Why is the Mayo Clinic promoting pseudoscience — ‘energy healing’ Reiki?

The Mayo Clinic is a prestigious medical institution with a deserved international reputation. It also promotes rank pseudoscience.

...

I have seen first hand how one or a few true believers can promote so-called alternative medicine at their institutions, meeting little resistance from colleagues and administrators who are “shruggies”. They don't really understand the phenomenon and are content to let the “experts” take the lead.

In this case we see an article published on the Mayo Clinic website promoting the pseudoscientific practice of Reiki. As I and others at [Science Based Medicine, or] SBM have discussed many times before, Reiki is an Asian form of faith healing or laying on of hands. It purports to manipulate an unseen energy field surrounding living things. Proponents make mostly vague claims about “healing” or “wellness” and that the practice will reduce stress and subjective symptoms.

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Reiki is a microcosm of this entire struggle. Here we have a practice based upon no foundational science. It is based upon magic and faith healing. Proponents have not established their basic claims, that the life energy exists, has any relationship to health, disease, or symptoms, and can be manipulated by practitioners. Instead they study subjective outcomes with small and poorly designed studies, the kind designed to generate false positive outcomes.

This is an excerpt. Read the full article here