

A Longitudinal Pilot Study of Changes in How Residents Hope their Patients Experience Them

Kaleigh Timmins, MD; Adam Sattler, PhD; Renee Crichlow, MD; Michelle Sherman, PhD, ABPP
 North Memorial Family Medicine Residency Program

INTRO:

- Supporting residents in developing strong working relationships with patients is an integral component of family medicine residency.
- Examining changes in how residents hope their patients experience them may shed light on this aspect of resident development. No published research has examined this process.
- Research Question: Does residency training support a shift from residents’ focus on primarily appearing medically competent to valuing the importance of collaborative, provider-patient relationships?

METHODS:

- As part of every video review session, the behaviorist asks: **“How would you like your patients to describe you?”**
- Resident responses over a 3-year period were recorded and a preliminary codebook was created, consisting of six mutually-exclusive themes (Knowledgeable; Relationship-focused; Caring/Compassionate; Collaborative; Listening Skills; Other).
- Two coders (a psychologist and a family medicine resident) then re-examined the responses and independently classified each according to the coding system, which yielded strong interrater reliability across all six themes.
- Longitudinal analyses were then conducted to compare the frequency with which 21 residents cited each of the six themes during their first versus third year of training.

Residents want to be experienced by patients as both **medically competent** and **patient-centered.**

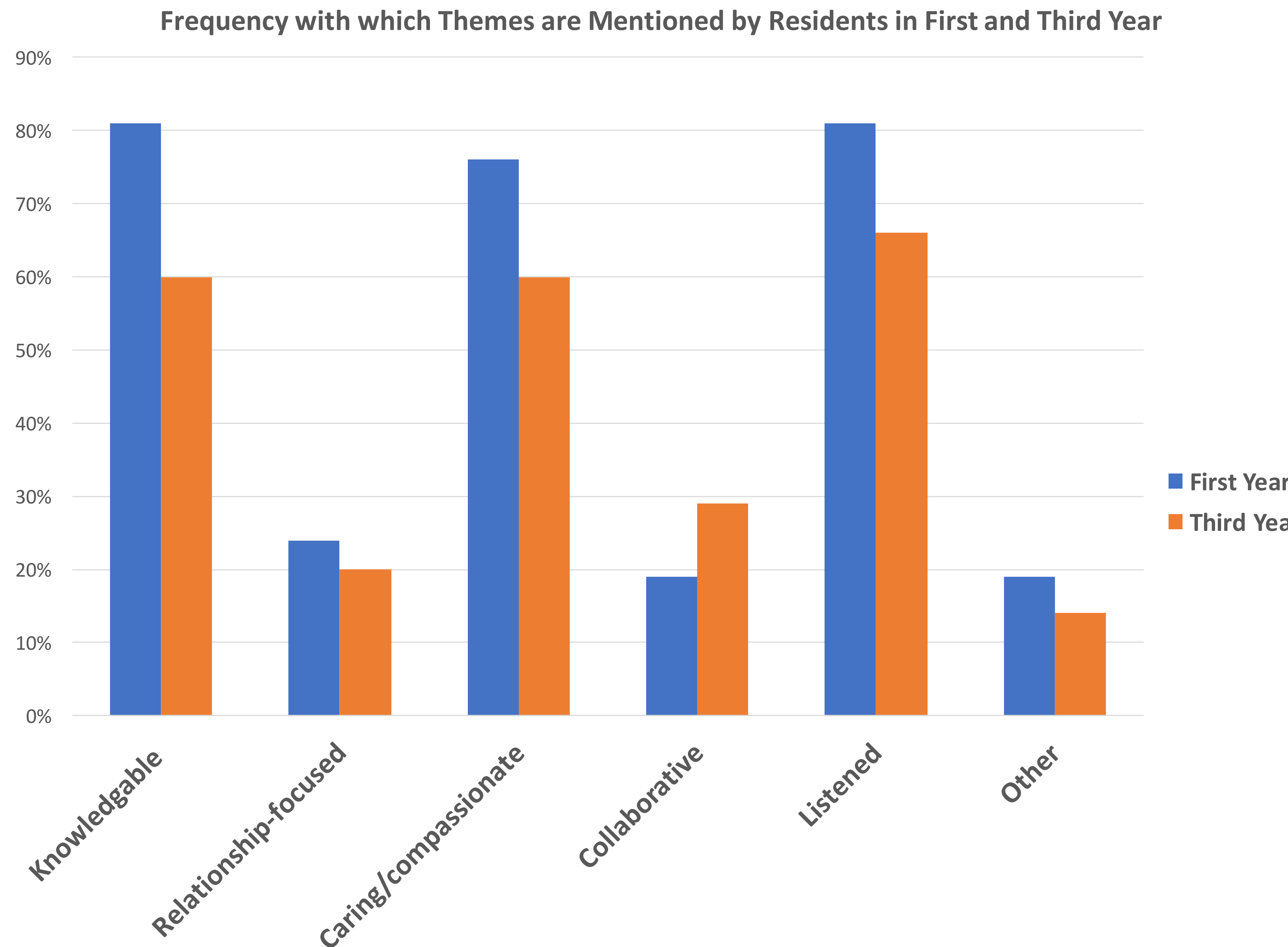
The relative importance of these qualities may **shift** over the course of training.



RESULTS:

- During their intern year, a higher percentage of residents (81%) stated that they wanted to be known as “knowledgeable” versus third year (62%).
- A higher percentage of residents also stated that they wanted to be described as “a good listener” during their intern (81%) versus third year (62%).
- In contrast, residents were more likely to state that they wanted to be known as “collaborative” during their third (29%) versus intern year (19%).
- These observed differences were not statistically significant (likely due to our small sample of 21 residents).

Theme (excluding Other)	Example Phrase
Knowledgeable	“smart”; “competent”
Relationship-focused	“helps patient feel comfortable”
Caring/compassionate	“kind”; “genuine”
Collaborative	“works with the patient”
Listening skills	“attentive”; “gives patient space to talk”



DISCUSSION:

- Our pilot data indicate a potential shift across the course of residency training from emphasizing medical proficiency to valuing collaborative provider-patient relationships.
- Future research might facilitate more rigorous examination of this process by applying similar methodology to larger samples of data.