

UC San Diego

Family Medicine Research Symposium 2025

Title

Referral Characteristics of an Ambulatory Integrative Medicine Consultation Service at an Academic Health Center

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<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/862466mj>

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Publication Date

2026-09-17

Peer reviewed

Research Question

The goal of this study is to retrospectively evaluate the details of referrals to an ambulatory integrative medicine consultation service at a single tertiary academic health center. More specifically, our primary aim is to understand referral characteristics to our integrative medicine service and our secondary aim is to understand the profile of patients who are being referred and attended their first integrative medicine consultation appointment.

Data and Methods

Descriptive study of a single academic health center's integrative medicine consultation service. Our cohort comprises outpatient integrative medicine consultations at UC San Diego Health between January 2022 and January 2025, and was identified via billing records. Retrospective data was extracted from electronic health records on each consult, including referral source, diagnoses codes associated with referral, and free text provided with the consult order. We describe patient information including demographics, medical history, insurance information, details on patient complexity, number of diagnosis codes, and attendance. Time of referral and time of consult was also captured, and the difference was calculated to capture the wait time to obtaining care.

Results

Data collection is in progress. Results are pending.

Significance

To our knowledge, this is the first study to comprehensively assess the referral basis of an ambulatory integrative medicine consult service. Given the increased use of integrative medicine amongst patients in the US, notably among complex patients, it is valuable to gain a deeper understanding of how healthcare providers and organizations are utilizing this service. This insight may facilitate further interdisciplinary collaboration and coordination of care patients with complex medical conditions. Additionally, this will further enhance an understanding of patient demographics accessing integrative medicine consults.