

# Increasing Instrument Assisted Soft-tissue Mobilization (IASTM) Self-competency

## Through a Certification Course

Ryan Rabena, OTD/S; Andrew Dyjak, OTR/L; Michelle Kornet, OTR/L, CHT  
West Coast University, Center for Graduate Studies



### Description of DCE Site

- High Five Hand Therapy and Rehabilitation founded in 2018
- Located in Orange County and Los Angeles County
- Private practice that focuses on hand therapy and sports rehab
- Mission: "To provide excellent, individualized care in a patient-friendly, comfortable environment" (High Five Hand Therapy Rehabilitation, 2022)
- Services include: IASTM, orthosis fabrication, fluidotherapy, traditional manual therapy, and therapeutic exercises
- Provides educational resources to assist clients overcome limitations

### Summary of Needs Assessment

- The development of an IASTM certification course with included multimedia content
- The development of an IASTM protocol
- Improved documentation and billing system to increase productivity
- Creating and advocating for occupation-based interventions (OBI)

### Literature Review

- No consensus between clinicians on an optimal IASTM intervention (Cheatham et al., 2019)
- IASTM inconsistencies, drastic variability, and uncertainty when performing technique on several diagnoses (Sefferin et al., 2019)
- Protocols are important as it develops structure for treatment taken with clinical judgement (Kendall & Frank, 2018)
- Positive correlation to patient outcomes and certification (Dunn, 2019)
- Online and in-person certification courses increased self-competency equally (Shete et al., 2020)
- Patients respond well to range of motion and strength opposed to OBI (Colaiani et al., 2015; Grice, 2015)
- Reasons for not using OBI include: time constraints, lack of natural environment, and availability of items (Grice, 2015)

### Student Learning Objectives

- Develop an IASTM protocol manual for 6 common hand diagnoses
  - Carpal tunnel syndrome
  - Cubital tunnel syndrome
  - Lateral and medial epicondylitis
  - Trigger finger
  - De Quervain's tenosynovitis
- Advocate using OBI within the hand therapy setting
- Obtain advanced clinical knowledge and skills in hand therapy and sports rehabilitation

### Project Description

- IASTM certification course and protocol multimedia content used to increase self-competency, consistent treatment within the clinic, and organize diagnoses information
- OBI training program with multimedia content to educate staff on carrying out activities
- Educational resources are used to expedite onboarding and training

### Program Description

- IASTM protocol created through researching best practices of the 6 common hand diagnoses and collaboration with staff and site mentor
- IASTM protocol includes: preparatory method, applying emollient, desensitizing treatment area, scanning, increase in pressure, stretching, strengthening, and tool hygiene
- IASTM educational material includes:
  - 60 minutes of introduction: fascia, IASTM, precautions/contraindications, tool hygiene
  - 60 minutes of instrument handling: choosing instruments using variety of strokes, applying emollient
  - 120-180 minutes of IASTM protocol

### Results

Figure 1. Pre-post Test of Common Hand Diagnoses Knowledge

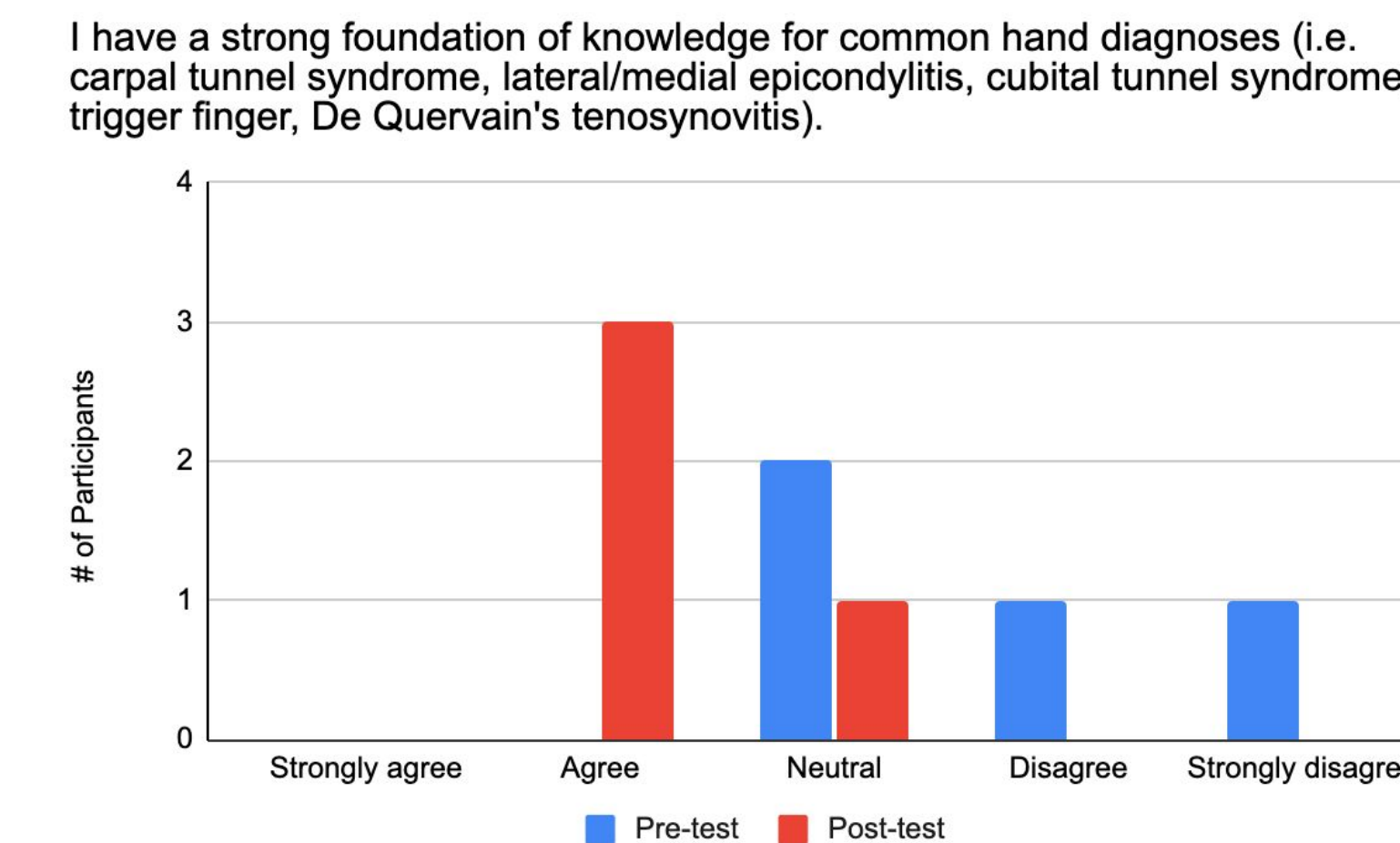
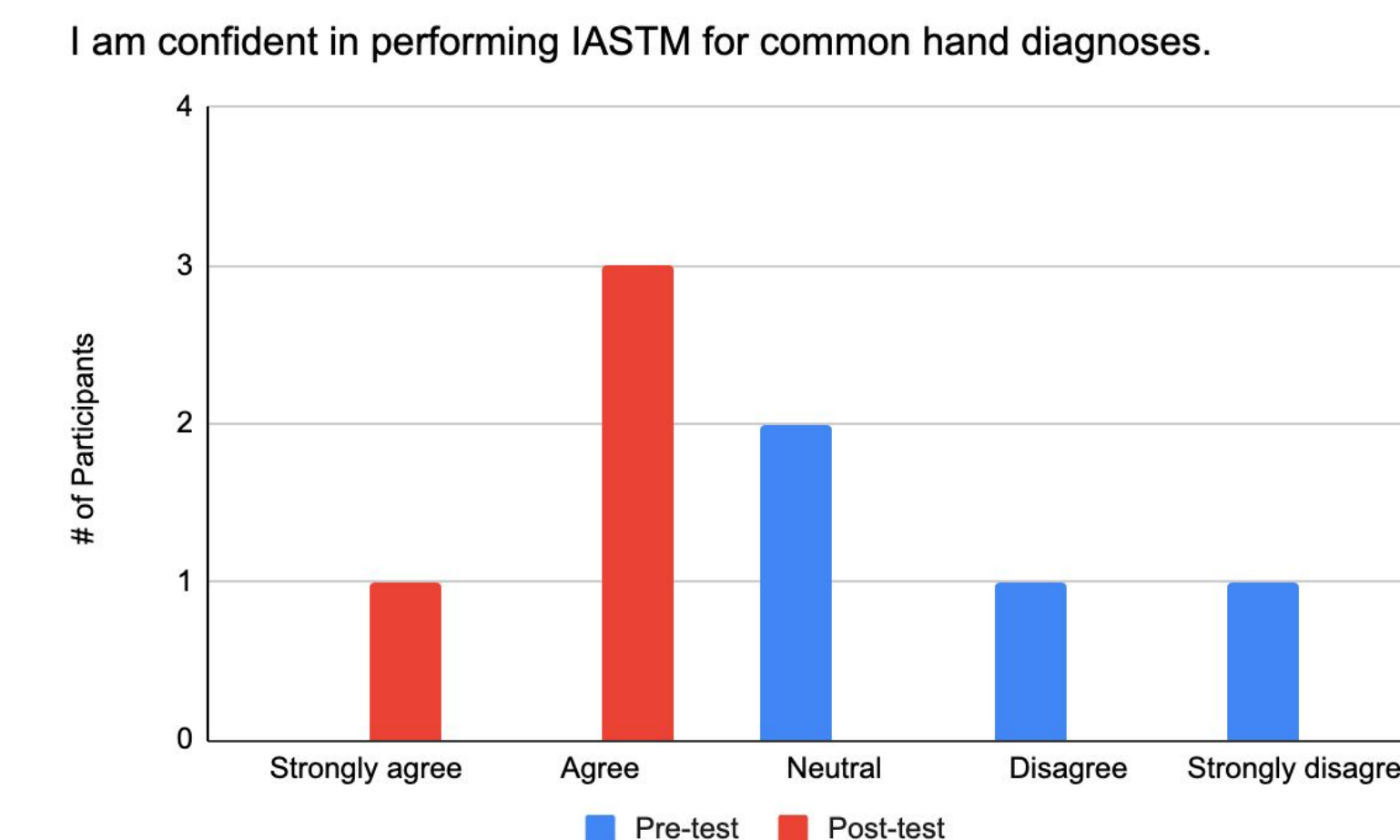


Figure 2. Pre-post Test of IASTM Self-confidence



- A total of 4 individuals participated in pre-post test survey
- Quantitative data:
  - Majority of participants shows an increase in knowledge of common hand diagnoses and IASTM self-confidence
- Qualitative data:
  - Necessary visual and kinesthetic learning opportunities
  - Clear and concise protocol
  - Training videos found to be very beneficial

### Discussion & Implications

- Certification courses and protocols allow for new clinicians to understand expectations of performance and/or client care
- Educational material is beneficial as it expedites onboarding training process
- Scholarly deliverables provide clear, concise information that will aid clinicians of HFHTR to deliver consistent explanations to patients
- Development of this IASTM protocol suggests for further research on IASTM standardized practice to promote consistency

### Conclusion

- Certifications allow for occupational therapists to become well versed as a clinician
- Multimedia content provide thorough training and increase self-competency
- IASTM certification course and protocol manual allow for HFHTR to expedite onboarding process and training
- Certification courses leads to increased levels in knowledge and self-confidence

### Scholarly Deliverables and References

