

Integrative Therapy Use among Registered Nurses in an Acute Care Setting

Arin VanWormer, RN, PhD¹, Kelly Buchholtz, RN, MSN, MBA², & Roxanna Cordova, RN¹

¹ University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire & ² Mayo Clinic Health Systems

Background

- Alternatives are needed to help patients manage pain and discomfort in acute care settings.
- Integrative therapies (IT) involve complementary/alternative medicine practices assimilated into conventional care.
- The degree to which Registered Nurses (RNs) use IT remains unclear.

Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to characterize knowledge, barriers, and intent to use IT among RNs in an acute care setting.

Research Questions

- (1) How frequently do acute care RNs use IT techniques?
- (2) What barriers exist when implementing IT in clinical settings?
- (3) RNs intend to use IT in future patient care?

Methods

- A cross-sectional online survey was conducted with RNs in one western Wisconsin hospital.
- Survey results captured IT use, beliefs, and attitudes, as well as sociodemographic and training characteristics.

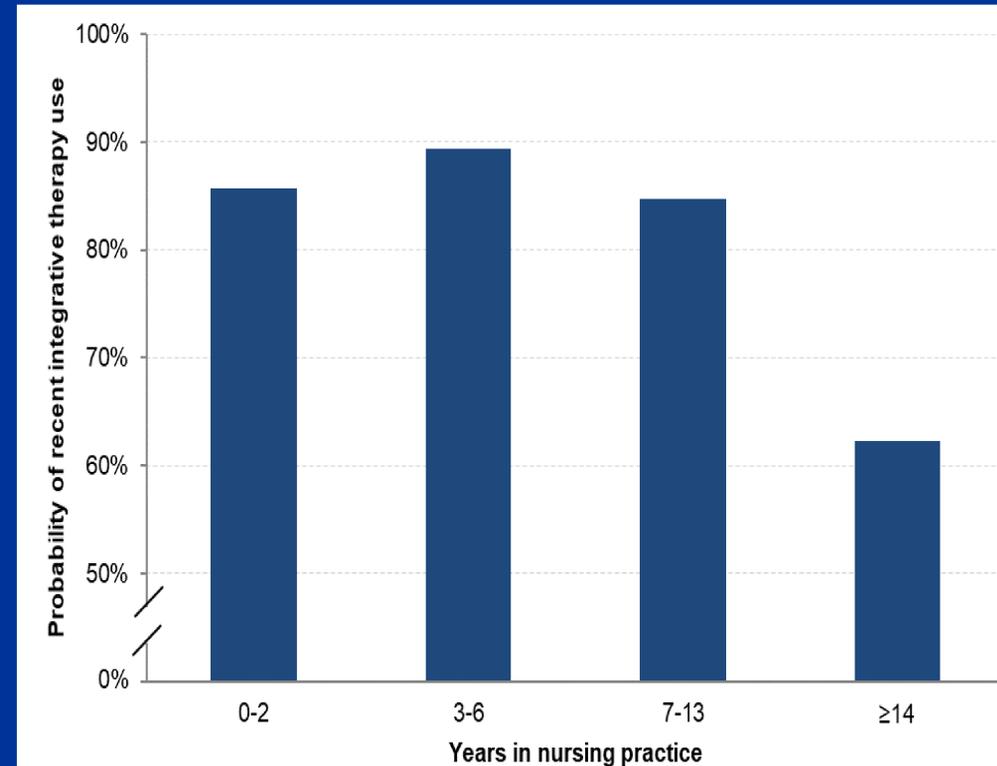
Sample

Age	32 (Median)
Gender	90% Female 10% Male
Race	95% White 5% Male
Degree	37% Associates 57% Bachelors 6% Graduate

Findings

- There were 164 respondents from 463 invited RNs (35% response rate).
- In the past six months, 79% reported use of IT with their patients.
- The most common IT practices were relaxed breathing, music therapy, essential oils, massage, and aromatherapy.
- Years of experience influenced IT use, but other factors such as age, gender, or nursing degree type had limited influence on IT use.
- Overall, the use of IT was generally high in this sample of hospital RNs, particularly among those trained more recently.

Integrative Therapy use by Years in Nursing Practice



Conclusions

- Use of Integrative Therapies was generally high in this sample of hospital RNs.
- RNs who were clinically trained at least 14 years ago, however, were less likely to use IT.
- Follow-up analysis are being conducted to identify barriers that exist for IT implementation in clinical settings.
- Future research is needed to compare the effectiveness of RN-led IT interventions in clinical settings.

Acknowledgments

This research was supported by the Vicki Lord Larson Collaborative Grant (Office of Research and Sponsored Programs).