

# PROMOTING FEMALE SEXUAL WELL-BEING THROUGH RESEARCH & EDUCATION

## Postpartum Patients

### Sexual-Wellbeing in the Postpartum Period

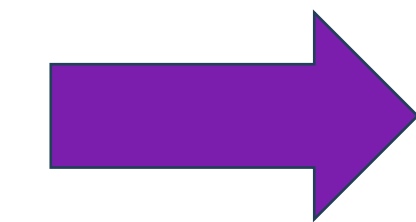
During the postpartum period, **decreases in sexual frequency, desire, and satisfaction are typical**. Many individuals report feeling **unprepared for these changes** and, thus, can experience **significant distress** and a strong desire to “get back to normal.” **Current clinical and research approaches** that equate these related, but distinct, outcomes (e.g., levels of desire) with sexual well-being can **reinforce distress**.

“Sex is sex...that can wait...I just want to enjoy moments with my kids”  
 15 months postpartum, multiparous individual

### Where We Started

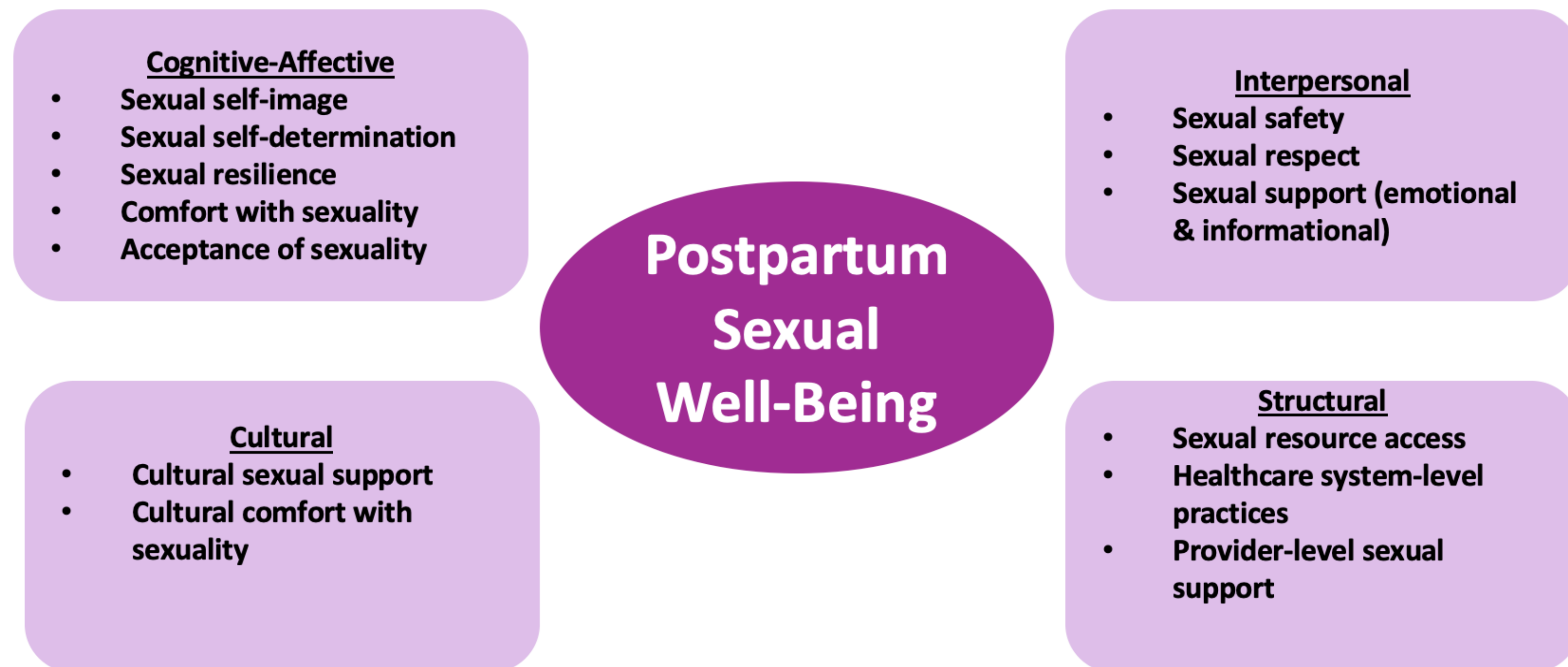
#### Scoping Review of Intervention Studies

- N = 12 studies evaluated the impacts of psychosocial interventions on sexual outcomes
- Revealed a need for a conceptual model of postpartum sexual well-being



#### Qualitative Synthesis of Literature

- N = 38 studies focused on understanding postpartum sexual well-being across cultures
- Informed a comprehensive and person-centered conceptual model (see below)



### Refining the Model

- Six (out of 12-16) interviews have been conducted with individuals between 12-18 months postpartum.
- Participants have confirmed the importance of domains identified in the qualitative synthesis.
- Participants have helped shape the definitions of these domains through descriptions of their personal experiences and beliefs.

### Next Steps

- Continue conducting **qualitative interviews** until saturation is reached.
- Draft a **preliminary item pool for a measure** of sexual well-being based on the literature review and concept refinement.
- Conduct **cognitive interviews** to streamline the preliminary measure of sexual well-being.
- Analyze the measure for validity and reliability in a **quantitative study** with 250 individuals.

“You feel like part of the problem if you did bounce back, and like a failure if you didn’t”  
 17 months postpartum, primiparous individual

## Adolescent & Young Adult (AYA) Cancer Survivors

### Cancer and Sexual Health

Cancer and cancer treatments can cause a significant impact on **sexual health and well-being**. Sexual health concerns are particularly important at the **stage of life** for **AYA patients** (15-39 years old). Female AYA cancer survivors report largely unmet sexual health **education** and **support** needs.

Objective: Develop an educational intervention to improve AYA sexual health and well-being

### Framework

**Step 1:** Online review of NCI-designated cancer centers for AYA sexual health resources

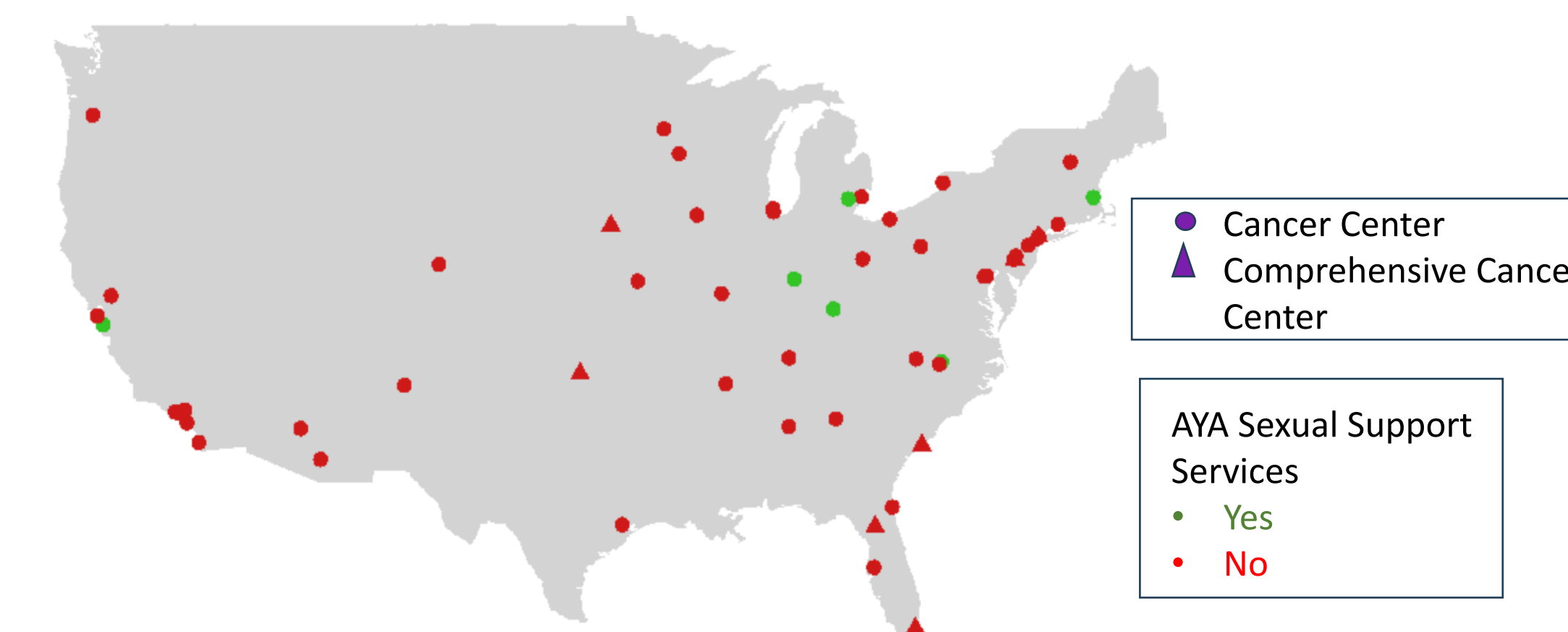
**Step 2:** Literature review of sexual health programs for cancer survivors (including AYAs)

**Step 3:** Develop potential content and stakeholder interview guide

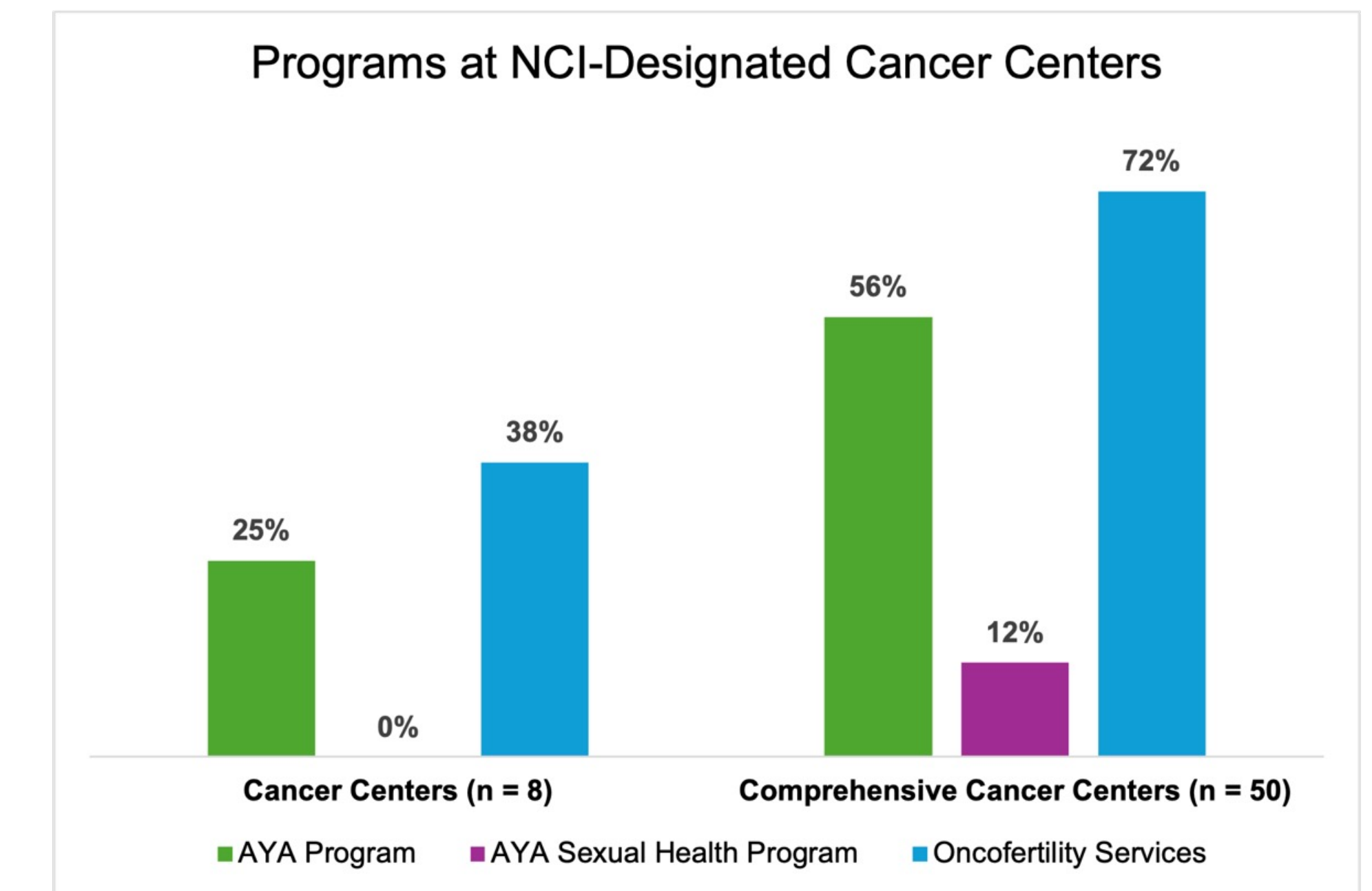
**Step 4:** Conduct stakeholder interviews and refine program content

**Step 5:** Pilot test developed program with patient stakeholders

### Distribution of AYA Sexual Health Support Services in NCI Designated Cancer Centers



<b>Cancer Center</b>	Provides care and services for cancer patients; integrates research across laboratory research, clinical research, and population-based research	<b>Comprehensive Cancer Center</b>	Same activities as cancer centers + extensive community outreach and education programs
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- **Few regions** have AYA sexual health support services, and many **vast regions of the country have no access** to cancer centers at large
- **12% of comprehensive cancer centers** had AYA sexual health support services
- **0% of cancer centers** had AYA sexual health support services

### Improving Patient Experience with Online AYA Sexual Health Resources

#### Navigability of Online Resources

- Search results **easy to find**
- Hyperlinks are not dead/broken and lead to substantive information
- **Intuitive** website navigation

#### Internal vs. External Resources

- External resources can be overwhelming
- **Comprehensive internal resources:** covering physical, mental, emotional side effects

#### Support Services

- Specific services available and **easily accessible** to patients
- Questions about sexual health are **asked by providers first**

### Next Steps

- **GOAL:** pilot test our developed program with patient stakeholders (N = 5)
- **HOW:** implement program with patients who participated in our stakeholder interviews from Step 4 to assess our intervention program