

Meeting M i n u t e s
Complementary and Integrative Medicine MIG
July 23, 2025

A videoconference meeting of the Complementary and Integrative Medicine MIG was held on July 23, 2025, beginning at 8:00 pm.

Present: Dr. Esther Konigsberg, Dr. Farah Tabassum, Dr. Fred Hui, Dr. Adrienne Junek

Regrets: Dr. Richard Nahas, Dr. Elliot Jacobson

By Invitation:

OMA Staff: Alex Skublics

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

1. Update: Survey results. Review
2. Fred Hui – discussion re: CPSO
3. Dr. Adrienne Junek update: re. fellowship in Integrative Medicine
4. Dr. Elliot Jacobson update re: proposal to the University of Toronto for a fellowship in Integrative Medicine
5. Dr. Kishore Singh proposal re: Ayurveda
6. Any other business.

Minutes for Approval, Meeting of May 15, 2025

Review Tasks for executives:

1. Dr. Elliot Jacobson (or Dr. Esther Konigsberg) to reach out to Dr. Richard Nahas regarding questions in the survey
2. Dr. Adrienne Junek and Dr. Esther Konigsberg to schedule a time together to discuss the development of the fellowship
3. Dr. Esther Konigsberg to send an email to connect Dr. Elliot Jacobson with Dr. Angela Cheung

4. Dr. Elliot Jacobson to write a piece about ticks and lime disease for the Spring Newsletter
5. Dr. Farah Tabassum to write a short blurb about the Centre of Effective Practice modules for the Spring Newsletter
6. Dr. Esther Konigsberg to write about the opportunity for MIG members to contribute by having lecture meetings for the CIM MIG

-The meeting minutes for February 27, 2025, were approved by the team

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg requested that the group begin by going over the survey

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg queried the team about amending the question “please rate the following in terms of significance to barriers to your practice”

-Dr. Adrienne Junek approved the options for this question

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson suggested altering the answer related to barriers to opportunities

-Dr. Richard Nahas clarified the difference between a lack of opportunity versus being uncertain of what to choose amongst a large variety of options

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson agreed that keeping this answer about uncertainty was a good idea

-Dr. Farah Tabassum questioned if the survey should include asking about training in family medicine or specialty and how it could relate to their interest in an Integrative Medicine (IM) fellowship

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg confirmed that CCFP is not interested in another focused practice designation, and that the royal college Certificate of Added Competence (CAC) would be available to any physician

-Dr. Farah Tabassum mentioned that some people may be unaware that the IM fellowships and CAC would be open to family medicine

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg said they plan to make it clear

-Dr. Adrienne Junek added a question to the survey asking about physician certification (CCFP or RCPSC) and the team approved.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked whether the question on interest in a Canadian Fellowship should clarify that it is available to everyone and not just specific specialties

-Dr. Adrienne Junek agreed we should make this clear

-Dr. Richard Nahas suggested we preface the question with some preamble that would include this information

-Dr. Adrienne Junek suggested some preamble and added it to this question

-Dr. Farah Tabassum asked whether the next question should be clearer about the difference between a fellowship and a certificate of added competence.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek stated that the certificate is based on an exam while the fellowship is the training program to take the exam, however people with extensive experience may be qualified without the fellowship

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg confirmed that the exam may not be necessary if your practical experience can be proven to the college

-Dr. Richard Nahas asked how the criteria would be determined
-Dr. Esther Konigsberg stated that a committee would be put together by the Royal College to develop the criteria

-Dr. Farah Tabassum asked about funding options for the fellows/residents
-Dr. Adrienne Junek said she was unsure of who to approach and suggested part time training models to allow fellows to maintain clinical work while paying privately for modules
-Dr. Esther Konigsberg suggested Dr. Adrienne Junek reach out to any group who have previously secured funding for this type of project to inquire.
-Dr. Adrienne Junek recalled a hematology group who created a fellowship she could ask

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg returned to the survey to address the question “Do you see publicly funded, privately funded, or a mix of both?” and wondered what the purpose of the question way.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek stated the question was just to gather general information and Dr. Richard Nahas agreed but was open to feedback.
-The team decided to leave the question as it is

-Dr. Richard Nahas suggested trimming the large paragraph that prefaced the following question and questioned the relevance and appropriateness of asking about legal issues

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg stated they had originally added that paragraph as they believed the background information was required

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson stated that most physicians are unfamiliar with the legal framework

-Dr. Richard Nahas said that he is in contact with CMPA lawyers who are open to providing a webinar or lecture on this topic

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson and Dr. Esther Konigsberg agreed that a webinar/lecture would be a good idea

-Dr. Farah Tabassum brought up that she was unaware of the RHPA and how it relates to integrative medicine and thinks the average physician would also have trouble answering this question

-Dr. Adrienne Junek agreed and suggested that this question be asked after there is a lecture on the RHPA lecture

-Dr. Fred Hui emphasized that this is important to ask about as soon as possible

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg acknowledged the prior experiences that Dr. Fred Hui and Dr. Richard Nahas have had with the CPSO but also noted others have had positive experiences

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg suggested altering the question order to start with “have you ever been investigated...?” to assess the frequency of this issue

-Dr. Fred Hui and Dr. Adrienne Junek agreed with this change

-Dr. Richard Nahas stated the issue is not frequency but the enabling legal framework – broad definitions and lack of appeal processes that may allow of power misuse

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg proposed including Dr. Richard Nahas’ point as part of the preamble

-Dr. Farah Tabassum suggested the survey should assess members’ familiarity with RHPA and CPSO due to the complexity of it

-Dr. Fred Hui and Dr. Adrienne Junek agree, citing the RHPA document as 90 pages

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg proposed two additional questions to ask about familiarity with the RHPA and one on interest in attending a webinar

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg suggested the final question to be “DO you have any suggestions for what the CIM MIG can do to support integrative medicine in Ontario”

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson agreed that it is a good closing question

-The team agreed the survey was ready to be distributed

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg discussed the newsletter

-Dr. Farah Tabassum had submitted her newsletter article

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson said he is finishing up his article on tics and will submit it to her

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg said she is going to finalize her portion to offer for general members to present webinars on IM topics

-Dr. Farah Tabassum suggested adding information for the Orthomolecular conference in September where Dr. Juneke will be presenting.

-Dr. Richard Nahas mentioned he is doing a workshop on July 11

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked Dr. Adrienne Juneke and Dr. Richard Nahas to submit the information so it can be added to the newsletter

New Business

-The meeting minutes for May 15, 2025, were approved by the team

1. Update: Survey results. Review

- Dr. Esther Konigsberg shared survey results for discussion.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum said that for question one (regarding clinical practice), approximately 60% were full-time and 40% were part time.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg and Dr. Farah Tabassum agreed that 16 responses were somewhat insufficient
- Dr. Adrienne Juneke suggested resending the survey.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg acknowledged reminders had been sent but agreed another round could be beneficial.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said question 2 indicated most respondents were family medicine practitioners.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum discussed results from question 3 about the role of Integrative Medicine (IM) in practice:
 - o 2 respondents identified as Integrative MDs.
 - o 3 said they use or prescribe integrative approaches with most patients.
 - o 2 used integrative approaches with some patients.
 - o 5 said they occasionally used an integrative approach.
 - o 4 said they did not prescribe or use IM in their practice.
 - o No one selected "skeptical but curious."
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg & Dr. Adrienne Juneke agreed results were unsurprising and evenly distributed.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 4 about barriers to improving integrative practice:
 - o Lack of applicable knowledge was neutral.

- Time to pursue continuing education was significant,
 - Uncertainty about accessing continuing education was neutral.
 - Lack of mentorship or clinical guidance was neutral,
 - Cost of continuing education was divided.
 - Financial and practice management concerns were slightly more significant.
 - Risk of CPSO regulatory discipline was very significant.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum said this demonstrated concern around CPSO risk.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg and Dr. Adrienne Juneke agreed.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 5, regarding interest in a 2-year clinical fellowship.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 6 regarding the certificate of added competence:
 - Dr. Esther Konigsberg said 37% of respondents were interested.
 - Dr. Adrienne Juneke, Dr. Esther Konigsberg, and Dr. Farah Tabassum compared this to the previous question.
 - Dr. Farah Tabassum noted that the lower effort for certification (compared to a full 2-year fellowship) might explain the higher interest.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 7: “To what extent would you support Ministry of Health funding for IM?”
 - Dr. Esther Konigsberg said 80% were supportive of such programs.
 - Dr. Farah Tabassum said this was unsurprising—many physicians are interested but face affordability barriers.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 8: “Have you been investigated by CPSO?”
 - Dr. Esther Konigsberg said 3 answered yes, 13 answered no.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 9: “Was the investigation related to IM?”
 - 1 said yes, 1 said partly, 2 said no, and 9 marked n/a.
 - Dr. Farah Tabassum said these responses did not provide clear insight, likely due to the small sample size.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 10 asked about familiarity with RHPA.
 - Dr. Esther Konigsberg said most respondents were very unfamiliar, followed by somewhat unfamiliar, with only a few being familiar.
 - Dr. Farah Tabassum said this stood out as a key concern.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 11 which asked if participants were interested in a webinar explaining the RHPA.
 - Dr. Farah Tabassum said responses were mixed indicating partial interest.
- Dr. Farah read question 12 which asked for suggestions on how CIM MIG could better support IM in Ontario:
 - One respondent strongly supported collaboration with the College to create a fellowship.
 - Another suggested clarification around CPSO legal case studies.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum agreed about importance of legal case studies, saying there was usually limited access to reliable information
- Dr. Adrienne Juneke said CPSO dialogues contained some relevant information but were often vague
- Dr. Adrienne Juneke also added it would be helpful if the College increased transparency in its review process
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked whether any lawyers had presented on risk mitigation in the past.

- Dr. Fred Hui confirmed Lisa Constantine had spoken at an in-person event.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said it might be worthwhile to have her speak again, but acknowledged lawyers usually charge a fee.
- Dr. Adrienne Junek agreed and added it could be recorded and paid for using MIG funding.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg suggested reaching out to CMPA to see if anyone would be interested in speaking.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum wondered if any statistics existed on complaints being more commonly patient-initiated or triggered by colleagues.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said obtaining those statistics would be difficult but very informative.
- Dr. Fred Hui suggested asking CMPA if they provide talks on legal issues and proper charting, especially in IM.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said she was willing to do a cold call to the CMPA to inquire – she also asked whether they should reach out to lawyers who have defended CIM practitioners too.
- Dr. Fred Hui recommended prioritizing CMPA, since it handles medical communication broadly
- Dr. Adrienne Junek and Dr. Farah Tabassum agreed and said CMPA would be the first choice.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked if it would be helpful to request a CMPA lawyer to give a webinar on keeping integrative practices compliant and safe.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum and Dr. Fred Hui agreed.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said it was interesting that many non-IM physicians answered the survey, suggesting broader interest.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum suggested resending the survey in October or November.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg agreed

2. Fred Hui – discussion re: CPSO

- Dr. Fred Hui clarified his concerns stemmed from witnessing numerous senior alternative medicine physicians resign or suffer disciplinary action.
- He proposed someone from the group approach Dr. Nancy Whitmore to request a meeting to express concerns
- Dr. Farah Tabassum questioned the specific goal of meeting with Dr. Whitmore to clarify what we're asking for.
- Dr. Adrienne Junek agreed
- Dr. Fred Hui said the meeting would be to promote understanding and he hopes Dr. Whitmore could acknowledge the group's perspective.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg responded that she wouldn't want to lead the initiative, as her recent experiences with CPSO suggested a shift toward more reasonable outcomes.
- Dr. Fred Hui suggested Dr. Elliot Jacobson might be an appropriate representative, especially given his involvement in reviewing his (Dr. Fred Hui's) file

- Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked whether the group to meet with her or it would be a one on one.
- Dr. Fred Hui replied either option was acceptable, the first step was simply to request an audience.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum asked whether integrative medicine practices were included in CPSO's practice improvement or QI reviews.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said she had undergone a QI review based and passed without issue.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum asked whether CPSO ensured integrative physicians were evaluated by true peers, or whether assignments were random.
- Dr. Fred Hui noted that the system didn't always provide true peers.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg stated the CPSO attempts to find appropriate peers, though it isn't always successful.

3. Dr. Adrienne Junek update: re. fellowship in Integrative Medicine

- Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked about the fellowship in Integrative Medicine
- Dr. Adrienne Junek said she had been developing the presentation and wanted to discuss the draft with Dr. Esther Konigsberg. She was also open to group feedback.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said she was open to reviewing it personally and that they could arrange a personal meeting before the next executive meeting
- Dr. Fred Hui and Dr. Farah Tabassum agreed to review the draft during the next meeting.
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4. Dr. Elliot Jacobson update re: proposal to the University of Toronto for a fellowship in Integrative Medicine

- Not discussed

5. Dr. Kishore Singh proposal re: Ayurveda

- Dr. Esther Konigsberg mentioned that a physician named Dr. Kishore Sing expressed interest in forming a medical interest group focused on Ayurveda and he wanted to present a proposal at an upcoming meeting.
- Dr. Fred Hui questioned how many physicians in Ontario currently practice Ayurvedic medicine, suggesting it may not be enough to justify a formal subgroup.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said it would be up to Dr. Kishore Sing to provide the information. She suggested he be invited to the next meeting
- Dr. Farah Tabassum, Dr. Adrienne Junek, and Dr. Fred Hui agreed

6. Any other business.

Tasks for executives:

- Dr. Esther Konigberg to contact the CMPA regarding talks on legal issues
- Dr. Adrienne Junek to complete her draft presentation for IM fellowship and arrange a meeting with Dr. Esther Konigsberg to review
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg to invite Dr. Kishore Singh to the next meeting
- Dr. Fred Hui to discuss with Dr. Elliot Jacobson regarding a meeting with Dr. Nancy Whitmore

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, September 18, 2025

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm