

P-892 - REVIEW OF DURATION OF DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIPS IN A COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

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Introduction: The therapeutic relationship between clinician and patient is seen as a critically important element in the delivery of mental health care. Despite this there is little published research outlining the number of doctor patient relationships experienced by patients attending a sectorised mental health service.

Objectives/aims: The aim of our study was to give a quantitative analysis of the number and length of doctor patient relationships experienced by patients attending a sectorised community mental health service.

Methods: The medical records of 50 patients were chosen at random in a semi-urban community mental health service in Dublin. Each record was reviewed between 2000 to 2011 in order to establish the number of consultations and the duration of each doctor patient relationship within that time.

Results: The survey revealed that the fifty patients selected had experienced a total of 2,343 consultations (average 47). Each patient had seen on average 14 different doctors (range 1-33) with an average doctor patient relationship lasting 3.4 consultations. Of note more than 50% of all doctor patient relationships were shown to be of 2 consultations or shorter.

Conclusions: Our survey confirms that patients attending a community mental health service experience a large number of short duration doctor patient relationships. We feel that this finding has significant implications regarding the ability of doctors to form therapeutic relationships and thus has further implications for service delivery as well as postgraduate training.