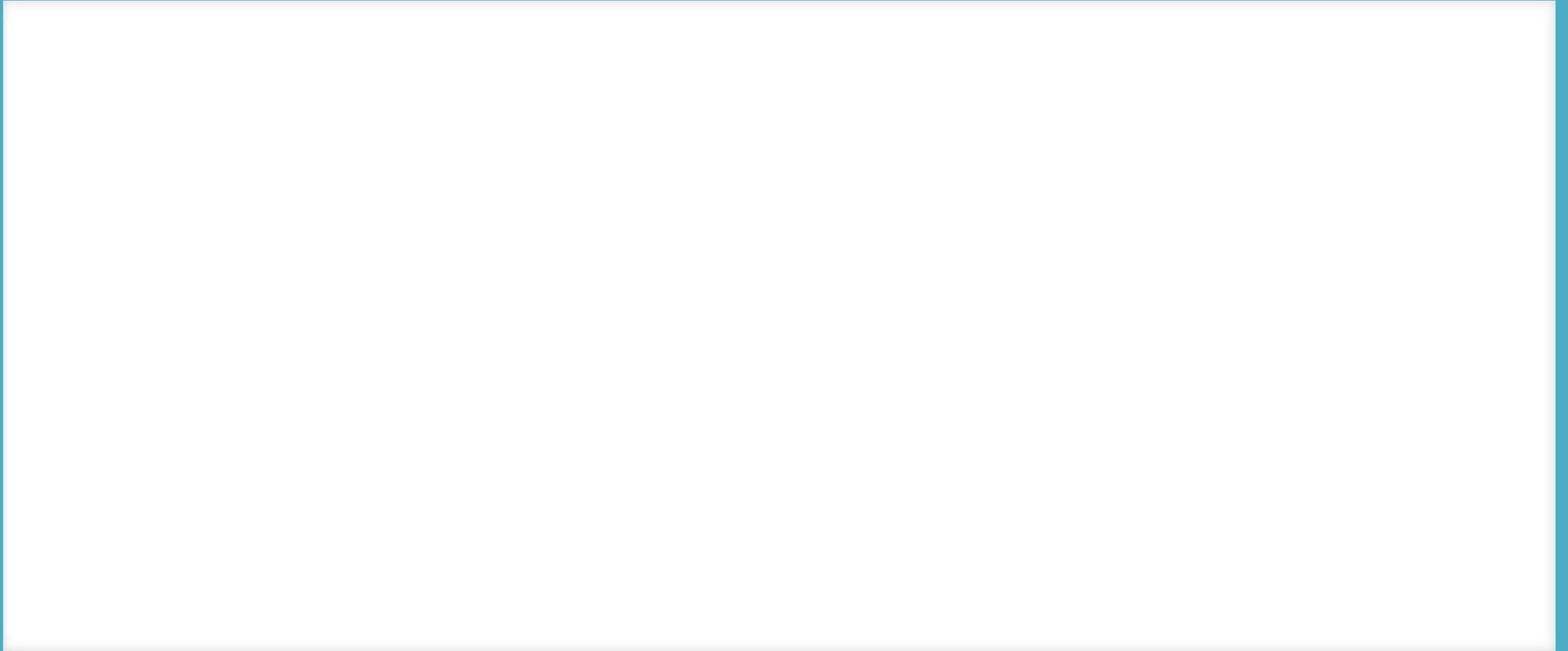
WOMEN'S HEALTH INITIATIVE

Changing the future of women's health

A landmark study since 1992



In WHI, low social support, social isolation predict:



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- Related to 50% higher death, 40% higher CRC death



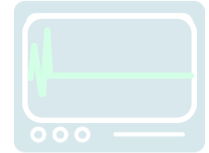
In WHI, low social support, social isolation predict:

- Related to 50% higher death, 40% higher CRC death
- **5-15% higher risk of new cardiovascular disease**



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- 5-15% higher risk of new cardiovascular disease








- **22% higher heart failure**



In WHI, low social support, social isolation predict:

- Related to 50% higher death, 40% higher CRC death 
- 5-15% higher risk of new cardiovascular disease 
- 22% higher heart failure 
- **Higher risk of mild cognitive impairment and dementia** 

In WHI, low social support, social isolation predict:

- Related to 50% higher death, 40% higher CRC death 
- 5-15% higher risk of new cardiovascular disease 
- 22% higher heart failure 
- Higher risk of mild cognitive impairment and dementia 
- **Social support loss and worsening loneliness in pandemic** 

What next

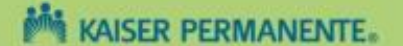


Kaiser Permanente and other health groups increasingly interested in social support, isolation



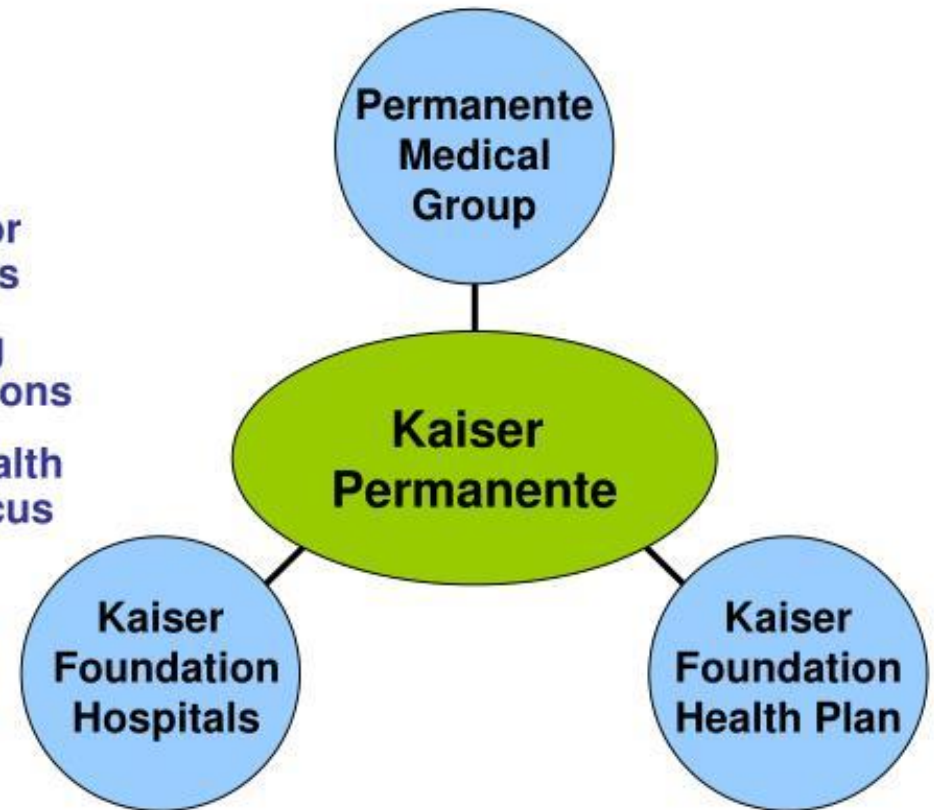
Launches Epic EHR in 2006

About Kaiser Permanente



A Prepaid Integrated Health Care Delivery System

- Social Mission
- Quality Driven
- Shared Accountability for Program Success
- Integration along Multiple Dimensions
- Prevention & Health Maintenance Focus



My research

1. Influence on health and how that works – interventions

2. How social support networks influence survival after dx of cancer (50 million unpaid caregivers, 75% women)

3. ID cancer patients who need support – “Social support as a vital sign” (temperature, pulse rate, respiration rate, blood pressure)

In summary

- Supportive social networks matter for health
- WHI has contributed to this growing literature
- Evaluation of social support as a vital sign under development



WOMEN'S
HEALTH
INITIATIVE



Thank you!

Should social support be considered a vital sign?

1. Can you measure it (accurately, noninvasively)?
2. Does it matter for clinical outcomes?
3. Ethics: Can you do something about it?
4. Can you create a clinical workflow?
5. Does it improve clinical care?



Resources for patients

Online support networks

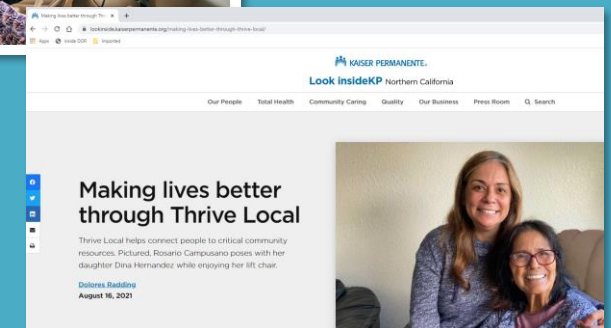
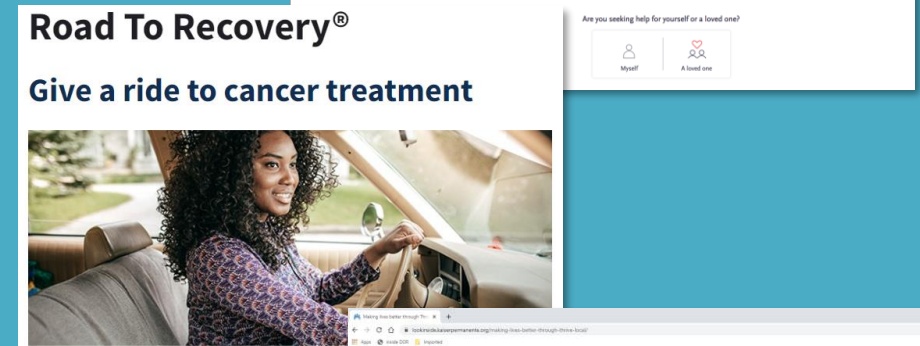
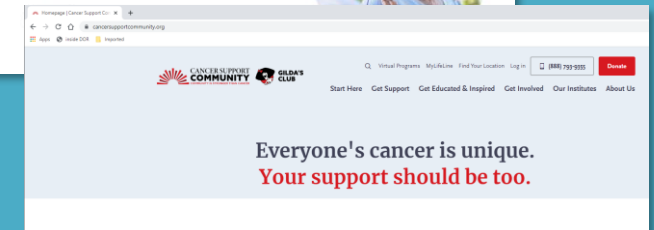
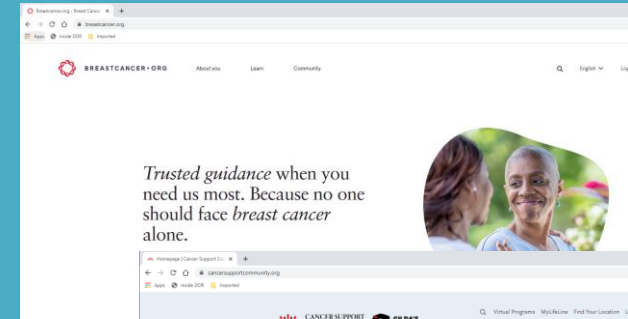
- Breastcancer.org
- MyBCTeam, Smart Patients (Roni Zeiger), Facebook
- Association of Cancer Online Resources (discontinued as nonprofit)
- Cancer Support Community

Community resources

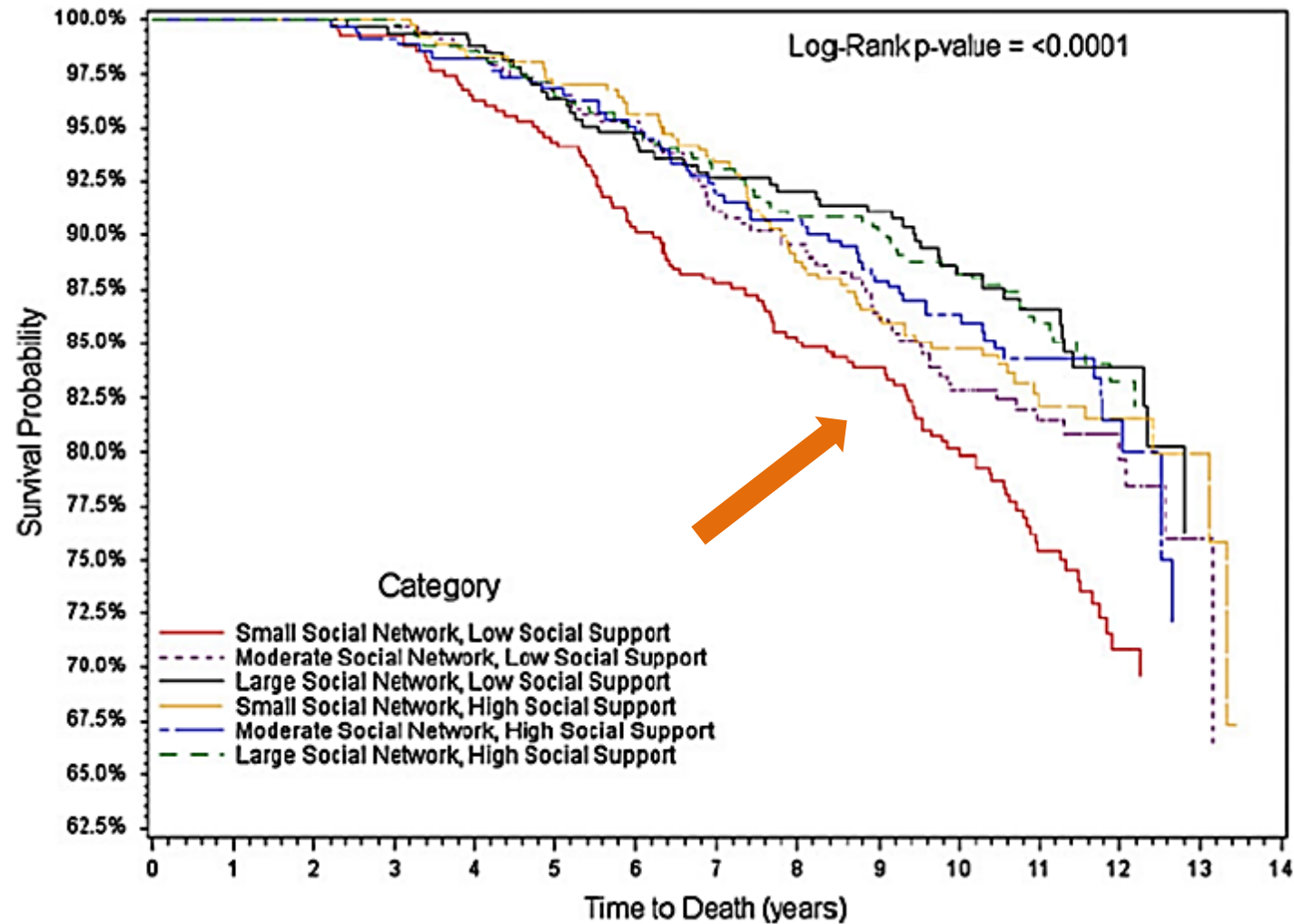
- Road to Recovery (rides to treatment)—ACS
- Caring Bridge (site to connect with others privately)
- ACS's I Can Cope (online cancer education)

Clinical resources

- Peers: Peer groups, Peer navigation
- Referrals: Social workers, Mental health counselors
- Thrive Local (community)

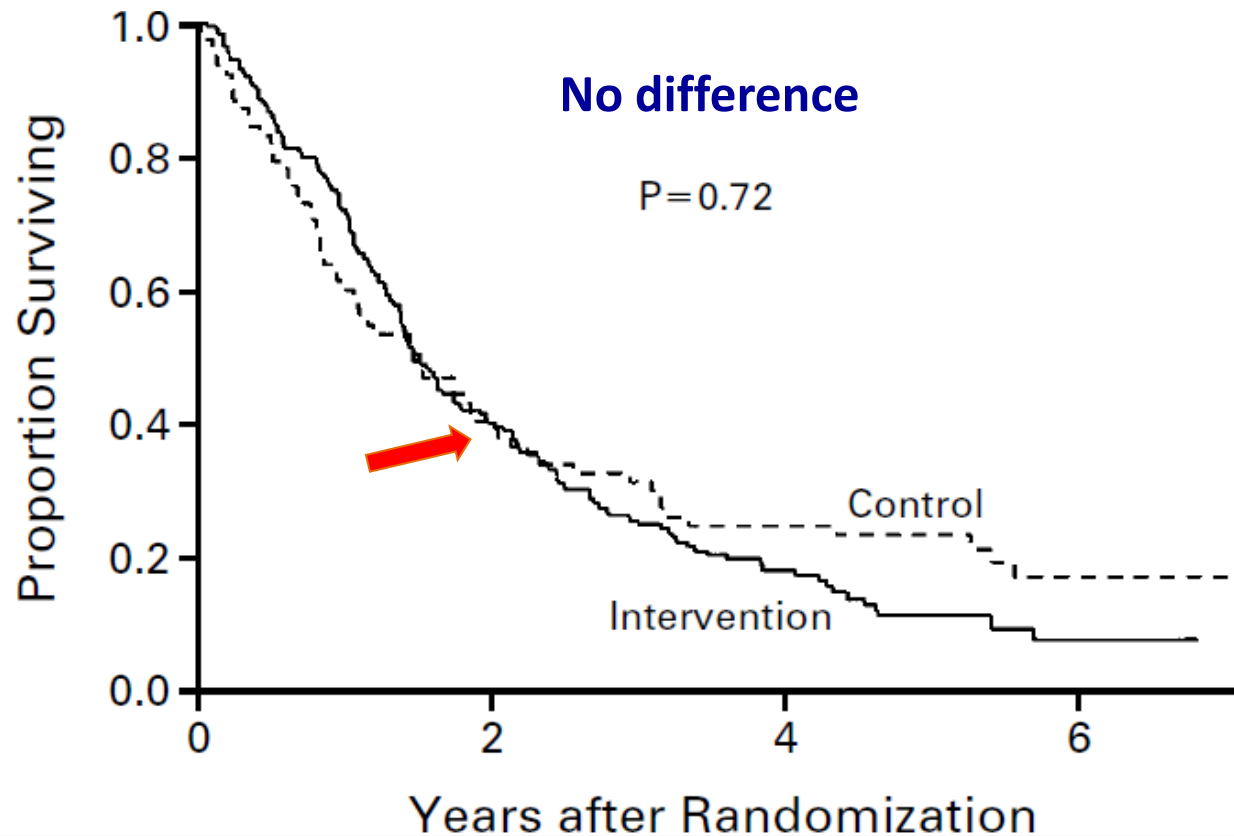


Small, unsupportive networks related to poorer survival, LACE, N=2,264



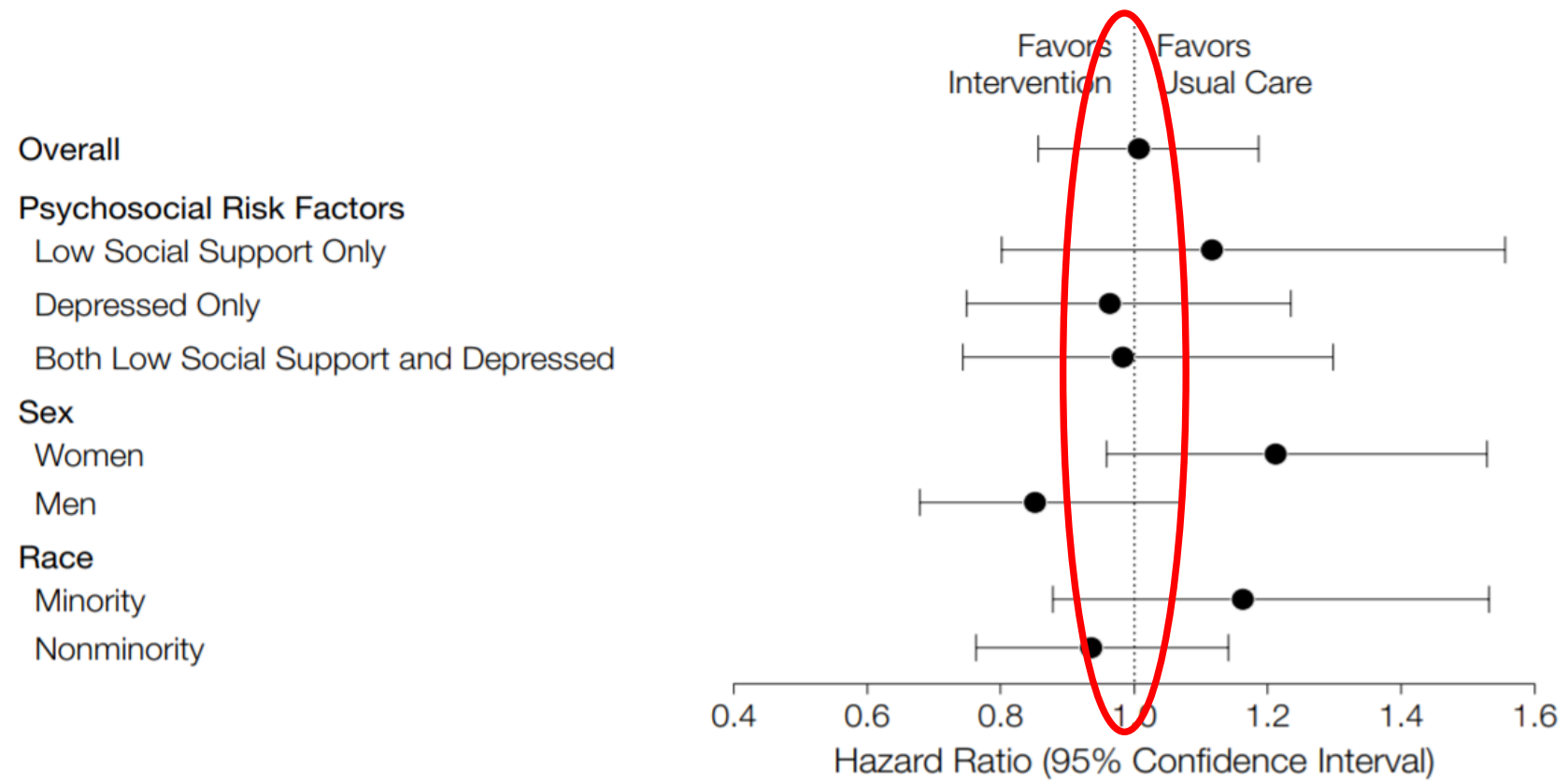
Survival in metastatic breast cancer patients unaffected by support groups

Kaplan–Meier Survival Curves for Women Assigned to the Intervention Group and the Control Group



Social support intervention failed to improve CVD outcomes

Effect of Enhancing Recovery in Coronary Heart Disease Patients (ENRICHD)
Intervention on Risk of Death or Nonfatal Myocardial Infarction



KP: concerns for social support issues

Living alone

Living with or caregiver for a person with dementia or memory loss

Recently widowed, separated, or divorced

Currently in an institutional setting that is not allowing visits from family members/friends

Homebound person of any age

In clinical isolation or quarantine for COVID-19 symptoms

Dependency on others for transportation

No internet access at home

New mothers with limited social support