

**W78**

**The strength of Family Medicine Research in Europe**

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**Background & Aim:** Research is a key pillar of a clinical discipline, thus the variation in the strength of primary care in different countries could be partly explained by the differences in the research strength in the subject in each country. The objective of this project was to determine the strength of research and compare it with measures of the strength of primary care. The aim of the workshop will be to refine the findings of the Delphi process and quantitative analysis.

**Method:** A two-phase Delphi process involving 20 Family physicians drawn from each WONCA region was conducted in order to identify the most relevant variables in assessing primary care research strength. The final variables selected and available were (Number of publications in peer reviewed journals per year over past 5 years; Number of FM researchers; Numbers of departments of FM with research methodological support posts; Whether training in research methods is part of postgraduate training in FM; Numbers of departments of Family Medicine (FM). Descriptive and bibliometric analyses were conducted in order to describe and analyze the research strength of each country. Cross tabulations, adjusted for population size and GDP, were completed to make international comparisons on a scale from 0-50. Inferential analyses were used to assess the association between research strength and the strength of family practice by country. **Results:** Overall, there was significant variability in research strength within categories of family medicine strength across Europe from 12-50 (GDP adjusted 0.7-1.4). The correlations between research strength and primary care strength were moderate. Weaker primary care systems had a mean unadjusted research strength of and strong primary care had a mean unadjusted research strength of 35.2.

**Conclusions:** Although these data are preliminary there is some support for McWhinney's assertion that research is the fourth pillar of our profession.