

W34

What keeps the family doctor happy?

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Background: Many countries experience great difficulties to recruit family doctors, or keep them from quitting. Burn-Out Syndrome is a rather common problem. On the other hand there are family doctors, who are enthusiastic and happy on their jobs, even after many years. Factors influencing job satisfaction in GPs are poorly understood. Individual characteristics as well as motivations and expectations towards being a GP might have an impact on job satisfaction. Working conditions have been subject to significant changes for the last years, adding to the problems. Using the workshop participants' many years of experience should help to identify possible predictors for job satisfaction, and to collect knowledge on working conditions that help or hinder GPs staying happily on their job. Aims: The workshop will use the experience of the workshop attendees, working in many different health systems, to analyze capabilities, strengths and resources needed to successfully work as a GP.

Methods:

1. Open ended key questions are defined.
2. The facilitator introduces the topic and poses the questions.
3. Small groups of about six are formed to discuss the questions, sitting at round tables, hosted by a "coffee house owner". Ideas are written on the table covered by a paper – e.g. based on mindmaps.
4. After 15 minutes the group changes tables, except for one participant, who hosts the next group, presenting the predecessor's results, then a new discussion starts combining views from both groups.
5. This rotating principle continues till the time specified.
6. Participants return to the large group for a final 20 minute session to share thoughts, insights and ideas.

Results: Doctors will analyze the challenges of General Medicine: what kind of skills, abilities and attitudes does it need, which system characteristics facilitate or jeopardize job satisfaction. They will reflect the gaps between expectations and reality, and on their possible effect on the way they feel about their jobs after many years in practice.