

Meeting M i n u t e s
Complementary and Integrative Medicine MIG
September 18, 2025

A videoconference meeting of the Complementary and Integrative Medicine MIG was held on September 18, 2025, beginning at 8:00 pm.

Present: Dr. Esther Konigsberg, Dr. Adrienne Junek, Dr. Elliot Jacobson

Regrets: Dr. Farah Tabassum, Dr. Richard Nahas, Dr. Fred Hui

By Invitation: Dr. Kishore Singh

OMA Staff: Alex Skublics

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

1. Follow up tasks from last meeting:
 - Dr. Esther Konigsberg 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
2. Dr. Elliot Jacobson update re: proposal to the University of Toronto for a fellowship in Integrative Medicine
3. Fall Newsletter
4. Dr. Kishore Singh proposal re: Ayurveda
5. Any other business.

Minutes for Approval, Meeting of July 23, 2025

-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 Junek 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 Junek 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.
 - o Time to pursue continuing education was significant,
 - o Uncertainty about accessing continuing education was neutral.
 - o Lack of mentorship or clinical guidance was neutral,
 - o Cost of continuing education was divided.
 - o Financial and practice management concerns were slightly more significant.
 - o Risk of CPSO regulatory discipline was very significant.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum said this demonstrated concern around CPSO risk.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg and Dr. Adrienne Junek 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:
 - o Dr. Esther Konigsberg said 37% of respondents were interested.
 - o Dr. Adrienne Junek, Dr. Esther Konigsberg, and Dr. Farah Tabassum compared this to the previous question.
 - o 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?"
 - o Dr. Esther Konigsberg said 80% were supportive of such programs.
 - o 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?"
 - o Dr. Esther Konigsberg said 3 answered yes, 13 answered no.
- Dr. Farah Tabassum read question 9: "Was the investigation related to IM?"
 - o 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 Junek said CPSO dialogues contained some relevant information but were often vague
- Dr. Adrienne Junek 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.

New Business

1. Follow up tasks from last meeting:
 - Dr. Esther Konigsberg 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
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said she had spoken to a health lawyer, Elyse Sunshine, about a Regulatory Landmines and Integrative Medicine session and that it emphasized practical risks in daily practice such as billing, informed consent, and advertising (Dr Konigsberg had communicated with the CMPA and they do not give talks on CAM policy and RHPA reform).
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said she tried to represent Dr. Richard Nahas and Dr. Fred Hui's concerns about RHPA in that conversation, but the lawyer felt discussing RHPA reform was not practical.
- Dr. Elliot Jacobson said RHPA reform is a massive overhaul and instead supported a practical session for day-to-day guidance and said such a talk might empower clinicians who are uncertain how to integrate IM into daily practice.
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg said she can follow up with the lawyer, propose an evening virtual talk in late November, and use OMA Connect and email to promote it. OMA can sign the participants up and provide the platform for the video conference. The lawyer's fee needs to be determined,
- Dr. Adrienne Junek questioned whether this could be framed as the group's AGM (Annual General Meeting).
- Dr. Esther Konigsberg agreed this talk could be like that and proposed a 7:00 PM start time.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said she had made a fellowship proposal and is now networking with vice-deans to explore how to frame it with respect to the education structure.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said she recently discovered the University of Ottawa Fellowship in Medical Simulation, which fits the desired model for practicing physicians, part-time, and tuition-based at around \$11,000.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said she is considering whether, if Ottawa proves difficult, to partner directly with the University of Arizona.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek stated she plans to connect with the Canadian Academic Consortium for Integrative Healthcare Education (CACIHE) to get support on objectives and exam standards.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg said the CACIHE objectives are outdated, and she can resend the newly revised competencies which were, while U.S.-centric, reviewed for international relevance and can be adapted to Canadian context.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said she will also reach out to Dr. Adam Gavsie for support since he is affiliated with the University of Arizona.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked Dr. Elliot Jacobson whether Dr. Fred Hui had reached out to him to discuss his desire to contact Nancy Whitmore.

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson said he hadn't heard from Dr. Fred Hui and wasn't updated on his process.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg said it's best left to Dr. Fred Hui to decide if he wants to approach Dr. Elliot Jacobson to discuss further advocacy.

2. Dr. Elliot Jacobson update re: proposal to the University of Toronto for a fellowship in Integrative Medicine

-this was not discussed during the meeting

3. Fall Newsletter

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked if an article on Low Dose Naltrexone (LDN) had been published in the past.

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson said it may have been included with his Vitamin D article in the spring newsletter.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said she may have written about LDN early on but doesn't recall.

-Dr. Elliot Jacobson said the Canadian Lyme Foundation is running the Lyme conference in Toronto on November 7–8 or 8–9.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked Dr. Elliot Jacobson to send her the event info to distribute

4. Dr. Kishore Singh proposal re: Ayurveda

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg welcomed Dr. Kishore Singh, and the team introduced themselves.

-Dr. Kishore Singh said he is a family physician in Burlington who practices Ayurveda along with his wife and that his goal is to integrate Ayurveda with Western medicine as a complementary, preventive approach.

-Dr. Kishore Singh said Ayurveda has gained patient interest post-COVID due to emphasis on natural healing and that other countries have successfully integrated it.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked what Dr. Kishore Singh hoped to gain from connecting with the group.

-Dr. Kishore Singh said he seeks exposure and inclusion of Ayurveda in the scope of complementary and integrative medicine.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said the fellowship curriculum includes Ayurveda

-Dr. Kishore Singh said that he and his wife had sent a letter regarding an article that appeared in the Canadian Living Magazine on Ayurveda

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg asked whether the article in Canadian Living Magazine could be repurposed for the newsletter.

-Dr. Kishore Singh said yes, and they would revise it for a physician audience and send it in.

-Dr. Kishore Singh said his wife has written to over 20 insurance companies, with only one response so far that was negative.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg said insurance coverage would require Ayurveda to be recognized as a regulated health profession by Ontario and stated the only applicable coverage at present is through Health Spending Accounts.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek asked about whether they had engaged stakeholders or consultants when approaching insurers.

-Dr. Kishore Singh said no and that they had contacted insurance companies directly

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said the group needs a strategy and messaging framework to appeal to insurers and proposed adding this as an agenda item for the next meeting.

-Dr. Esther Konigsberg agreed and said this is something that could be researched before the next meeting.

5. Any other business.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek said she is thinking about the future of medical education and how AI like ChatGPT may reshape learning.

-Dr. Adrienne Junek continued to say if well-structured objectives and AI tools are used, it may reduce costs for institutions as well change how integrative medicine is taught in the future.

Tasks for executives:

- Dr. Konigsberg to organize CMPA webinar and setup invitations and promotional emails via OMA connect
- Dr. Adrienne Junek to connect with University of Ottawa, CACIHE Consortium, and Dr. Adam Gavsie to further explore the implementation of the fellowship program
- Dr. Elliot Jacobson to email the Lyme conference details to Dr. Esther Konigsberg
- Dr. Kishore Singh to revise and submit Ayurveda article for the upcoming newsletter
- Dr. Junek to provide an article on LDN for the newsletter
- Executives to research framework for communicating with insurers regarding Ayurveda

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 29, 2025, at 8:00 pm

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm