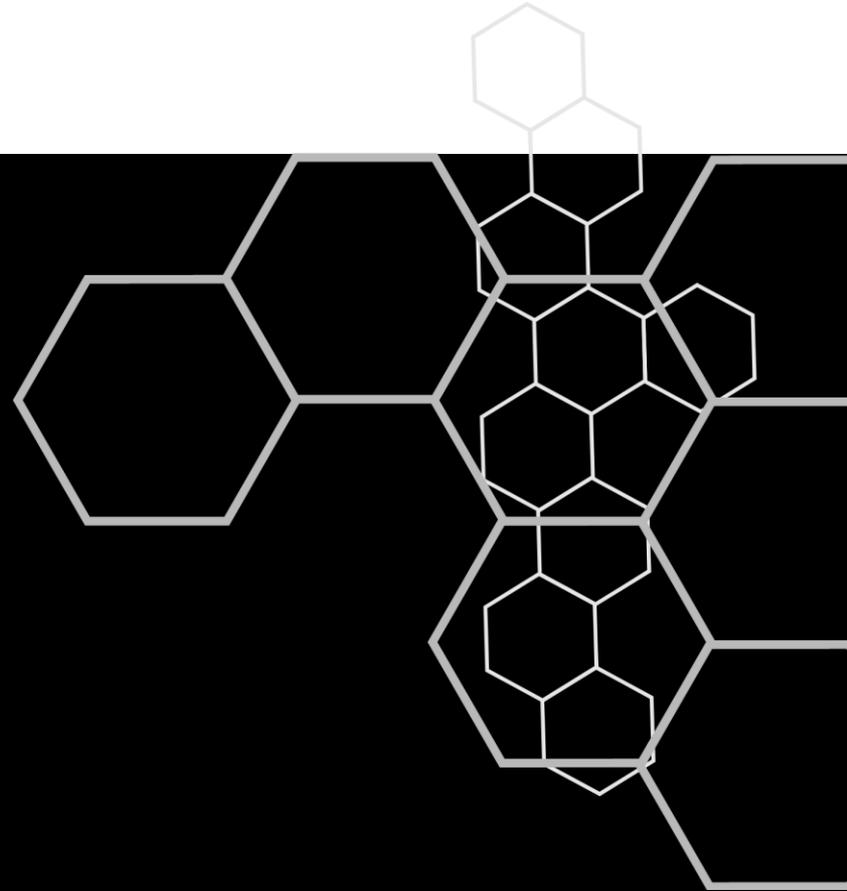


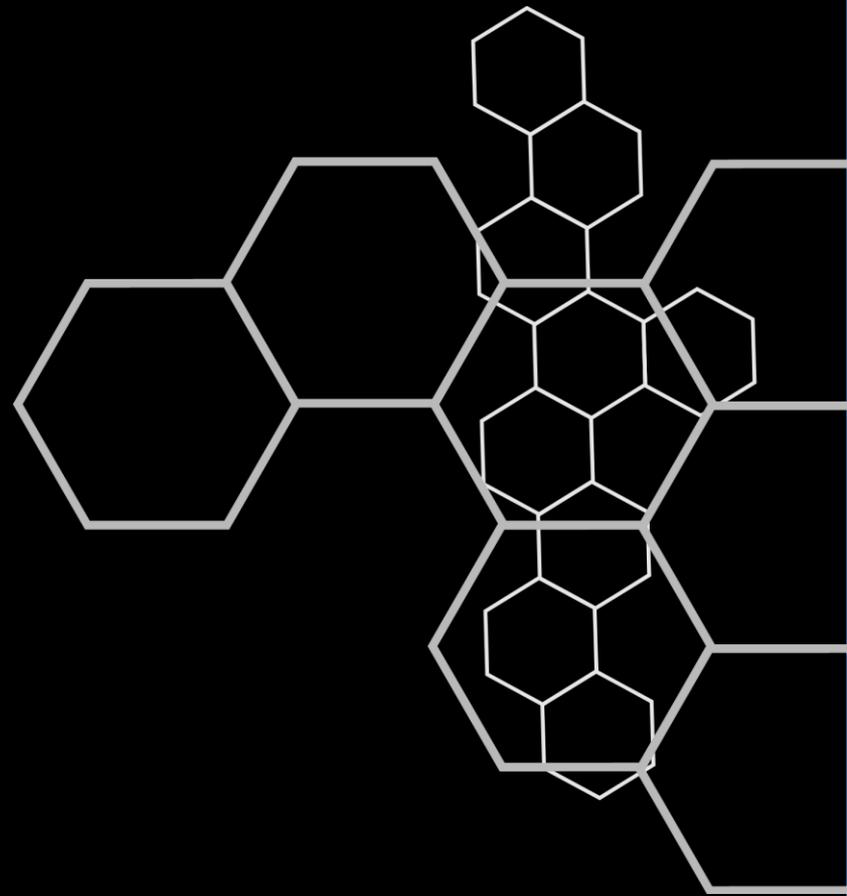
Concordance of Frailty among Community-Dwelling Older Couples: An Administrative Health Data Study

January 31, 2023

Dr. Sandra Magalhaes, Research Associate
University of New Brunswick



The Challenge



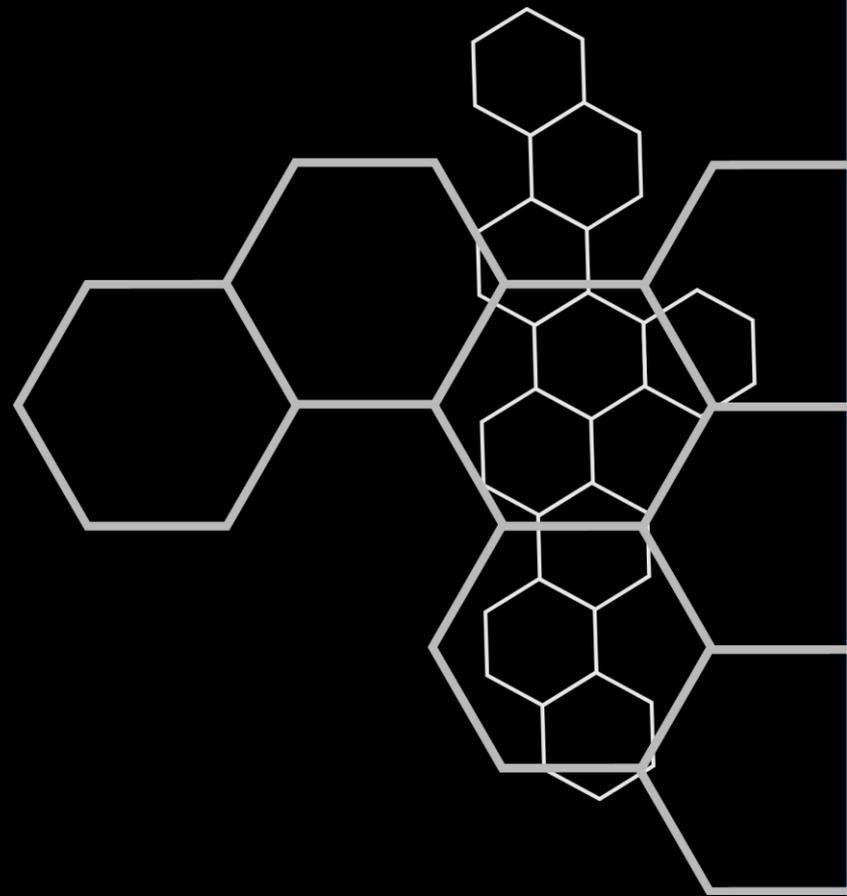
The Challenge

- **Increasing focus on developing programs and services to help older Canadians maintain their independence and remain in their homes for as long as possible**
 - AGE-WELL Challenge Area: Supportive Homes & Communities
- **As we age, sickness and frailty can become a more regular part of their lives**
 - Major impacts on individual health and healthcare resource utilization
- **For those who remain in their homes, burden of care falls on their co-habitants**
 - Who are most often their partners/spouses

Background

- **Rapidly expanding aging Canadian population will lead to a higher burden of frailty at the population level**
- **Frailty in one spouse is shown to influence development of frailty-related health outcomes in the other**
 - Research limited to small samples, lack of Canadian data, conflicting results
- **A better understanding can provide insights into opportunities for intervention**
 - Early identification of high-risk groups is essential

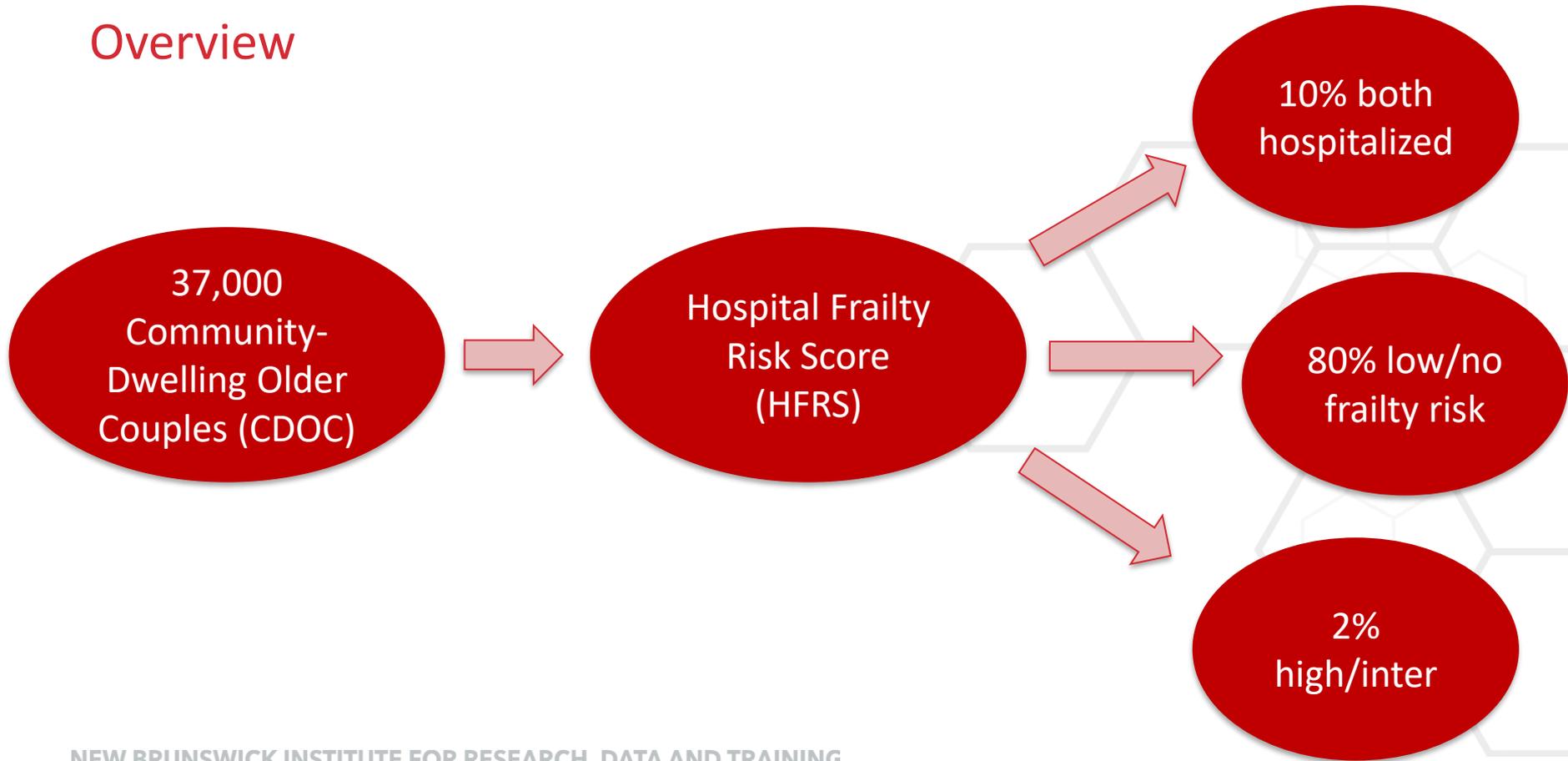
Research Study



Objective

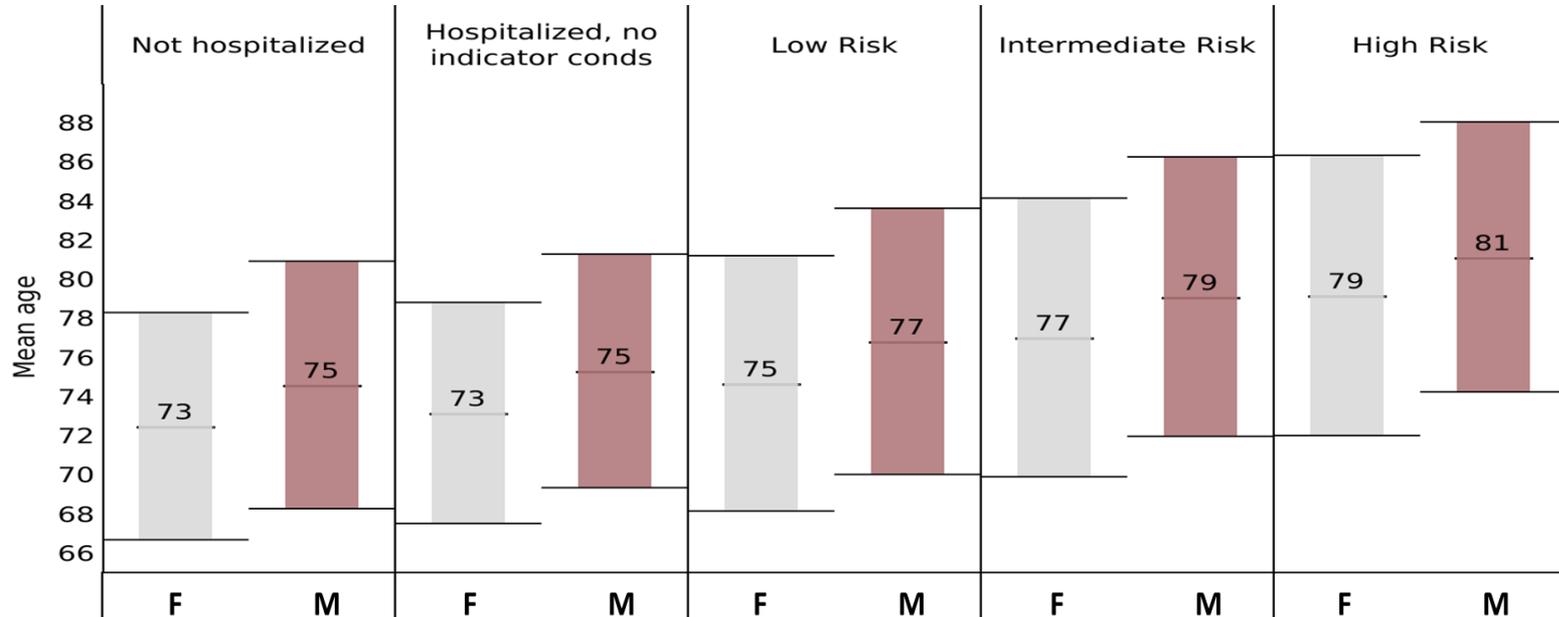
To characterize the concordance of frailty in community-dwelling older couples

Overview



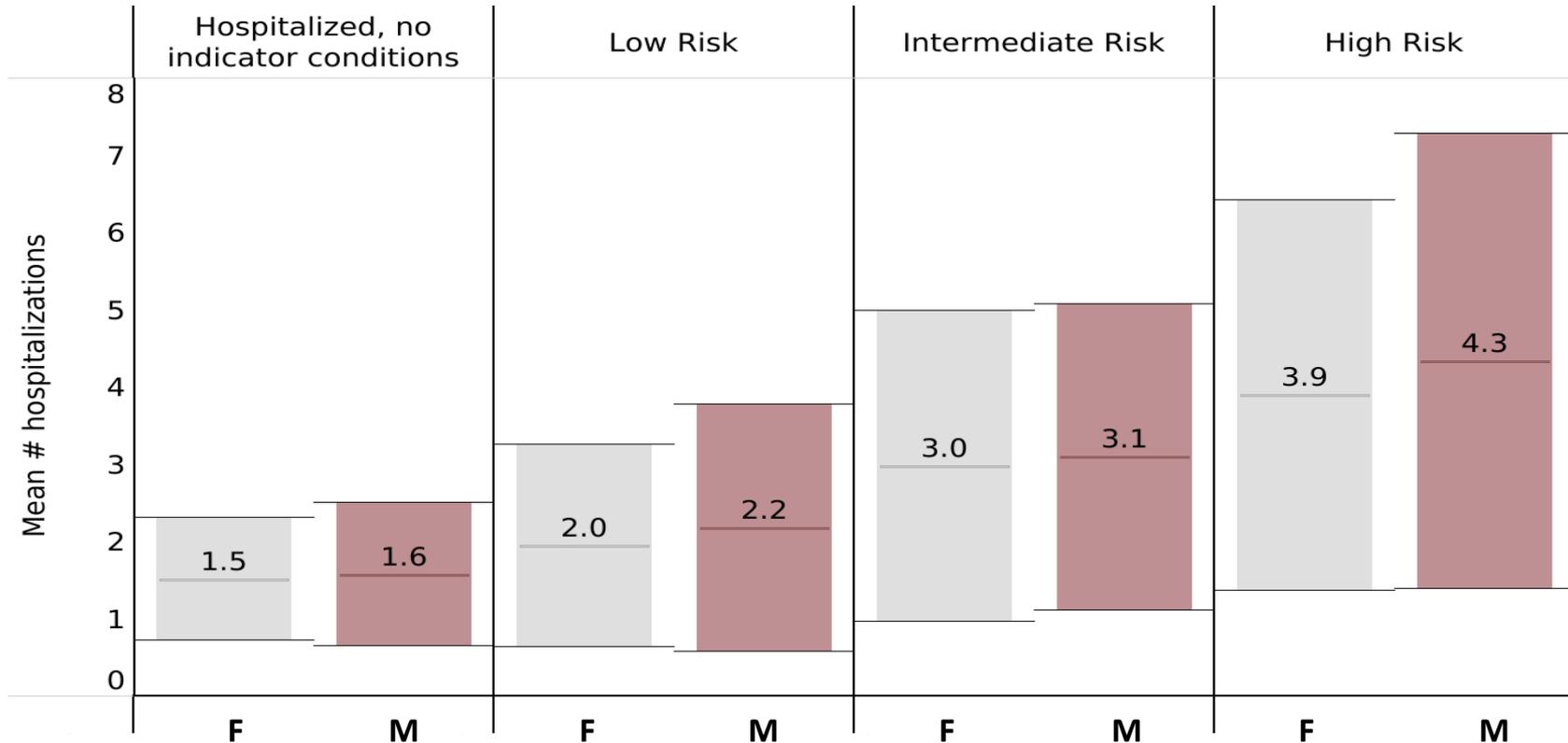
Age by Frailty Risk and Sex

Results I



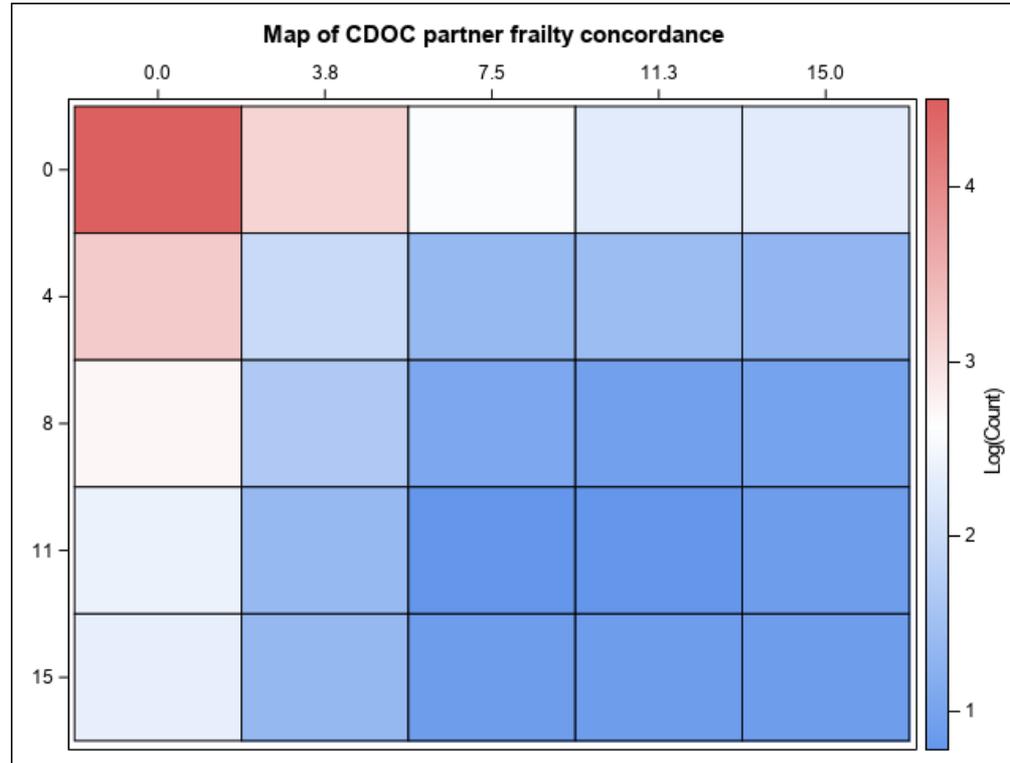
Hospitalizations by Frailty Risk and Sex

Results II



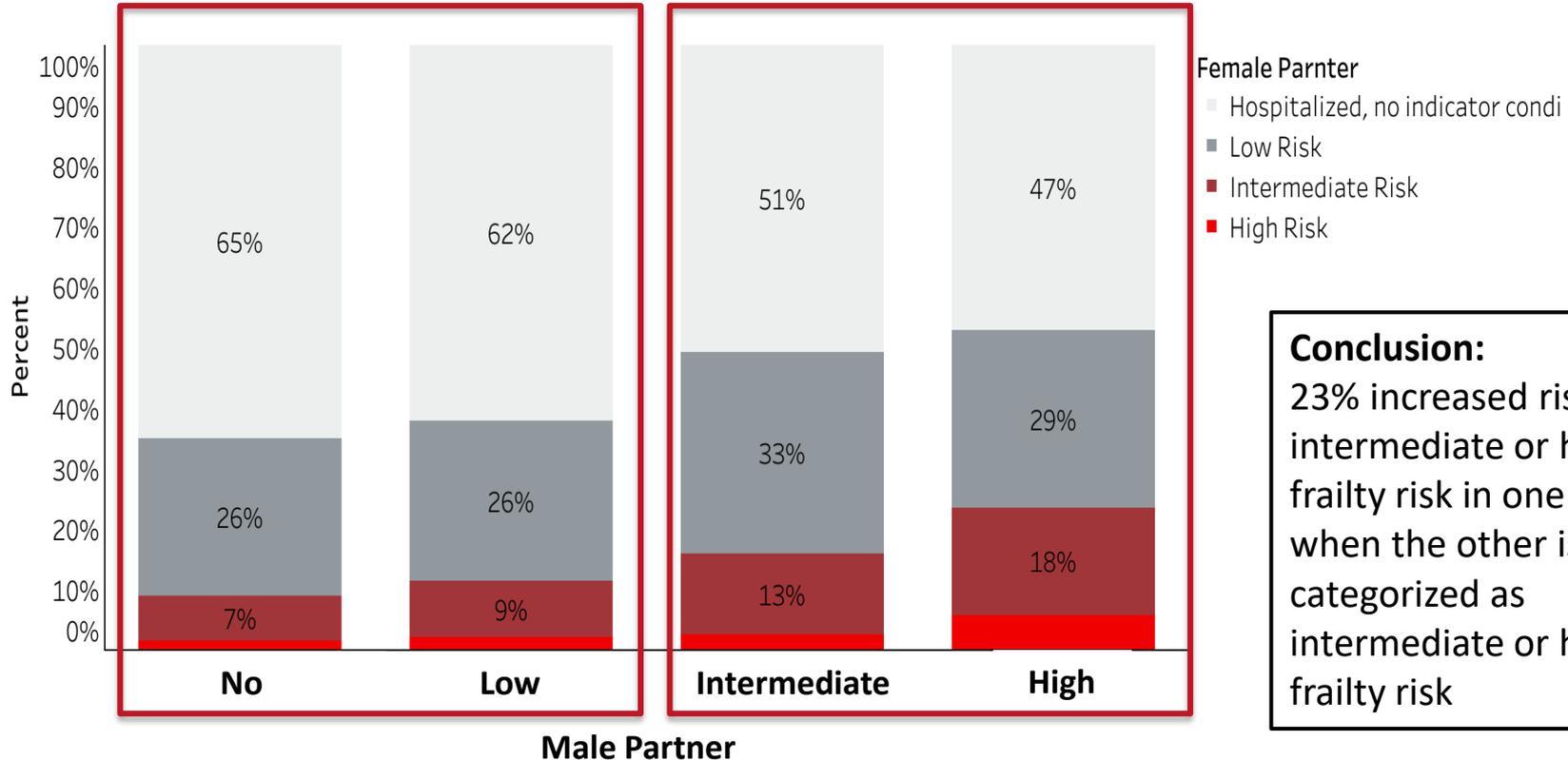
Frailty Risk Score Concordance

Results III



Frailty Risk Categories Concordance

Result IV



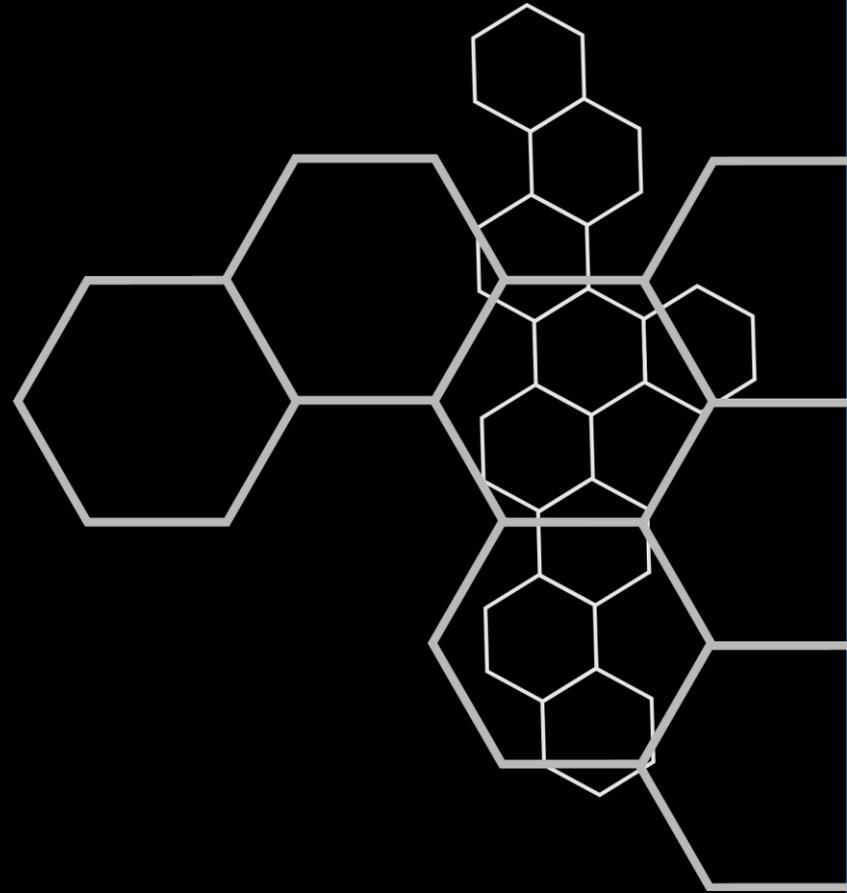
Conclusion:

23% increased risk of intermediate or high frailty risk in one partner when the other is also categorized as intermediate or high frailty risk

Next steps

- **Validation of frailty risk algorithms**
 - Different theories on measurement of frailty risk
- **Expand algorithms beyond hospital-based administrative data**
 - Include disease specific and other health care services
- **Employ longitudinal study design**
 - Co-evolution of frailty in couples over time

Policy Implications



Summary

- **Majority of community-dwelling older couples (CDOC) were not hospitalized in a two-year period**
- **Female spouses are younger and have less hospitalization than males' spouses within each frailty risk category**
- **Frailty risk categories are more informative than frailty risk scores in quantifying concordance among CDOC**
- **If one partner has frailty, their partner is more likely to have frailty**

Policy Implications

- **Aging in place, together, is important for many older couples**
 - Without proper supports health of a sicker spouse can have negative impacts on health of the other spouse
- **Impact on frailty has important implications for non-frail spouses**
 - Provides a window of opportunity to intervene
- **More research is needed to understand the dynamic over time**
 - Especially on factors that prevent/mitigate negative health outcomes

Thank you!

Study supported by

