

Know Before You Go: Evaluating the Utility of Pre-Departure Training for Internal Medicine Residents Prior to an International Elective

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ABSTRACT

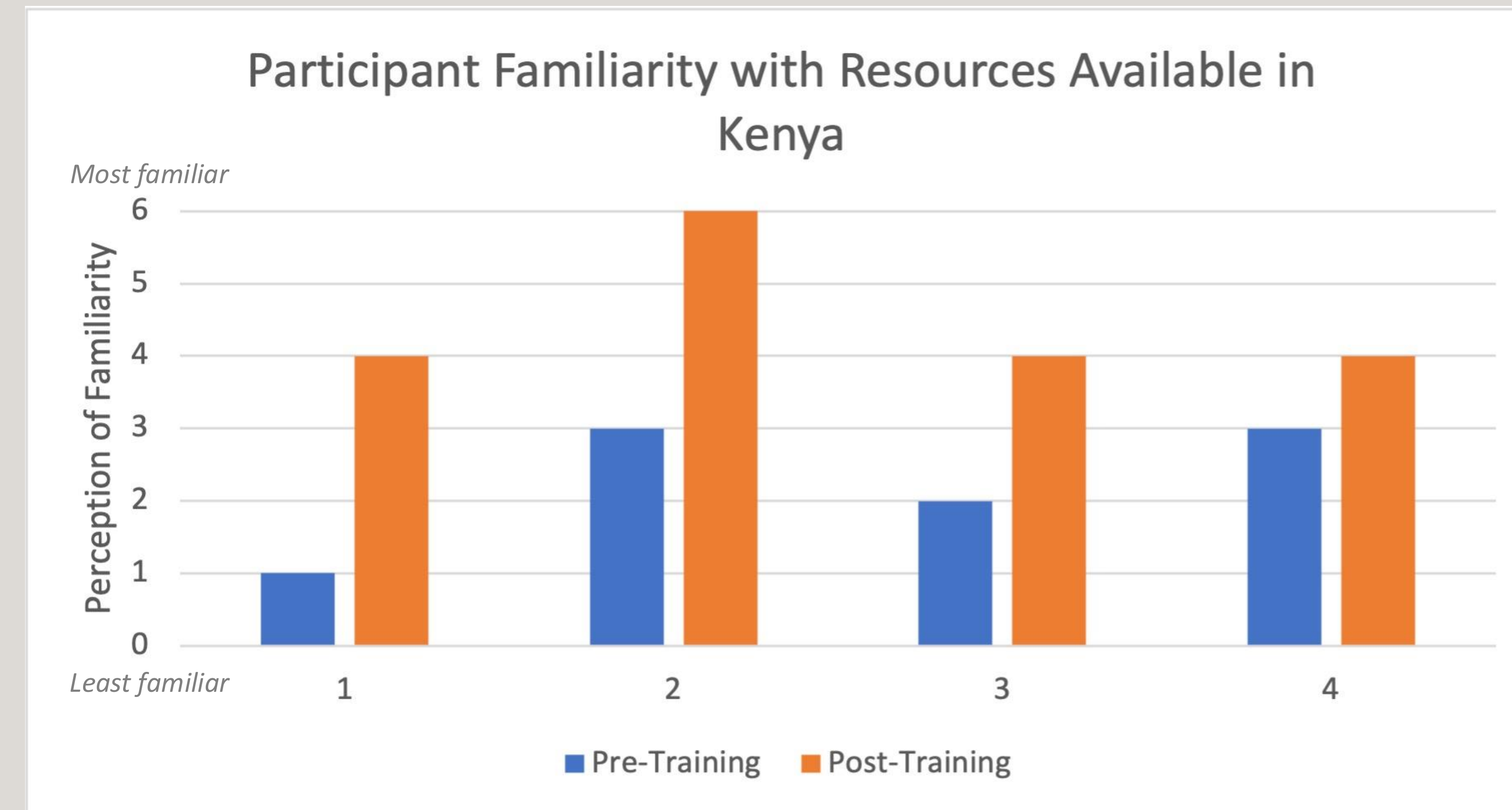
A needs assessment at Indiana University revealed that a large majority of internal medicine residents desired formal pre-departure training for their international elective in Kenya. In response, a two-hour orientation covering cultural context and site-specific clinical cases was developed and led by residents with prior experience in Eldoret. Pre- and post-curriculum surveys showed that participants, 75% of whom had minimal to moderate prior LMIC experience, reported increased familiarity with clinical challenges, improved preparedness, and reduced anxiety.

BACKGROUND

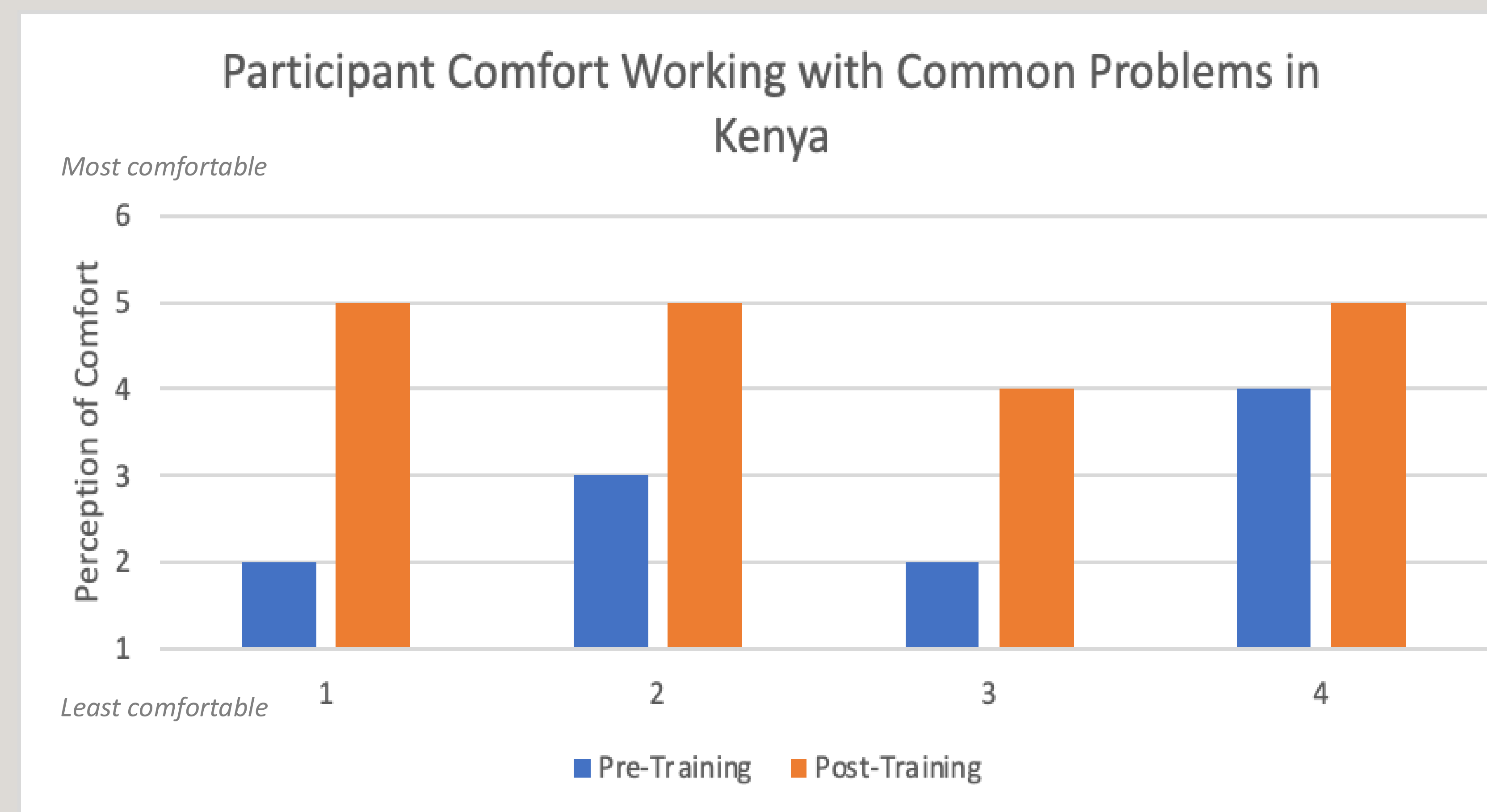
Global health opportunities are increasing in U.S residency programs, but gaps in preparation for international experiences persist. Prior to this study, no specialty-specific, pre-departure orientation existed for Indiana University internal medicine (IUIM) residents participating in an international elective in Kenya. However, an institutional needs assessment revealed 72.7% of IUIM residents desired formalized orientation¹. Key gaps identified were training in site-specific knowledge and culture.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Internal medicine residents with an international elective scheduled during the 2024-25 academic year were eligible for the study. All four eligible participants agreed to participate in an optional two-hour orientation, which included cultural information and clinical cases specific to internal medicine. The curriculum was developed and led by Internal Medicine-Pediatrics residents with prior international elective experience in Eldoret, Kenya. The curriculum was presented before departure, and pre- and post-curriculum REDCap surveys were administered. A post-elective survey was also collected



A pre-departure curriculum eased anxiety and enhanced perceived preparedness among IUIM residents participating in an international elective in a LMIC.



QUOTES

- "Helpful for expectations and common diagnoses ."
- "I appreciate the advice regarding how to approach procedures we're not as comfortable with."
- "We were able to discuss more about how to handle bad outcomes while on service."
- "Super helpful to re-align how we think about whether we really need imaging/deciding on image modality"
- "After training..., i felt comfortable and gained much experience delivering care"

RESULTS

All IUIM participants completed the pre- and post-curriculum surveys.

- Pre-curriculum surveys showed 75% had minimal to moderate prior LMIC experience.
- Participants self-reported familiarity with common medical problems, clinical resources and expertise available, and potential stressful ethical situations which they could encounter during their international rotation improved in their post-curriculum survey.
- All participants reported reduced anxiety and increased preparedness following the session.
- All respondents found the three case discussions valuable for their upcoming rotation.

REFERENCES

Swanson, E., Yates, S., Maveddat, A., George, B., Patel, P. (10 May 2024). Internal Medicine Residency Pre-Kenya Orientation Needs Assessment [Poster Abstract]. 2024 IU Center for Global Health Equity Scholars Day, Indianapolis, IN, United States.

