



**Interviews with doctors who have worked both
in Germany and elsewhere in Europe**

**How does the
role of
complementary
and alternative
medicine in
general practice
differ between
countries?**

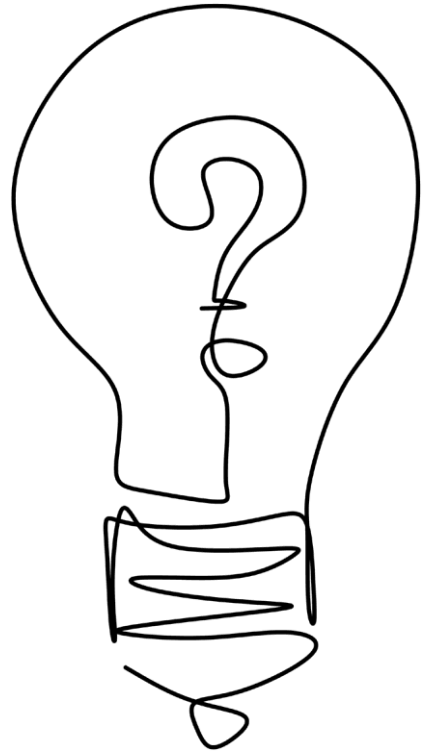
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Who should read the paper?



- Healthcare professionals
- Patient (representatives) with interest in CAM
- Public health specialists
- Researchers with interest in health system differences between countries
- Policy makers

What is it about?



The perception and experiences of country differences of General practitioners with work experiences in Germany and one other european country regarding health system, relevance of CAM modalities, the role of evidence-based medicine (EBM) and science, and how they handle so-called indeterminate situations.

What did the
researchers
do?



Study design

Methodology: Thematic Analysis

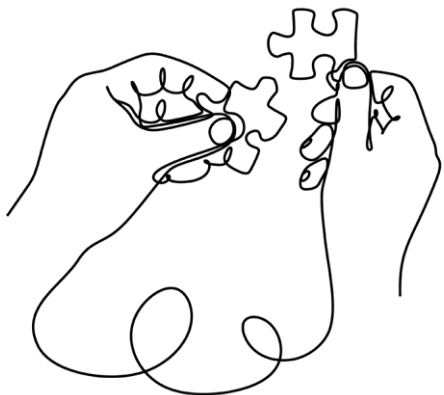
Data collection: semi-structured interviews

Setting: Germany

Participants: 12 GPs who had worked both in Germany and Italy, the Netherlands, Norway or the United Kingdom (UK; $n = 3$ for each of the four countries)

Data analysis: Thematic Analysis with focus on themes that cover CAM

What did the researchers find out?



Study results

- CAM was perceived to be more relevant in general practice in Germany compared to the other countries.
- Physicians with experiences in countries with a strong EBM and science orientation (Netherlands, Norway and the UK) considered the deeply ingrained view in national healthcare systems and GP communities that CAM modalities are not evidence-based as the main reason for the lower use of CAM by GPs
- Extensive training of communication skills was cited as a reason that reduced the need for CAM in the Netherlands, Norway and the UK
- Differences in patient expectations and demands were perceived as a factor contributing to greater utilisation of CAM by German GPs compared to the other countries
- Country-specific reimbursement mechanisms were considered as a factor influencing the role of CAM in general practice.

How can the results be used?

The findings point to major country differences in primary (in respect to CAM and in general) practice.

- The perceived and experienced country differences, described in this article, can become a useful point of departure for prevention of problematic practices within CAM.

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