

Abstract:

Integrative Medicine Education within FM Residency at Northwestern

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Background:

Despite increasing popularity of integrative medicine modalities among patients, integrative medicine education in residency programs remains limited. In absence of a full integrative medicine (IM) curriculum, targeted resources may increase awareness of IM among both patients and providers. The purpose of this study is to explore whether residents among all three FM programs at Northwestern McGaw feel comfortable in recommending alternative therapies to patients, and to assess whether available materials highlighting aspects of integrative medicine for specific topics would encourage residents to make specific recommendations for patients.

Methods:

A didactics session was developed to prepare residents for patient conversations about IM and to introduce patient education handouts on common IM topics (including diet, mental health, sleep health, smoking cessation, and dietary supplements). Learning objectives for the didactics session were as follows: 1) Identify situations in which IM resources may benefit patients. 2) Summarize and synthesize information from patient handouts to address questions about IM. 3) Apply information about IM in a simulated discussion with a patient. Handouts were made available in the precepting room of the family medicine clinic at Delnor. These handouts were also put into a published google document that was shared among residents of all three programs. Google analytics was used to track the number of times the document was viewed. Resident physicians from all 3 FM residency programs were recruited to participate in the study. Resident physicians were contacted by email with information about the project and a link to participate. Prior to the didactics session on 8/24/23, a 15-item REDCap questionnaire using a Likert scale was sent to residents across all 3 programs asking about exposure, education, interest, perceived perception of benefits among other questions. Residents received another REDCap survey 4 months post-intervention on 12/21/23, to reassess the likelihood of recommending alternative therapies to patients.

Results and Conclusions:

Currently in progress. Outcomes of interest include 1) the utilization of patient handouts 2) resident satisfaction with patient handouts and 3) residents' perceived likelihood of recommending alternative therapies to patients.