

Job satisfaction of Swiss general practitioners with and without proficiency certificate in homeopathy

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Introduction: Job satisfaction and therefore wellbeing of physicians is an important issue in high quality and safety of health care provision. The role of additional qualification in complementary medicine (CM) for job satisfaction of general practitioners (GPs), however, has not been explored. This study compared job satisfaction of conventional and homeopathic Swiss GPs.

Methods: Participants of the Swiss Family Docs Conference 2013 and members of the Swiss Association of Homeopathic Physicians participated in the survey. They indicated the extent of job satisfaction on 17 questions covering patient care, work-related burden, income-prestige, personal rewards, and professional relations.

Results: Data of n=125 GPs with homeopathic proficiency certificate and data of n=143 GPs without any proficiency certificate in CM were analyzed. Overall job satisfaction was high and did not differ between the groups. However, due to lower number of patients per day, homeopathic GPs reported higher satisfaction in relations with patients and with workload, and lower satisfaction with income and in relations with peers compared to conventional GPs. Controlling for further confounding variables (e.g. working hours per week, practice setting), homeopathic GPs reported less satisfaction with their income than their conventional colleagues.

Discussion: Longer consultation time and lower number of patients homeopathic GPs see per day, may allow them to unfold a deeper and more satisfying relationship with their patients and to lessen the workload. However, this comes along with financial discontent compared to conventional GPs. Certification in homeopathy and increased consultation time, respectively, may represent a way to enhance GPs' job satisfaction.