

Zeaiter N, Ghandour MA, Hayek M, Farfour I, Dabbous A, Hajj Hassan MA, Haidar Ahmad H, Al Hussein H, Abou-Mrad F. Physician and Patient Perceptions of Physical Touch in Primary Care Consultations in Lebanon: A Qualitative Study. Int J Clin Res [Internet]. 2020Sep.21 [cited 2020Sep.21];1(1):45-57. Available from: <https://ijcrcentral.com/index.php/IJCR/article/view/14>

Supplementary Appendix

I- Physician interviews

- **Participant demographics:**
 - a) Sex
 - b) Ethnicity
- **How many years have you been qualified as a General Practitioner (GP)?**
- **How long have you worked at this practice?**
- **Can you tell me a little bit about your practice?**
 - a) Size of practice list
 - b) Mixed patient demographics?
 - c) Teaching practice?
 - d) Particular interests within the practice?

The purpose of this study is looking at different factors involved in ongoing GP-patient relationships.

- **Can you think of any patients with whom you would say you have an ongoing relationship with, perhaps someone who has chronic problems and whom you see regularly?**
 - a) Can you tell me a little about this patient?
- **How would you describe your relationship with this patient?**
 - a) What do you think is good about it?
 - b) Is there anything that is negative about the relationship?
 - c) In what way do you think this relationship benefits you/the patient?
- **Could you talk me through the last consultation you had with this patient?**
- **From reading the literature and speaking to other GPs, one discussion point that has arisen is the use of physical contact in some consultation. For example, do you shake hands with patients? If yes, what purpose does it serve?**
 - a) Which patients do you shake hands with?
 - b) Why/why not?
 - c) Do you think patients like it? Why/why not?
- **Can you think of the last time (or any time) that you used physical contact with a patient, other than when you were examining them? Can you describe that situation?**

Why did you do this?

- a) How did it make you feel?
- b) How do you think it made the patient feel?
- c) Do you do this often?
- **Do patients ever become distressed or upset in consultations?**
 - a) How do you deal with this?
 - b) From reading the literature and speaking to some other GPs, some people have said they use physical touch sometimes in these situations. Have you ever done this?
 - a. Why do you think you did this?
 - b. What was the purpose of this action?
 - c. How do you think it made the patient feel?
 - d. How did it make you feel?
 - e. Do you do this often?

- f. Are there any patients with whom you are more/less likely to do this with?
- **Can you think of any situations in which you would be more/less likely to use physical contact with patients?**
 - a) When?
 - b) Why?
 - c) Are there any other ways of doing this? (e.g. offering tissues – does this have the same impact and effect as physical contact?)
 - **Have you ever been in a situation when you've used physical contact with a patient and it hasn't worked?**
 - a) What happened?
 - b) Why do you think this happened?
 - c) How do you think it made the patient feel?
 - **What about when patients touch you?**
 - **One idea that has come up from other interviews is the idea that how well you know the patient affects how likely you are to use physical contact with them. What do you think this means?**
 - **Another discussion point that has come up is about doctors occasionally becoming upset and showing these emotions in front of patients. What do you think about this?**

II- Patient interviews

- **Demographics:**
 - **Sex:**
 - **Age:**
 - **Religion:**
 - **Location:**
 - **Employment status:**
 - **Highest qualification:**
- 1. Do you have any **health problems** you see your doctor regularly about?
 - Can I ask you to describe these?
What are the main things that are problems at present?
- 2. **Who supports you** most with these health problems?
- 3. How **often** do you tend to go to the doctor?
- 4. Do you have a **regular doctor** that you see at the practice?
 - Why do you choose to see this doctor in particular?
 - Can you tell me about a recent consultation?
 - Have there been any significant consultations in the past that you can think of that made an impact on you, or resulted in a change in your situation?
 - What we're particularly interested in is the relationship between you and your doctor, how do you feel the relationship with this doctor is?
 - (a) What's good about it and what is not good and Why?
 - (b) Could anything improve this relationship?
- 5. Some people have described their doctor as a **friend**, whereas others have thought of it more as a **working relationship**, what are your views on this?

Nonverbal communication

1. Are there any non-verbal things that your doctor does that you think are beneficial?
 - Some people have said they really know their doctor is **listening/sympathizing** with them because of the way they act (such as eye contact, leaning forward) can you relate to this?

Touch

1. Some doctors like to **shake hands** with patients at the beginning or end of the consultation, what do you think about this?
 - Does your doctor do this?
 - How does it make you feel?

- At what point in the consultation did this happen?
- 2. Sometimes when people visit the doctor they get **upset**, has this ever happened to you?
- 3. If you got upset, what would you **expect your doctor to do**?
 - What would you like them to do?
- 4. Some people say that in consultations with the doctor when they were upset the doctor has leaned over and put a **hand on their shoulder**, how does that sound to you?
 - Can you think of a situation when something like this has happened to you?
- 5. Have you ever been in a situation where you feel your **doctor got upset**?
 - How do you feel about doctors showing emotion during consultations?
 - How would you feel if, for instance, your doctor was to cry?
- 6. Some people have described how the doctor may put reach out and touch them during a consultation, such as putting a hand on their arm, **how do you feel about doctors using physical contact with patients in the consultation**, other than during a formal examination such as listening to your chest?
 - What situations might this be ok?
 - Are there any situations where you wouldn't like it?
- 7. We've talked about instances where a doctor might touch a patient, what do you think about **patients touching doctors**, for example, giving them a hug?
 - Have you ever done anything like this?
 - Have you ever wanted to do this?

Knowing

1. Do you feel your **doctor knows you**?
 - How do you think doctors knowing (or not knowing) patients affects their care?
2. Do you feel **you know your doctor**?
 - How does knowing (or not knowing) your doctor affect your relationship/your medical care?
 - Are there any situations where you would prefer to see a doctor who you don't know or who doesn't know you?
 - What do you think about patients knowing doctors? explore boundaries.

Closing

1. Is there anything else you would like to add to what we've talked about today, or expand on?

Reference

Cocksedge S, George B, Renwick S, Chew-Graham CA. Touch in primary care consultations: qualitative investigation of doctors' and patients' perceptions. *Br J Gen Pract.* 2013 Apr;63(609):e283-90. doi: 10.3399/bjgp13X665251. PMID: 23540485; PMCID: PMC3609476. <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp13X665251>