

# Introduction of an Integrative Medicine Interest Group in a Family Medicine Residency Program



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## Background

- 42% of patients have used some form of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) but 40% of patients do not disclose it to their physician.<sup>1</sup>
- The Institute of Medicine recommends doctors learn about Integrative Medicine (IM) and CAM.<sup>1</sup>
- The Society of Teachers of Family Medicine recommends including IM and CAM in graduate education curriculum.<sup>2</sup>
- There are many barriers that prevent residencies from implementing the STFM CAM/IM competencies.<sup>3</sup>
- Teaching integrative medicine in residency can draw more competitive applicants and is associated with better board scores.<sup>4,5</sup>

## Integrative Medicine

Healing-oriented medicine that focuses on the whole person.<sup>5</sup>  
Addresses physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual health.<sup>5</sup>  
Engages mind, body, spirit, and community to facilitate healing.<sup>5</sup>  
Emphasizes the importance of a therapeutic relationship between the practitioner and the patient.<sup>5</sup>  
Engages the patient as an active partner in their health.<sup>5</sup>  
Integrates both conventional and complementary methods for treatment and prevention of disease.<sup>5</sup>

### References:

1. Complementary and Alternative Medicine in the United States: Institute of Medicine Report.
2. Gardiner, P., Filippelli, A. C., Lebensohn, P., & Bonakdar, R. (2013). Family Medicine Residency Program Directors Attitudes and Knowledge of Family Medicine CAM Competencies. *Explore*, 9(5), 299-307. doi:10.1016/j.explore.2013.06.002
3. Lebensohn P, Kligler B, Brooks AJ, et al. Integrative Medicine in Residency: Feasibility and Effectiveness of an Online Program. *Fam Med*. 2017;49(7):514-521.
4. Institute of Medicine 2005. Complementary and Alternative Medicine in the United States. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/11182>.
5. "Philosophy of Integrative Medicine." *Integrative Medicine*, by David Rakei, Elsevier, 2018, pp. 2–11.

## Hypothesis

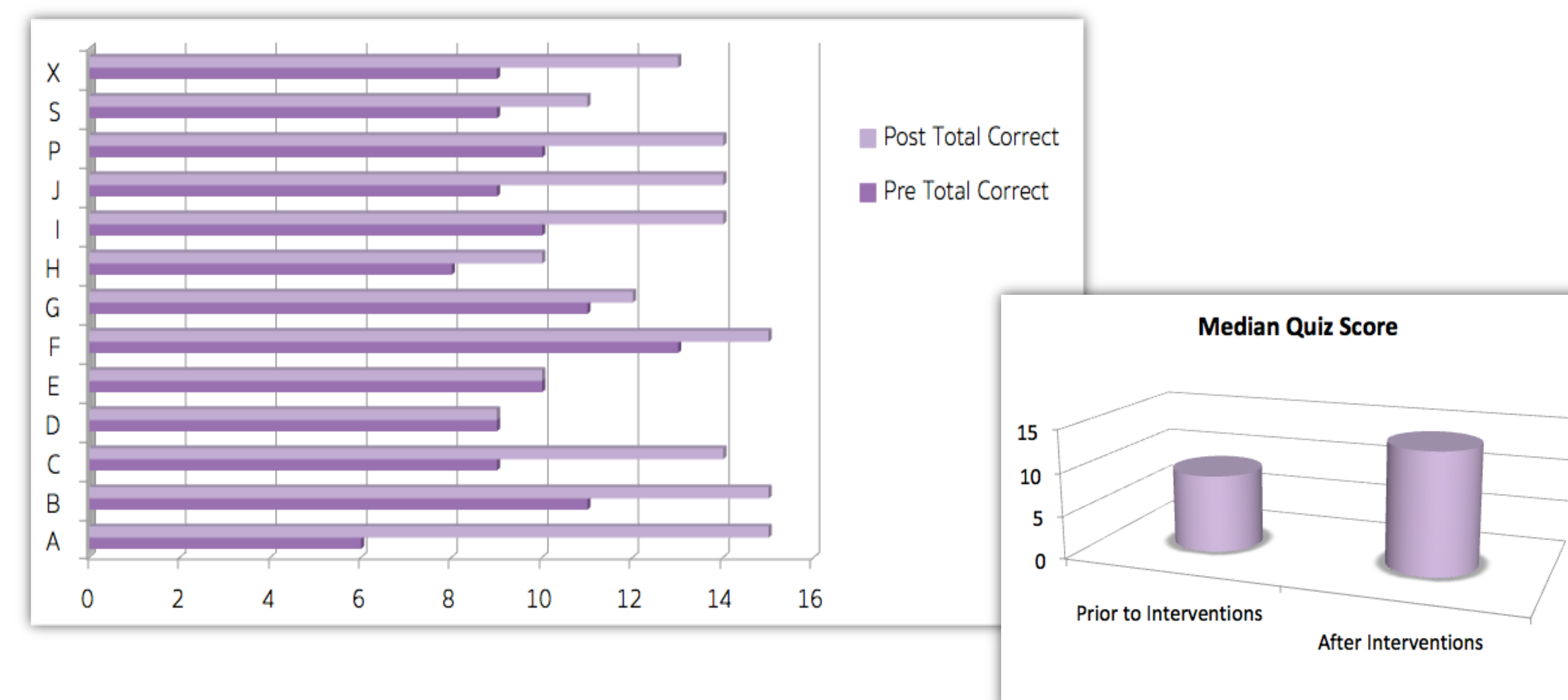
We hypothesized that the implementation of an Integrative Medicine Interest Group (IMIG) in residency would improve resident knowledge regarding various integrative medicine topics, including Acupuncture, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Ayurveda, Nutrition, and Reiki.

## Design Subject, Hypothesis, and Methods

- 24 resident physicians in a family medicine residency program were surveyed regarding their interest in participating in the IMIG.
- 11 residents who opted out completed a questionnaire to assess attitudes and beliefs about IM and reasons for not participating.
- 13 residents participated in the IMIG and completed a 15 item, knowledge-based pre-intervention test.
- Lecture series was conducted with guest lecturers from community practitioners on different healing traditions:
  - Acupuncture
  - Traditional Chinese Medicine
  - Reiki
- Lecture summaries and supplementary reading materials were provided to all participants to enhance learning.
- Participants completed a 15 item, knowledge-based post-intervention test.
- Pre- and post-intervention test scores were compared to assess changes in IM knowledge, using a McNemar test for paired data for statistical analysis.

## Resident Pre- and Post-Survey Results

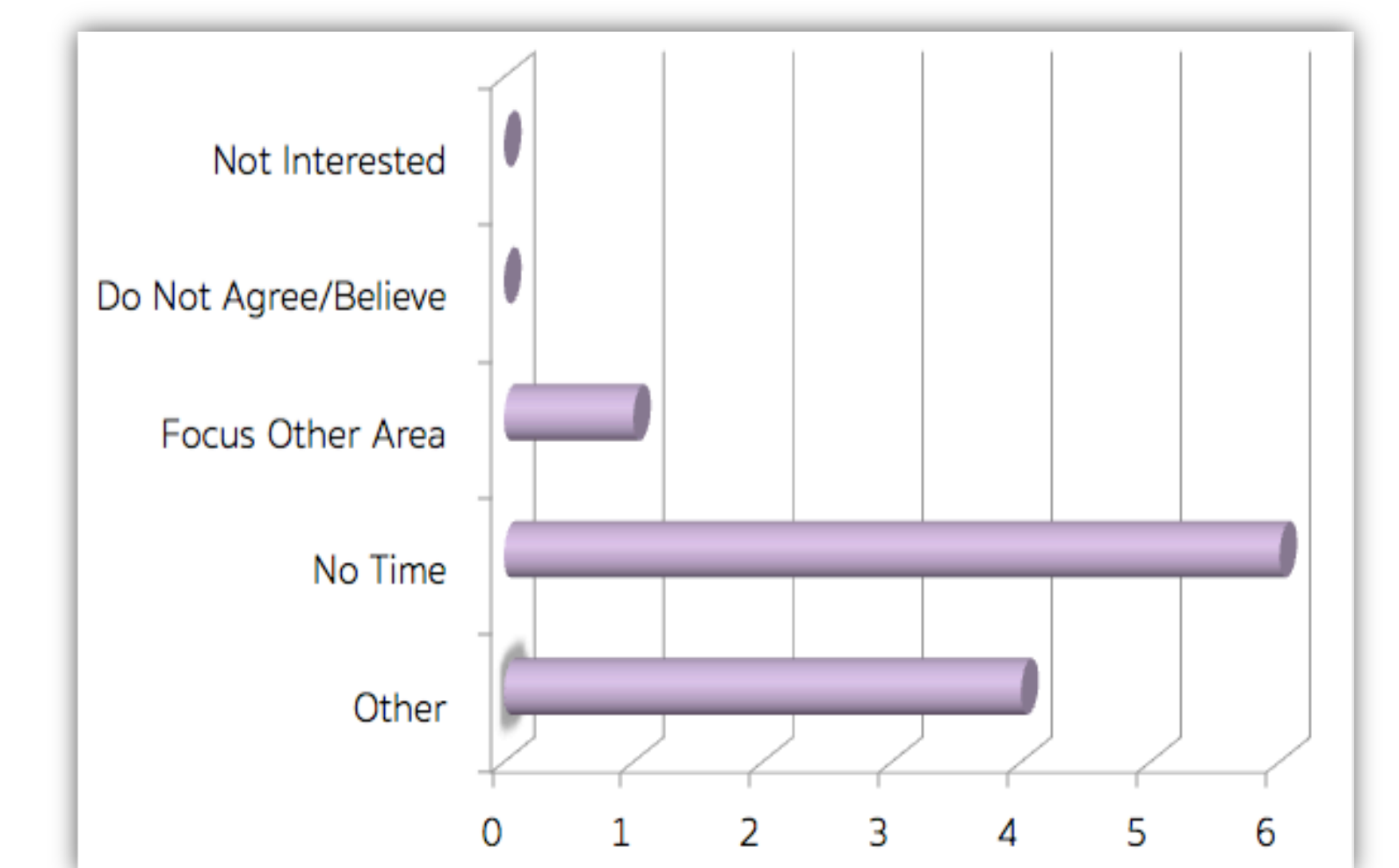
- Median quiz score increased from 9 to 14, statistically significant.
- 2 of the 15 items showed statistically significant improvements.
- Improvements were seen in 10 of the 15 survey items.
- Improvements seen in 13 of the 15 resident overall test scores.



## Non-Participatory Questionnaire Results

Some responses given by the 11 residents who opted not to participate in the IM Interest Group:

- “Too tired - Fellowship interview season”
- “Will join later”
- “In other residency tracks”
- “Unable to attend first meeting”
- “Want to spend time with family”



## Discussion

- Family Medicine residents in our program showed interest in learning principles of Integrative Medicine.
- More than half of our residents participated in the IMIG.
- Implementation of an IMIG in residency improved knowledge in participants regarding various topics in Integrative Medicine, including Acupuncture, Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Reiki.
- Non-participants indicated their main reasons for not participating were not due to lack of interest or negative attitudes regarding IM/CAM, but due to time constraints, other commitments, or desire to focus on other areas of medicine.



Widespread interest in Integrative Medicine following this intervention led to the establishment of the University of Arizona Integrative Medicine in Residency track at our program.

- Longitudinal curriculum incorporated into primary care training
- Learning objectives aligned with ACGME core competencies
- Online learning with additional off-site group activities
- Test for certification after completion of modules