

Background

- Poor nutrition is a major risk factor for mortality and chronic disease.
- Physicians face significant barriers to practicing healthy eating habits.
- Few studies have focused on improving nutrition among resident physicians despite compelling evidence that adequate nutrition plays an important role in overall wellness.
- There are significant gaps in the current framework for medical nutrition education, despite patients expecting physicians to be a source of nutrition information.
- Many physicians lack confidence in providing nutrition counseling and do not prioritize healthy nutrition in their personal lives.
- It has been shown that providers are more likely to counsel patients on health behaviors they engage in themselves.

Innovation: Evidence-Based Nutrition Curriculum

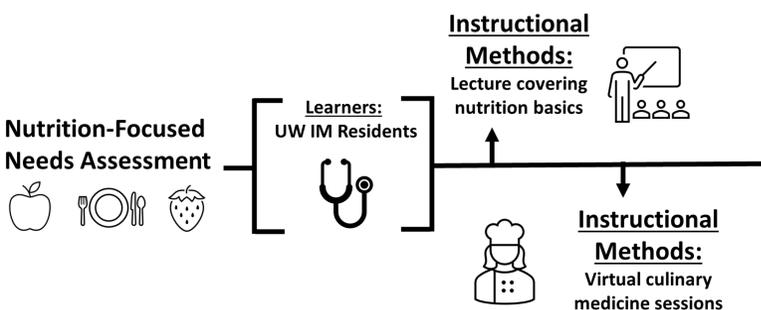


Figure 1. A nutrition-focused needs assessment survey was administered to current UW Internal Medicine (IM) residents. A nutrition curriculum was subsequently implemented within the UW IM Residency Program with teaching modalities including didactic material and virtual culinary medicine sessions.

The Current State of Nutrition Education

- Pre-intervention surveys were completed by 18 current UW IM Residents.

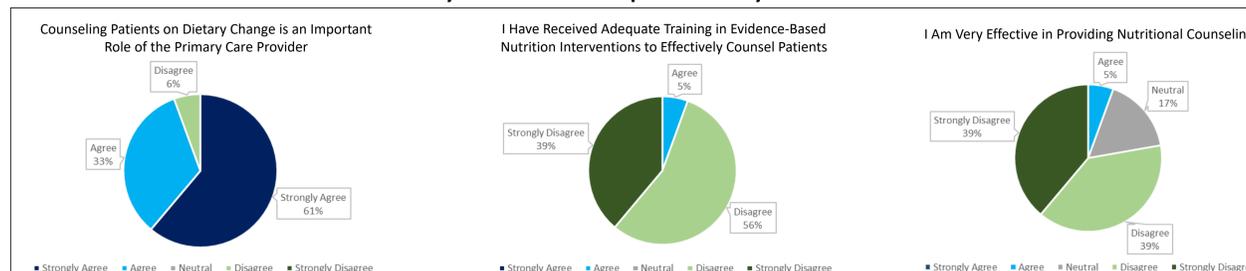


Figure 2. 95% of IM residents reported that they have not received adequate training in evidence-based nutrition interventions to allow them to effectively counsel patients despite 94% believing that this is an important role of the primary care provider. Only 5% of residents felt very effective in providing nutritional counseling to patients.

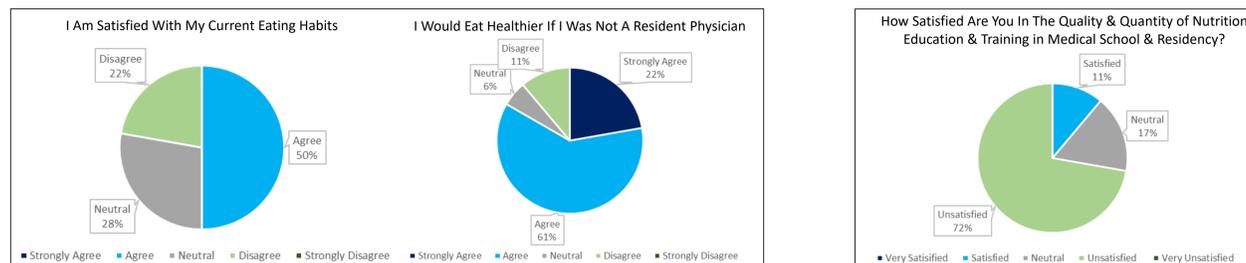


Figure 3. 50% of IM residents stated they were satisfied with their current eating habits. 83% of residents felt that they would eat healthier if they were not a resident physician. All residents universally felt that dietary habits impact their overall wellbeing.

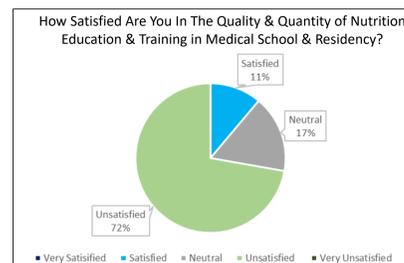


Figure 4. 72% of residents reported being unsatisfied with the quality and quantity of nutrition education in medical school and residency.

Components of the Nutrition Curriculum

Nutrition Lecture

Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate understanding of nutrition basics including micro- and macronutrients
- Understand the role of nutrition in disease prevention and management
- Understand how nutrition impacts cognitive performance and consider strategies to improve physician performance
- Develop skills and techniques to help empower patients to change their dietary habits

Virtual Cooking Sessions

Learning Objectives:

- Enhance culinary skills
- Learn how to prepare healthy meals in an efficient manner
- Understand how to read nutrition labels
- Understand components of a healthy diet and be able to discuss various popular diet trends
- Consider barriers to healthy eating and develop patient-centered problem-solving strategies for improvement

Healthy Eating Basics

- Eat a variety of foods and a rainbow of colors
- Fill at least 1/2 plate with fruits and vegetables
- Drink plenty of water
- Portion control
- Consider calorie density
- Do not overlook calories in beverages
- Eat mindfully, not mindlessly
- Meal prep and plan ahead
- Focus on whole grains. Avoid refined grains.
- Fill up with fiber
- Reduce/eliminate red and processed meats
- Avoid trans fats. Reduce saturated fats.
- Limit highly processed foods
- Limit added sugars
- Decrease sodium intake
- Commit to a lifelong habit of healthy eating and regular exercise



What's on the Menu?
Veggie Chili with Beans

Figure 5. Example of a meal prepared during a virtual culinary medicine session.

Discussion

- There remains a significant need for more emphasis on nutrition education in medical school and residency curriculums.
- Many providers feel that they lack the skills necessary to provide effective nutrition counseling to patients.
- Nutrition plays an important role in overall wellness.
- Innovative strategies are needed to help improve dietary habits among resident physicians.
- Culinary medicine allows individuals to learn how to prepare and enjoy healthy meals.

Future Directions

- Ongoing culinary medicine sessions are planned in the upcoming academic year.
- Post-intervention surveys will be administered at the end of the planned innovation to determine the effectiveness of the nutrition curriculum.
- Components of this nutrition curriculum can be disseminated across departments and training levels.

References

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