

# What are effective therapists doing that their less effective counterparts are not?

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# Therapist effects

Some therapists are more effective (have consistently better outcomes) than others



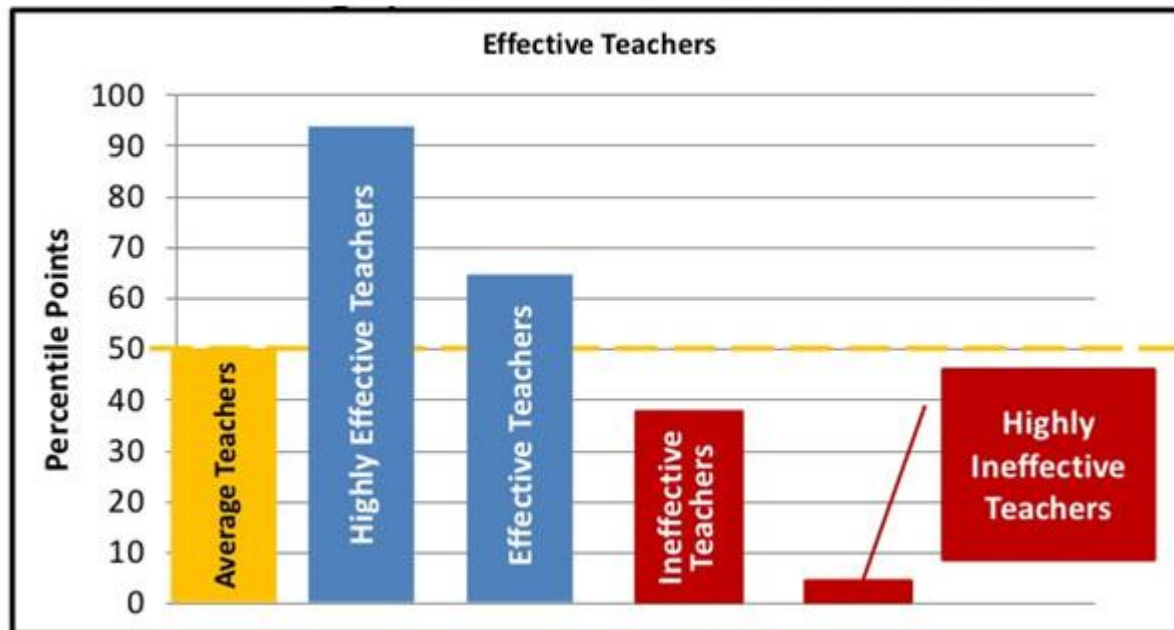
**SUPER SHRINK**

This issue is studied in other fields and effects are very substantial.

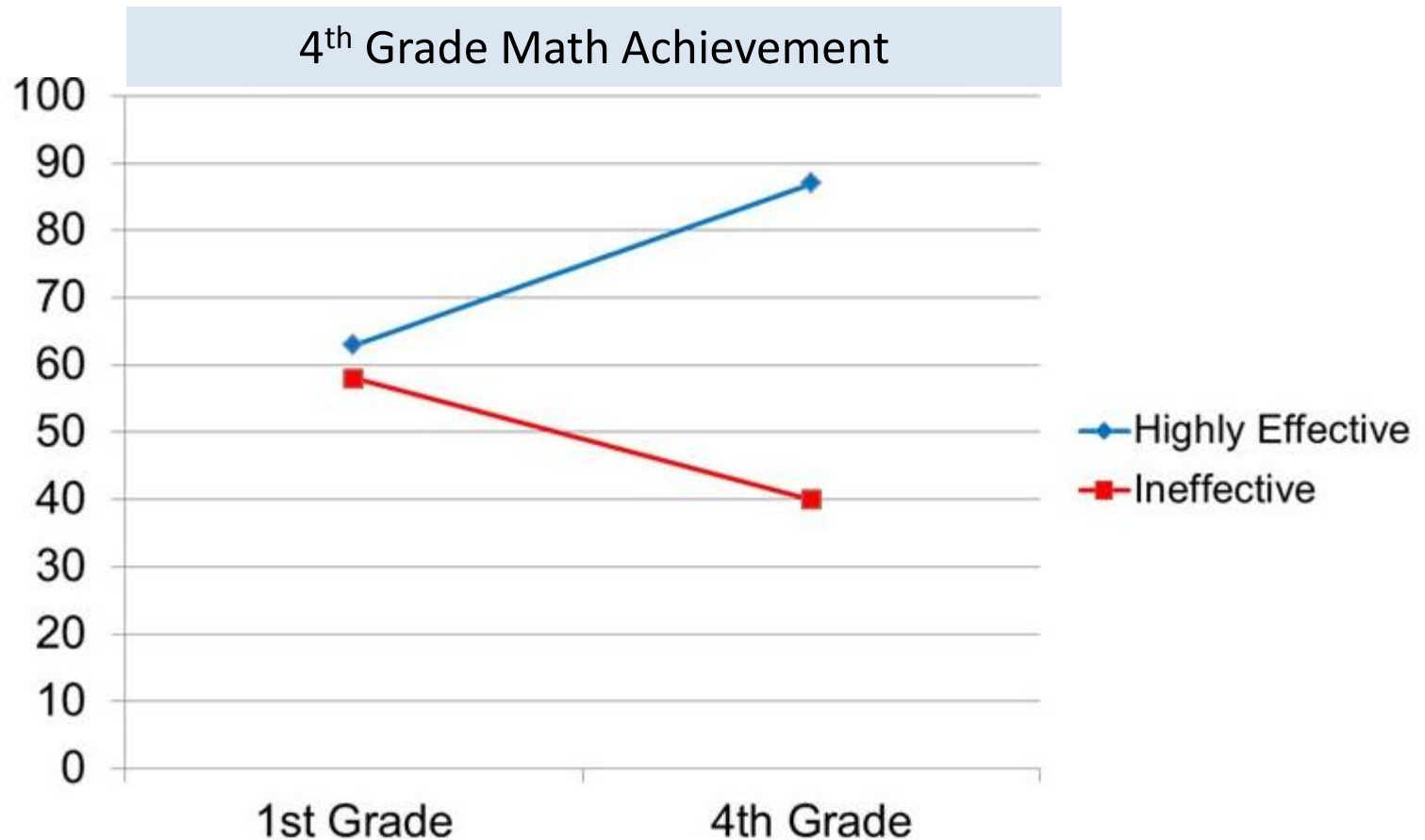
How much do teachers matter?

# Cumulative Effect on Student Achievement

## Highly Effective vs. Ineffective Teachers



# Dallas Research: Teacher Quality



Dallas, Texas data: 2800-3200 students per cohort

Comparison of 3 "highly effective" & 3 "ineffective teachers (Jordan, Mendro , & Weerasinghe, 1997)

**SUPER SHRINK**

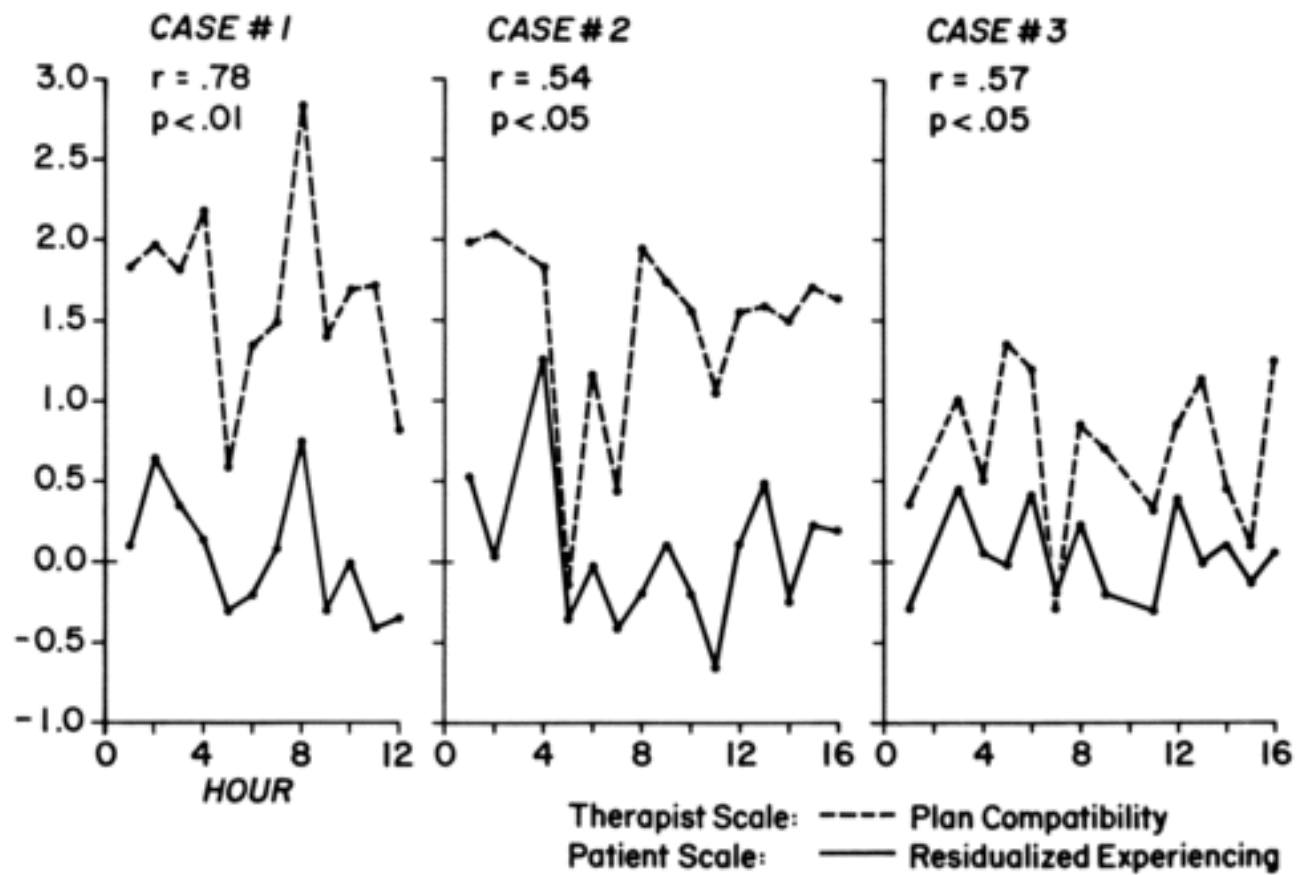
# The critical questions

- How can these supershrinks be identified?
- What are they doing that their less effective counterparts are not (i.e., what accounts for their effectiveness)?

# Background: Findings from our research group's process studies

- Therapist interventions that are responsive to the patient's therapy goals — the patient's plan — are predictive of in-session progress.
- Sessions with a higher frequency of plan compatible interventions are significantly more productive than sessions with fewer responsive interventions.





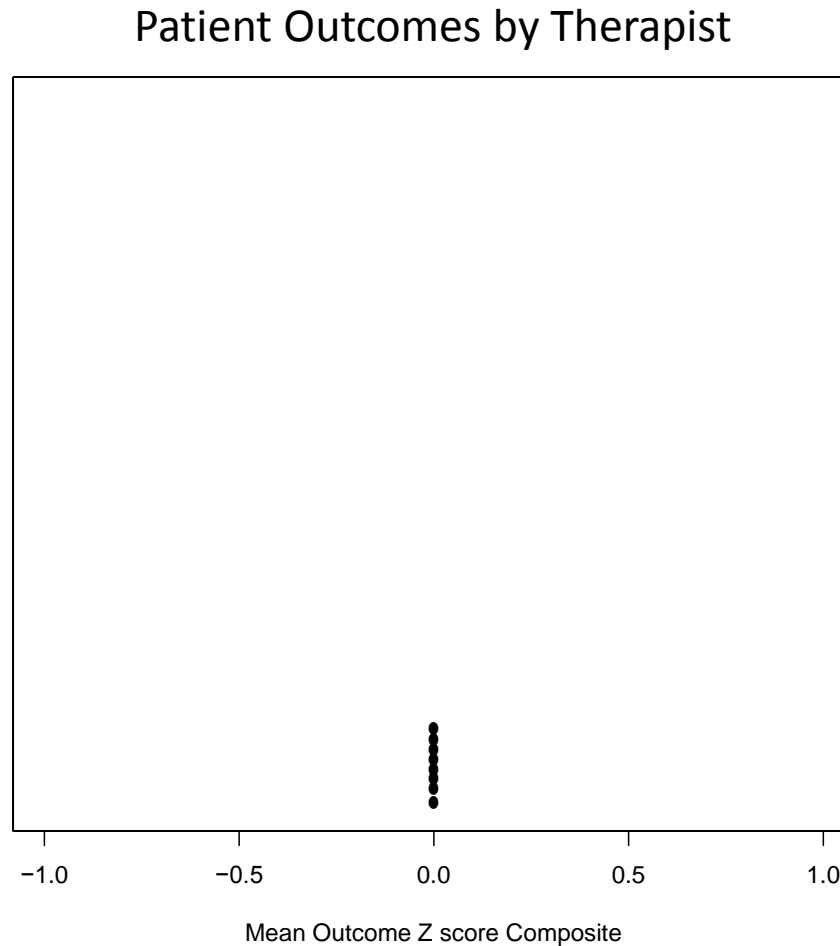
Therapist responsiveness to the patient's problems/needs/goals (**Plan Compatibility**) is an effective ingredient in psychotherapy.

## Correlation Between Plan Compatibility and Outcome

Outcome domains	Plan compatibility of therapist intervention (late session)
<b>Symptomatic Change:</b>	
SCL-90 GSI	-.345
BPRS	-.649
<b>Individualized Change:</b>	
Target Complaints	-.500
Goal Attainment	.486
<b>Global Change:</b>	
Overall Change	.548
GAS	.513

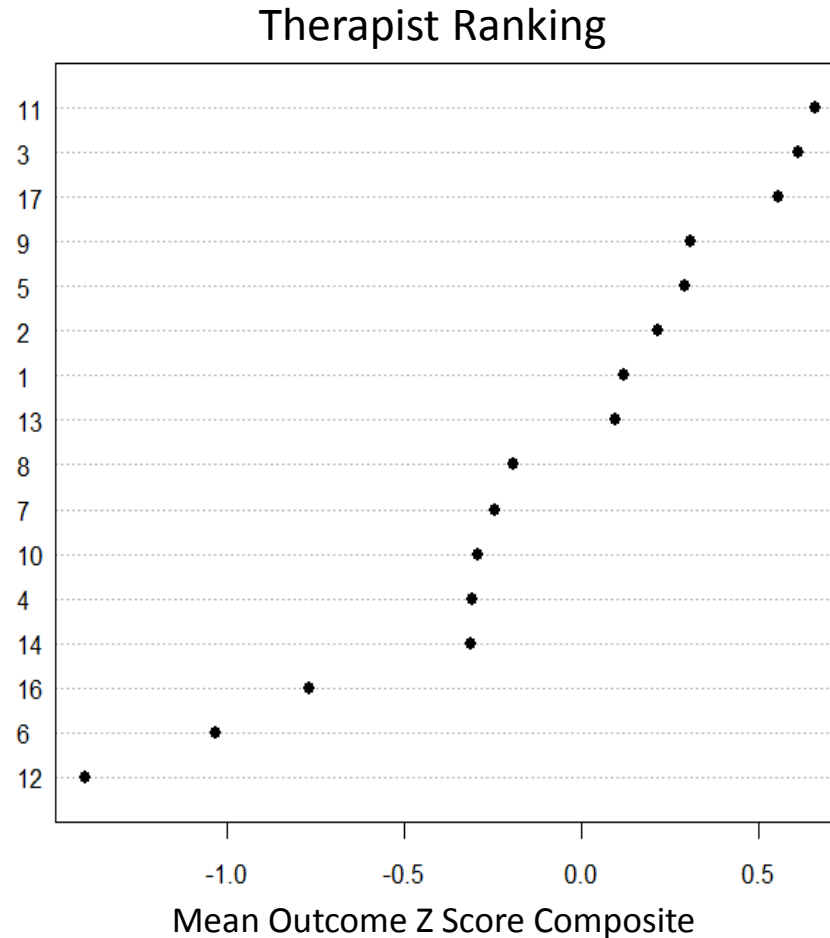
Let's see how this relates to therapist effects.

# Hypothetical outcome distribution if all therapists are comparable



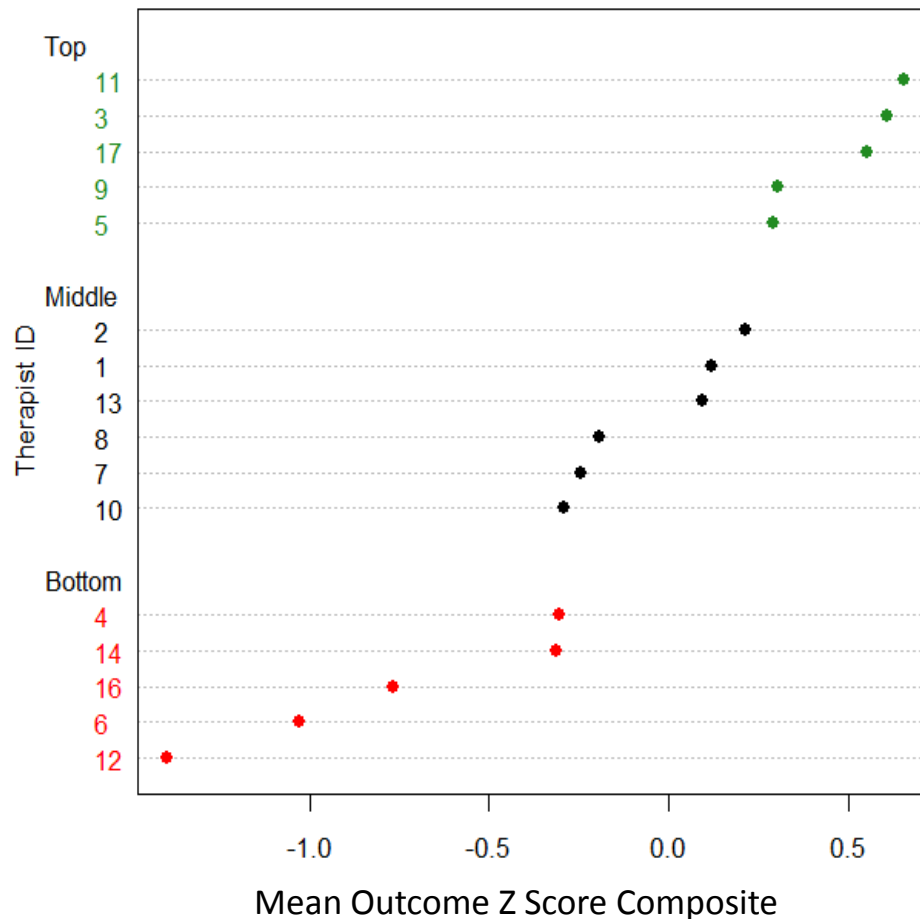
# And here is some real data...

(mean outcome z-scores for 16 therapists' caseloads)



# Same data showing top, middle, and bottom group of therapists

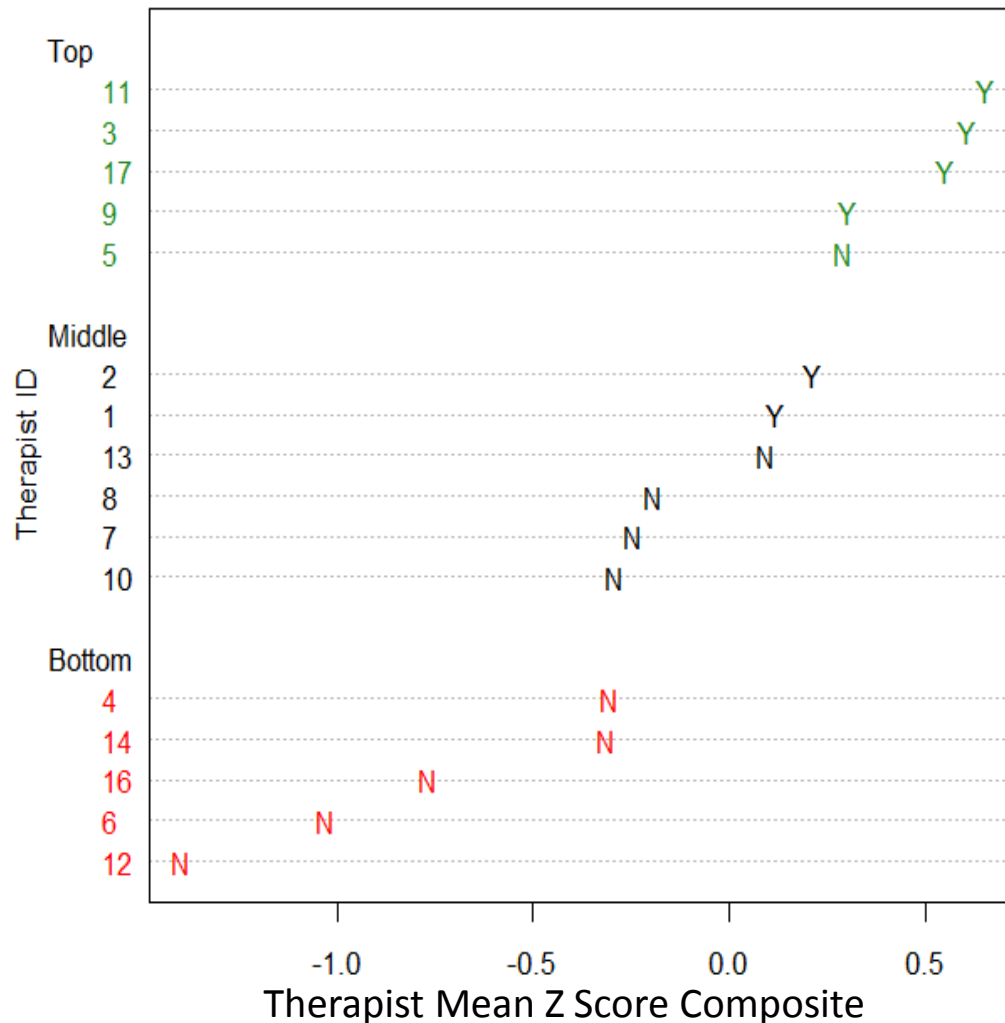
Therapist Ranking Grouped by Top, Middle and Bottom Outcome Scores



# What differentiates the most effective therapists?

Therapist Ranking Grouped by Top, Middle and Bottom Outcome Scores

Plan Formulation Therapist: Y=yes, N=no

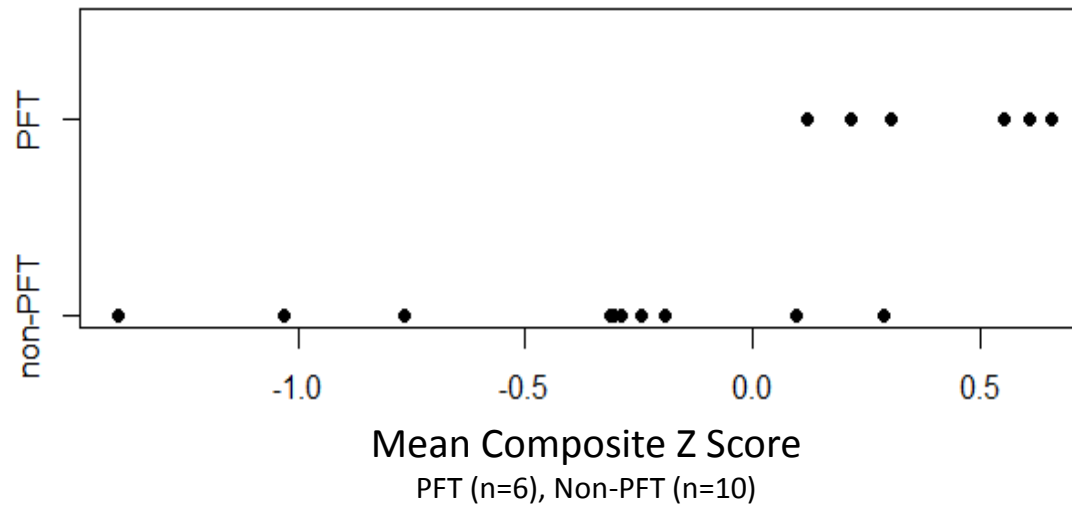




# Comparison of PFT and Non-PFT Outcomes

## Mann Whitney Rank Sum Test

$p < .0005$

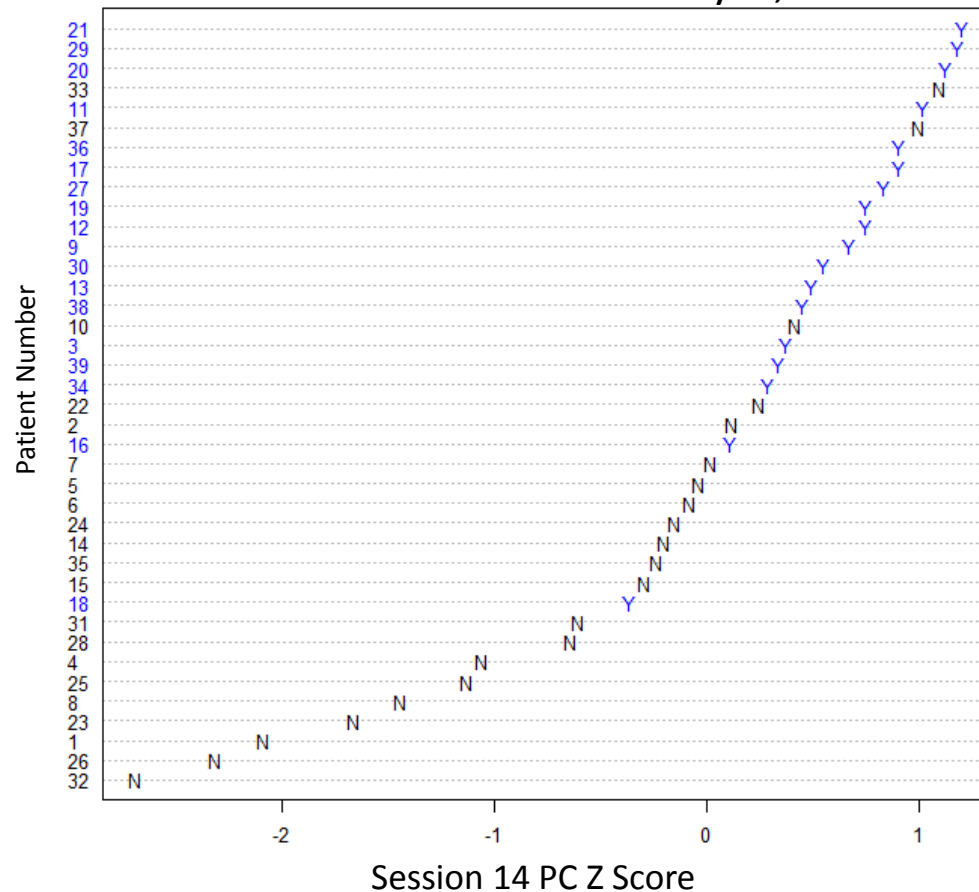


Are PFT Therapists delivering  
Plan Compatible Interventions?

# Therapist Plan Compatibility Ratings for a late session

Session 14 PC Ratings

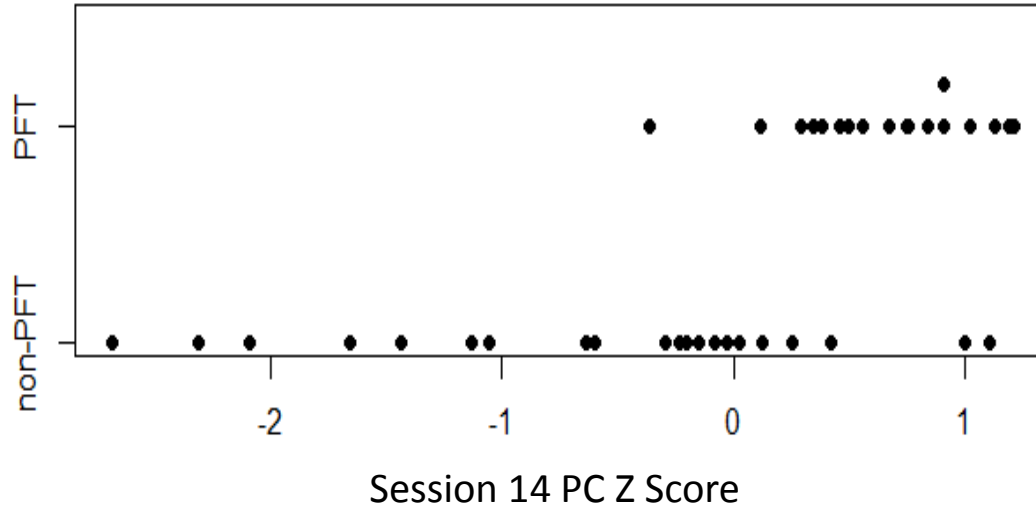
Plan Formulation Trained Y=yes, N=no



# Comparison of PFT and Non-PFT PC Ratings (Session 14)

Mann Whitney Rank Sum Test

$p < .0001$



# Conclusions

- Supershrinks can be identified
- Possible to assess elements of therapy that differentiate them from their counterparts
- Degree of responsiveness to the patient's needs/problems/goals – plan compatibility – is one likely element.