

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Maryland HB 259, “The Patient’s Access to Integrative Healthcare Act of 2020”.

As indicated in my attached CV, I am an epidemiologist by training with expertise in research methodology. The epidemiological methods in which I received doctoral training “play no favorites”, so to speak, and apply equally to all preventive measures, to all treatments, and to all fields of medicine.

As such, after completing my Ph.D. following a first career in healthcare management consulting and several years as a research analyst at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), I joined the faculty of the Center for Integrative Medicine (CIM) at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in 2010 with both skepticism and open-mindedness knowing that I would apply my agnostic research methodology training to this style of care. CIM’s worldwide accolades in research, education, and clinical care, which I will expound upon below, were certainly impressive to me and discordant with what felt like an incompatible bias expressed by some of my mentors and colleagues during my conventional medical research training when I shared that I would be entering the field of integrative medicine.

After 10 years on the faculty, and now serving as the Director of CIM, I have come to realize that the beliefs that some of my colleagues had expressed towards integrative medicine were indeed a sadly common reflection of bias, as they were ignorant to the wealth of evidence supporting integrative medicine. At CIM alone, we have published over 850 peer-reviewed papers in the medical literature and have been awarded over \$50 million of grant funding for our research, education, and clinical care since our inception in 1991. Much of this funding has been awarded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is widely regarded as the most prestigious source of research funding. In fact, CIM first received our longstanding recognition as an NIH “Center of Excellence in Research”, a double peer-reviewed award, in 1995. In addition to clinical trials, basic science, population studies, and clinical practice-based outcomes research of integrative medicine, we have received continuous funding from the NIH since 1996 to coordinate Cochrane systematic reviews and meta-analyses in the field of integrative medicine. The Cochrane database now contains over 90,000 clinical trials of modalities utilized in integrative medicine. The claims that integrative medicine is not well-studied or supported by evidence is patently false.

In addition to our research credentials, CIM has educated many thousands of medical students, physicians, and other healthcare professionals over the years. Alongside a

popular integrative medicine elective course that we offer for 4th year medical students that features a waiting list for enrollment, our educational content is embedded throughout the required curriculum for all medical students at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. This is an expression of trust from the medical education leadership at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in the field of integrative medicine. In fact, in response to the calls for increased nutrition education coming from high-impact medical journals including the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and *Lancet* (***papers attached***), CIM has taken a national leadership role in providing nutrition education to medical students by partnering with the Institute for Integrative Health (www.tiih.org) to provide experiential “Culinary Medicine” training. This training offers practical nutrition education to support patient care and the students’ personal health through a combination of didactic evidence-based nutrition education and cooking corresponding to the teaches medical students. While Culinary Medicine is now offered at dozens of medical schools across the United States on an elective basis, CIM is the first to offer this training as part of the required medical student curriculum at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, an accomplishment of which the University is proud (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppr2bvDj1SY>). Furthermore, the increases in medical student knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards healthy eating noted in our outcomes evaluation of the over 300 medical students that we have trained this academic year are expected to provide evidence for medical education leadership at other academic medical institutions to include this type of training in their required medical student curriculum.

Finally, CIM has continuously provided integrative medicine clinical care to patients since our inception. The patients we have treated have often come to us after years of having not received satisfactory outcomes from their conventional medical care. We have helped patients heal from debilitating conditions including chronic pain, autoimmune disorders, depression and anxiety, and Lyme disease, among many others. In fact, the synergy between integrative medicine research and clinical care is evident in our publication of the first non-pharmacological intervention for patients with persistent symptoms of Lyme disease with a low-intensity resistance exercise program (***paper attached***). Lyme disease drastically compromises the health and quality of life of a rapidly growing number of Maryland residents and others across the globe. We are hopeful that these encouraging results will inspire medical researchers to pursue other integrative medical treatments for Lyme disease.

While CIM has been a worldwide leader in integrative medicine research, education, and clinical care, we are far from the only academic integrative medicine center that is committed to generating rigorous, peer-reviewed research evaluating the effectiveness of integrative medicine and providing education and clinical care based upon that research. There are now over 80 integrative medicine centers at prestigious academic medical centers across the world that are members of the Consortium of Academic Medical Centers in Integrative Medicine and Health (<https://imconsortium.org/>). The rapid growth of integrative medical centers within the academic medical community is powerful testimony to the strength of the evidence base and the clinical value of integrative medicine.

With all of this in mind, it is my honor to support this bill that will preserve the right of patients in Maryland to access the integrative medical care that is supported by such robust scientific evidence and an extensive base of support in academic medical institutions across the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. D'Adamo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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