

VISITING STUDENTS LOOK AT DIFFERENT WAYS TO HEAL

Lomi lomi, Qi Gong, acupuncture and Reiki are among therapies examined

By Helen Altonn
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Four University of Minnesota fourth-year medical students gained a different perspective on healing after three weeks at the North Hawaii Community Hospital on the Big Island.

They visited physicians and practitioners with 10 or 12 different types of healing methods, including acupuncture, Chinese medicine, Reiki, Qi Gong, healing touch, heartmath, meditation, homeopathy, naturopathy and Hawaiian lomi lomi.

Brad Kuzol, going into orthopedics, said he was impressed with how well the hospital practiced integrative medicine, combining multiple approaches including western medicine and other healing traditions.

He said the students worked with all kinds of healers and talked a lot about "positive intention." Like healing touch, he said, "it is a way of transmitting healing energy."

"Nowadays we have patients and tell them all things that can go wrong with a procedure. We let them sit and stew about it before surgery when we could give them guided imagery and get their mind prepared for surgery."

Kuzol said he hopes some day to have an integrated muscular skeletal care clinic using multiple techniques, as well as orthopedic surgery if necessary. He believes malpractice suits would decrease substantially with an integrated clinic and it would attract more patients.

The students, two men and two women, were from the University of Minnesota Medical School's Center for Spirituality and Healing, a national leader in complementary therapies and healing practices.

They took an elective course offered by North Hawaii Community Hospital through the center to train them in blended medicine.

The students also met Minnesota-born Earl Bakken and heard his vision for the future, said Benjamin Baechler, planning to go into internal medicine and specialize in cardiology.

Bakken invented the first human heart pacemaker, co-founded Medtronic Inc., which develops therapeutic devices and pioneered a unique integrated healing program at the small North Hawaii hospital.

His vision is to address spiritual and emotional needs of patients, as well as physical, and to create a healing environment, Baechler said. "Not a hospital that's a sterile, sedentary place but a vibrant place where patient healing can take place."

Dr. Ken Riff, course director, chairman of North

Hawaii's Integrative Healing Committee and director of the hospital's Hawaii Heart-Brain Center, said the program was designed to give students practical experience and "open their minds to all the different ways that people are attempting to do healing."

"The whole idea is that different healing traditions have different strengths and weaknesses," Riff pointed out.

"If you have a heart attack, you want to be in an intensive care unit getting high-tech medicine. But if you're in chronic pain, western medicine doesn't do well with it. They end up throwing pills at people."

"Some other traditions, such as acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, medical massage and yoga, do a pretty good job with chronic pain."

Riff said the students are told: "Don't just think you have one set of tools to offer patients. Know these (other approaches) and know how to put them together so you can offer all ways to patients."

Other students in the course were Lindsey Darrah, going into obstetrics/gynecology; and Kari Thompson, taking a surgical residency. Baechler said he learned the importance of not only taking into account the pathology of dis-



University of Minnesota medical students Kari Thompson, left, Lindsay Darrah, Brad Kuzol and Ben Baechler listen to kumu lomi Dane Silva.

ease in evaluating patients but also factors associated with lifestyle and diet.

"I'm excited about it," Baechler said. "This is taking medicine from where we exist today, and incorporating a holistic approach to taking care of the patient."

Riff said North Hawaii sees the course "as a real validation of what we're doing" by a nationally known medical school. "It makes us feel we're really on the right path, even though we're a small hospital out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, and it's something the community can feel good about, too."

NORTH HAWAII NEWS

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Med Students study at Waimea hospital

Special to North Hawaii news

North Hawaii Community Hospital's (NHCH) "holistic" approach to integrated healing is now a training ground for students from one of the nation's top medical schools.

The University of Minnesota (UMN) has sent four fourth-year medical students to attend a new Hawaii-based section of their three-week course on blended medicine, "Integrative Healing in Hawaii," which utilizes the talented interdisciplinary health care community in the Big Island, including faculty from NHCH. This UMN medical school course was developed by UMN's Center for Spirituality and Healing, a national leader in complementary and alternative medicine.

"To have one of the country's great medical schools look to our small hospitals to teach their students is true validation of the great work being done at North Hawaii community Hospital," said Stan Berry, North Hawaii Community Hospital CEO. "We are honored to be working with the University of Minnesota and to be helping train future doctors in our shared vision of blended medicine," Berry added.

So why are students from such a distinguished program calling on the NHCH?

"The University of Minnesota recognized a unique opportunity at North Hawaii Community Hospital to deepen our training in integrated medicine," said Mary Jo Kreitzer, director of UMN's Center for Spirituality and Healing.

"The rare combination of NHCH's blended medicine and the healing environment of the Big Island demonstrates for our students the relevance of culturally-based healing practices and how these practices, along with high-tech conventional medicine, can produce very positive outcomes for patients."

Blended medicine at NHCH is the vision of Big Island resident, Dr. Earl Bakken, the hospital's founder and predent emeritus. "We are pleased that our Waimea-based program is fast becoming a prototype for the careful integration of select complementary healing practices with high-quality medical care in a healing environment," he said. Bakken is co-founder and retired CEO of Medtronic Inc., a multibillion-dollar medical technology company and inventor of the first wearable, external, battery-powered pacemaker.

The students' goal in spending three weeks at the NHCH is to learn about its Bakken-inspired approach to patient-centered care, which treats the patient as a whole person—mind, body and spirit—in the context of family culture and community.

According to Dr. Karen Lawson, director of Integrative Clinical Services at UMN's Center for Spirituality and healing and president of the American Holistic Medical Association, "Our aim is to cultivate broad-minded doctors who are comfortable and fluent in the appropriate and effective use of a full range of complementary approaches."

The course emphasizes the development of integrated treatment plans using a combination of therapies from multiple healing traditions. In addition, students learn about indigenous healing practices that are available on the Big Island and some of the cross-cultural issues involved in integrative healing. During the three-week course, students are also shadowing Big Island-based physicians and practitioners of acupuncture and Chinese medicine, Reiki, Qi Gong, Healing Touch, meditation, naturopathy, homeopathy, message, including lomi lomi (Hawaiian massage), and other complementary therapies.

"Students will learn how to create a patient care program that effectively combines evidence-based methods from multiple healing traditions to best meet an individual patient's needs," said Dr. Kenneth Riff, Integrative Healing in Hawaii course director.

Kari Thompson a UMN fourth-year general surgeon student commented, "People have asked me why alternative therapies are of interest to a surgeon. This course has already stretched my thinking and opened my eyes to the many areas where a blended approach makes sense." Citing examples of this, Thompson said that the patient's pre and post-surgery experience might be greatly improved with healing touch, guided imagery, herbal supplements to boost immunity or even osteopathic manipulation to help realign the muscles of the body.

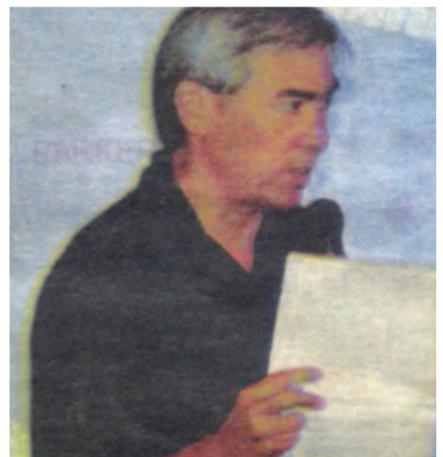
THIS WEEK



The Claw

Students head to Oahu for robotics competition.

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Bypass

Waimea bypass discussion draws crowd, controversy.

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