



The Introduction of Pain Medicine Education During the Preclinical Years

Benjamin D. Mirman, MD¹, Amir Taree, MD¹, Michael Yakobi-Shvili, MD¹, Daniel Kanzer, MD¹, Mourad Shehebar, MD¹

¹ Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY



Introduction

- Medical student exposure to pain medicine, while differing per institution, is ubiquitously minimal [1, 2].
- Less than 4% of medical schools offer any formal, mandatory curriculum for pain medicine. Only 16.3% offer an optional elective [1].

Here, we describe the successful implementation of a semester-long pain medicine course at our institution, reviewing the curriculum, pre- and post-course survey data, and future directions for the course.

Methods

- An exemption was granted by the Icahn School of Medicine Institutional Review Board
- A semester-long optional course was created for 1st and 2nd year preclinical medical students with a curriculum of various guest lecturers and workshops led by multidisciplinary pain medicine specialists
- Topics included “what is pain medicine?”, pain medicine basic procedures, neuromodulation, research, ultrasound workshop, and fluoroscopy suites tour
- Pre- and post-course surveys were sent to all participating students to assess understanding of and exposure to pain medicine (n = 11)
- Surveys composed of Likert scale questions (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) as well as open text boxes

Results

- All eleven students involved in group completed pre- and post-course surveys
- Notably, 63.6% (7/11) of students reported that they were unaware of interventional pain management as a subspecialty before taking the course

Figure 1. First and second year medical students' familiarity with pain medicine before and after the introductory pain medicine course at The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

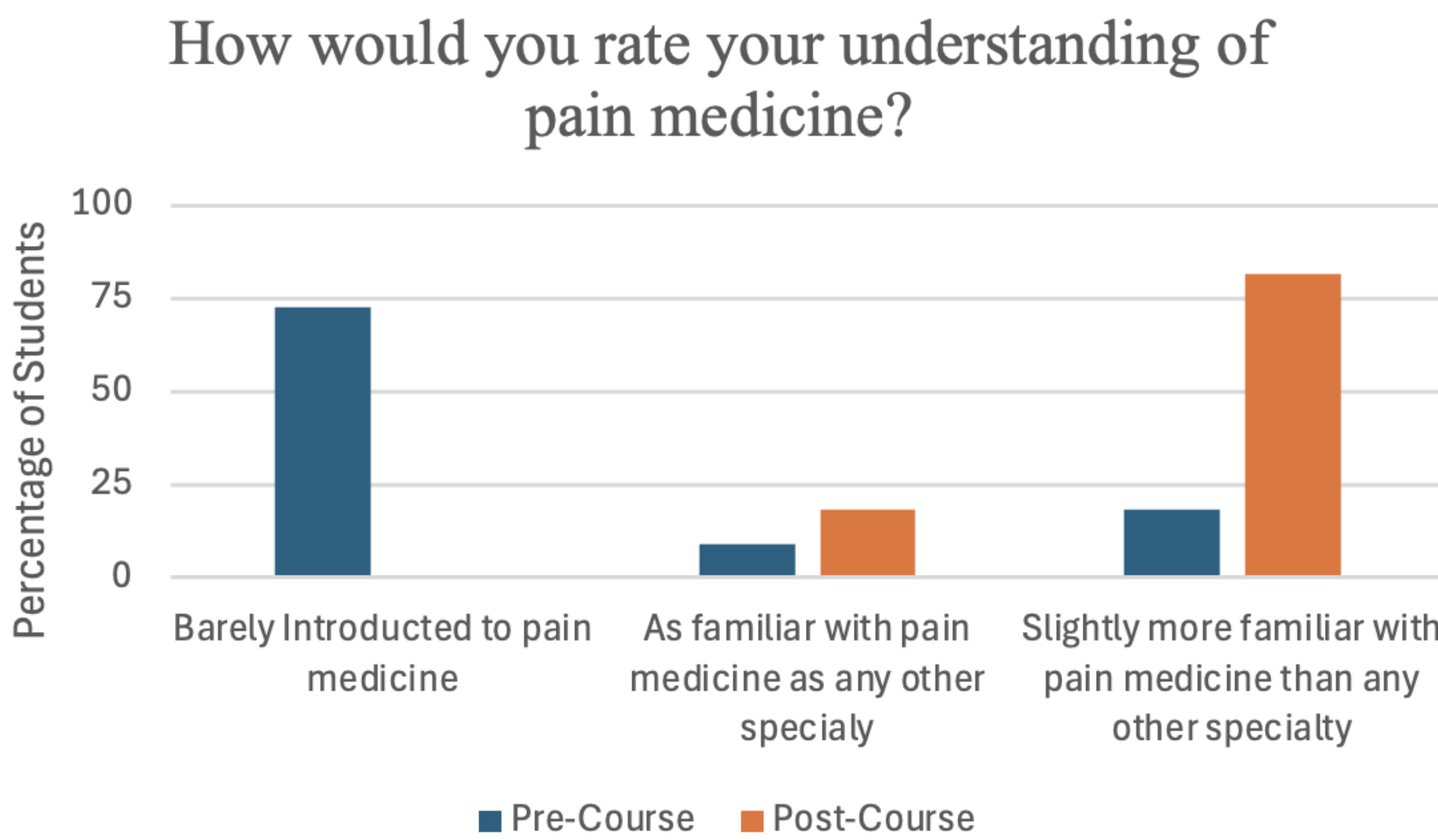


Table 1: Pre- and post-survey results of the quantitative survey questions given to the participants enrolled in the pain medicine course. All mean differences were statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Survey Items	Pre-Course Mean	Post-Course Mean
Q1. I understand what pain physicians do and the procedures they perform.	3.7	5.8
Q2. I know when to consult pain medicine for assistance in patient management.	3.0	6.5
Q3. How many different pain medicine procedures are you aware of?	2.0	6.1

For items 1 and 2 scale of answers were 1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Somewhat disagree, 4: Neutral, 5: Somewhat agree, 6: Agree, 7: Strongly Agree. For item 3, the answers are presented as n.

Discussion

- Medical schools lack adequate exposure to pain medicine
- Surveys showed that students gained adequate exposure to and appreciation for the field
- A pain medicine course provides medical students an early introduction to pain education and enhances the specialty's presence
- Next steps:
 - Disseminating course contents to other institutions
 - Weaving elective curriculum into a mandatory core curriculum

References

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2. Hoang HT, Sabia M, Torjman M, Goldberg ME. The importance of medical education in the changing field of pain medicine. *Pain management (London)*. 2014;4(6):437-443. doi:10.2217/pmt.14.37