



## **Physiatry**

### **Quick recap**

The meeting began with casual conversation and introductions among participants from various locations, including discussions about personal experiences and work challenges. The main focus was on learning about Physiatry, a medical specialty. Dr. Martin Lanoff, a physiatrist specializing in outpatient musculoskeletal pain and sports, provided insights into treating conditions like stroke and spinal cord injuries, while addressing questions about treatments and medications for various medical conditions. He explained the unique role of physiatrists in treating the whole person through a holistic approach to patient care.

### **Summary**

#### **Understanding Physiatry: A Medical Specialty**

Kimia introduced the main topic, highlighting the purpose of the meeting: to learn about physiatry, a medical specialty, with a focus on sharing experiences and knowledge about physiatrists for those who are unfamiliar with the field. Kimia introduced Dr. Lanoff, a physiatrist, who specializes in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, treating spine, nonoperative orthopedic & sports conditions.

#### **Physiatry's Holistic Patient Approach**

Martin discussed the unique role of physiatrists, emphasizing their holistic approach to patient care by treating the whole person, not just the physical symptoms. He highlighted the importance of considering psychological, social, and environmental factors in patient treatment. Martin also explained the training and certification process for physiatrists, noting the specialty's focus on improving patient function, whether it be simple daily tasks or complex



activities like sports. He addressed the challenges of marketing the specialty to the public and the need for referrals from other medical professionals.

## **Profitability and Medical Research Insights**

The discussion centered on the relationship between profitability and medical research. Martin emphasized that most evidence-based medical practices are thoroughly studied regardless of financial incentives. The group explored how alternative treatments and the placebo effect influence patient outcomes. The placebo effect refers to a beneficial health response that occurs when a patient believes they are receiving an effective treatment, even if the treatment itself has no active medical ingredient. Martin illustrated this point with an anecdote about a patient who experienced improvement using Cannabidiol (CBD), a non-psychoactive compound derived from the cannabis plant.

The conversation concluded with Roo seeking guidance about off-label medication use for improving motor function. Martin encouraged open dialogue with healthcare providers, stressing the importance of asking questions and taking an active role in one's own recovery. Working collaboratively with a medical team, he noted, is key to maximizing health outcomes.

## **Physiatrist's Role in Neurological Treatments**

Dr. Martin Lanoff explained the differences between central and peripheral nervous system injuries and the treatments available, including the use of Botox for spasticity. Shelli asked about treatments for spasticity and nerve pain after a stroke, and Dr. Lanoff suggested consulting specialists at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, a leading rehabilitation facility in Chicago, IL. Roo inquired about medications for pain and brain healing, and Dr. Lanoff clarified that while SSRIs can help manage depression and pain, there is no proven medication to regenerate central nervous system tissue. The conversation ended with Susan thanking Dr. Lanoff for his insights and Kimia offering to address any further questions.