



# Graduate Medical Education Residents' Perceptions of Culinary Medicine as a Pathway to Enhanced Well-Being: Insights from Two Years of Data

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## BACKGROUND

Culinary medicine has emerged as a promising tool in graduate medical education (GME), bridging the gap between nutrition science and clinical practice to better prepare future physicians for addressing diet-related health conditions. By provision of culinary medicine content through the lens of personal wellness we sought to introduce the topic via a high priority ACGME program requirement.

## PURPOSE

To evaluate the different aspects of resident physicians' experiences and perceptions regarding a culinary medicine wellness workshop.

## METHODS

### Setting

UAMS on-campus teaching kitchen, 2023-2024

### Participants

Medical residents and fellows, multiple specialties

### Procedures

An institutional grant titled "Paving the Way to Health through Your Fork" funded a GME workshop designed to enhance participants' well-being by integrating hands-on culinary experiences with evidence-based information and discussion on the Mediterranean diet and lifestyle. Attendees engaged in 90-minute sessions consisting of meal preparation, plating competition, a short didactic session and guided reflective discussion on aligning personal values with health habits.

### Measures

Post-event survey including six Likert scale questions (1 = Poor to 5 = Excellent) assessing usefulness, enjoyment, speaker quality, knowledge gained, applicability to work/home life, and overall recommendation to colleagues. Additionally, participants rated the workshop's impact compared to similar programs taken using a five-point scale (Much Worse to Much Better). Two open-ended questions allowed for qualitative feedback on the most valuable aspects of the event and suggestions for improvement.

## RESULTS

FIGURE 1. Participants by Residency Program

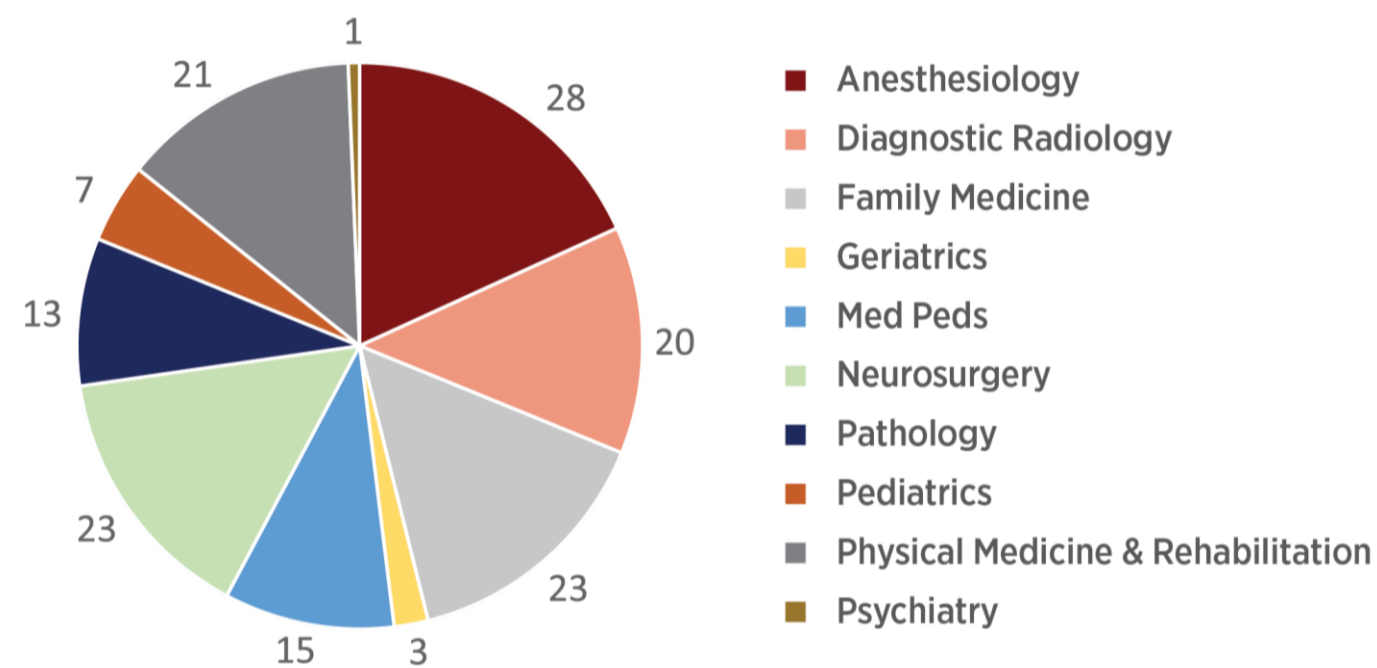


FIGURE 2. Participants' Perception of the Workshop

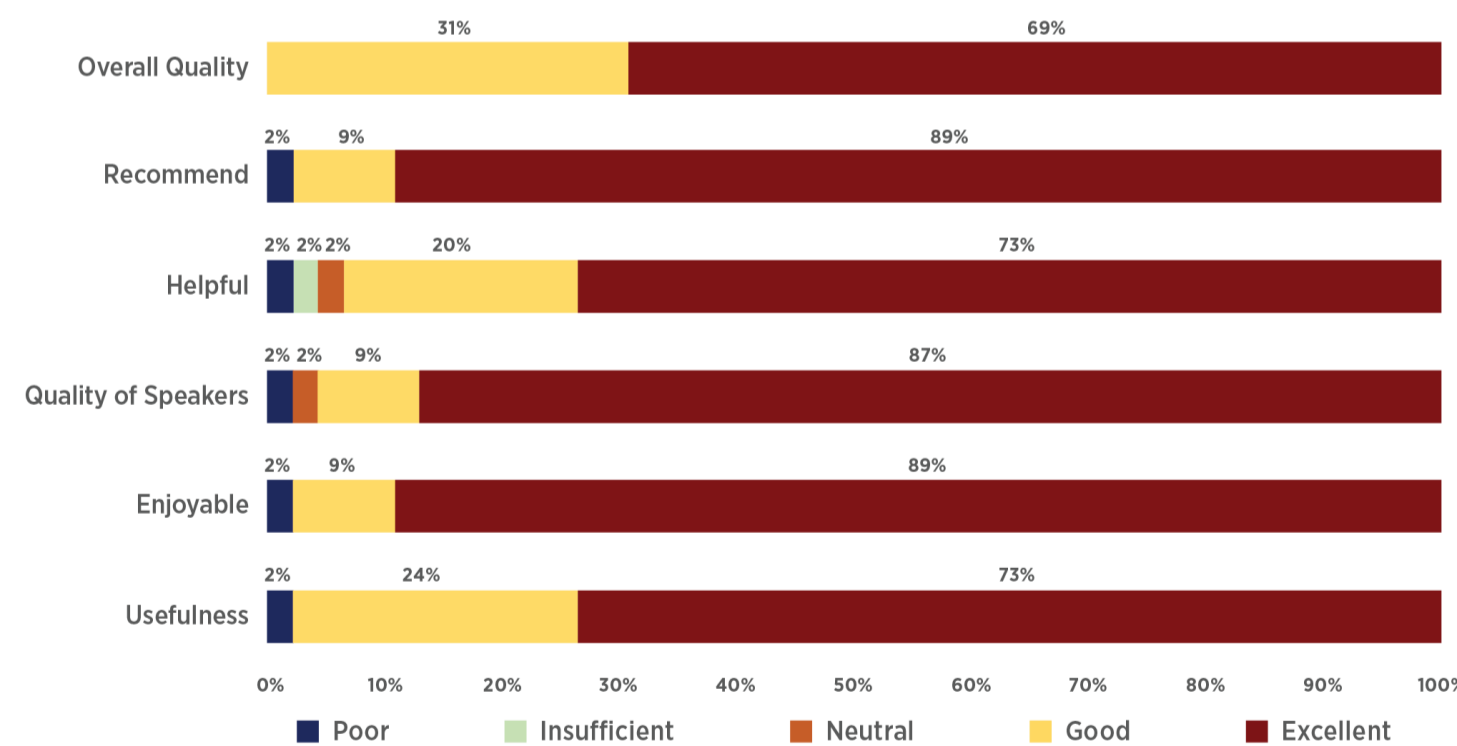


TABLE 1. Thematic analysis of responses to: "What did you find most valuable?"

Deductive Themes	Inductive Sub-themes	Illustrative Quotes
<b>Learning New Cooking Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooking skills</li> <li>Health and nutrition</li> <li>Understanding dietary needs</li> </ul>	<p><i>Learning how to make easy quick healthy foods.</i></p> <p><i>The recipes accommodated by dietary requirements as a vegetarian.</i></p>
<b>Teamwork and Social Interaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team building and collaboration</li> <li>Shared experience</li> </ul>	<p><i>Being able to work together and achieve a goal.</i></p>
<b>Relaxation and Enjoyment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress-free environment</li> <li>Fun and satisfaction</li> </ul>	<p><i>There's something very satisfying about cooking and sharing a meal together.</i></p>
<b>Practical Application and Takeaways</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Useful tips for everyday life</li> <li>Meal prepping and healthier choices</li> </ul>	<p><i>It simplified the idea of making a healthy meal.</i></p>
<b>Instructor and Event Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructor's impact</li> <li>Event organization</li> </ul>	<p><i>The amazing instructors being very prepared helped streamline things.</i></p>
<b>Community and Giving Back</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing and giving back</li> </ul>	<p><i>I loved that our leftover food was given to geriatric patients.</i></p>

### Areas for Improvement:

- Offer more events and a variety of recipes
- More focus on meal prep and practical tips

## CONCLUSIONS

- Resident physicians and fellows reported high levels of enjoyment and satisfaction with the culinary medicine workshop.
- Speaker quality was high, and the content was valuable and applicable to participants' lives.
- Most participants appreciated the opportunity to learn healthy, practical cooking skills in a relaxed and supportive environment, and would recommend it for their colleagues.
- Participants value direct involvement with hands-on instruction and desire more opportunities to engage in culinary medicine experience.
- In summary, the data highlight the positive influence of a culinary medicine workshop on the educational experience and well-being of residents and fellows.

**REFERENCES:** Albin JL, Thomas OW, Marvasti FF, Reilly JM. There and Back Again: A Forty-Year Perspective on Physician Nutrition Education. *Adv Nutr* 2024 Jun;15(6):100230. Shafto K, Vandenburg N, Wang Q, Breen J. Experiential Culinary, Nutrition and Food Systems Education Improves Knowledge and Confidence in Future Health Professionals. *Nutrients* 2023 Sep 15;15(18):3994.