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Theoretical framework for a study of WONCA women: influencing professional resilience of female family doctors during lifecycle transitions

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With the WONCA Working Party on Women and Family Medicine (WWPWF) we are embarking on a study titled “What do female family doctors believe influences their professional resilience during lifecycle transition events?”. The objectives are to:

1. Explore the types of lifecycle transitions experienced by female family doctors and the commonalities in resilience used.
2. Understand the individual, organisational and systemic factors common to all participants that can facilitate or act as a barrier to resilience.
3. Elicit key strategies for maintaining resilience through lifecycle transitions.
4. Utilise the research findings to develop recommendations for individuals and workplaces to help develop and maintain professional resilience amongst women family doctors.

in the initial phase of the study a literature review was performed and focus groups were held at four international conference workshops (in London, Dubai, Taipei and Denver). Then themes were tested that emerged from these focus groups at the Wonca Europe 2015 workshop in Istanbul. The data collected so far has provided a framework within which factors can be categorized and ranked. We plan to formally test our current framework, explore the themes further, and gather richer data through qualitative methodology, using in-depth semi-structured interviews with female family doctors from all seven WONCA regions; Africa, Asia Pacific, Eastern Mediterranean, Europe, Iberoamerica, North America and South Asia. The interview topic guide will be piloted at a workshop at the Wonca World Conference 2016, to ensure it is appropriate to doctors globally.

in this workshop we will present the background and findings of our scoping work, and then spend time considering the most appropriate epistemology and theoretical framework for the study. Delegates do not need to have expertise in qualitative research or theory, just an interest in the topic and willingness to explore ideas through discussion.