



# Meet the EIM Leader



**Name:**

Robert Sallis, MD, FACS

**Background:**

I was born and raised in Southern California. I attended college at the United States Air Force Academy (where I was a collegiate basketball player) and medical school at Texas A&M University. I completed my residency training in Family Medicine and additional training in Sports Medicine at Kaiser Permanente.

**What is your current work position and title?**

I am currently the Co-Director of the Sports Medicine Fellowship at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Fontana CA. I am also a Clinical Professor of Family Medicine at the UC Riverside School of Medicine.

**How and when did you get involved with EIM?**

I founded EIM when I served as ACSM President back in 2007-08. I continue to serve as Chair of the EIM Advisory Board.

**How do you promote EIM through the work that you do?**

The idea for EIM was formed through my involvement with ACSM and my experiences as a Family Medicine Physician at Kaiser Permanente. I found that by asking every patient about their exercise habits and encouraging them to get more active, I was able to see almost instant improvements in their health and well-being. Based on this experience, I convinced our

leadership at Kaiser Permanente to begin using an “Exercise Vital Sign” so that every patient at every visit would be asked about their exercise habits and encouraged to meet the US Physical Activity Guidelines of 150 min per week or moderate exercise.

***How has EIM influenced the work you do professionally and those you work with (your patients/clients/colleagues)?***

The Exercise Vital Sign at Kaiser Permanente is now being used in all of our Kaiser regions that include 35 medical centers and almost 11 million patients. Every patient in our system is now asked about their exercise habits at every visit, regardless of the specialty of the provider they are seeing.

***Has EIM impacted you personally? If “yes”, how so?***

I work hard to practice what I preach and exercise daily. I think that healthcare providers need to be examples to their patients and do their best to eat right, not smoke and exercise daily.

***What are some of the challenges that you have faced in introducing and/or implementing EIM where you work?***

There is always resistance to anything new, especially if it adds work to your day. However, I was amazed at how no one I encountered at Kaiser disagreed with the EIM message and how important it was to our patients. The challenge now is finding ways to get our sedentary patients more active. We are in the midst of studies using exercise professionals to counsel sedentary diabetic patients about their PA habits and encourage them to get more active, rather than instantly putting them on medication. I think promoting exercise is the future for chronic disease management, rather than the current singular reliance on medications.

***What are some of the successes that have you seen implementing EIM into your work?***

The support and acceptance of the Exercise Vital Sign at Kaiser Permanente has been a big success. Along with that, the spread of EIM around the world has been amazing. It is clear this message resonates with all healthcare providers and systems. We need to work together to make it happen.

***What advice do you have for early career professionals wanting to promote and develop careers related to EIM?***

The intersection of physical activity and health lies closest to the specialty area of sports and exercise medicine. There is nothing more powerful to improve health and longevity than regular exercise. For these reasons, need to be the leaders of this movement to increase physical activity levels around the world to improve health. I think we can have a profound

effect on health around the world by increasing levels of physical activity. What more exciting a career is there?

