

## **EP08.08**

### **GP's attitudes towards participating in emergency medicine: A qualitative study**

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**Background and Aim:** Health authorities want to increase GP participation in emergency medicine, but the role of the GP in this context is a matter of controversy. We aimed to gain insight into GPs' attitudes towards participating in call outs.

**Method:** Focus group interviews with GPs at four rural or remote casualty clinics in Norway were analysed using thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke. The GPs had experience ranging from one to 32 years.

**Results:** The GPs felt that their role has changed from being the only provider of emergency care to now being one of many. In particular, the Emergency Medical Technician teams (EMT) has evolved and may manage well without a physician. Consequently, the GPs get less experience and feel more uncertain when encountering emergencies. Nevertheless the GPs wanted to participate in call outs. They believed that their presence contribute to better patient care, and that the community appreciated it. Being on-site on a regular basis was seen as vital to maintain skills as they sometimes handle medical emergencies on their own. The GPs had difficulties explaining how to decide whether to participate in call outs. Decisions were perceived as difficult due to insufficient information, and the GPs had divergent approaches to similar cases.

**Conclusions:** Although their role may have changed, GPs still play a part in rural emergency medicine. By participation in call outs the GPs can maintain their skills and improve patient care in several ways, but further research is needed to help policy makers and clinicians to decide when the presence of a GP really counts.