

P01-139 - **SOCIAL ANXIETY AMONG MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA**

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**Objectives:** To study the prevalence of social anxiety problem and potential risk factors that may be associated with social anxiety among Malaysian medical undergraduate students.

**Methods:** Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) and a questionnaire assessing gender, religion, number of siblings, type of previous school and partner status were given to 167 final year medical students at University Malaya.

**Results:** There were 101 respondents of which 56% of the medical students scored > 19 in the Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) suggesting that they may be having social anxiety. However, none of the variables analysed were significantly associated with social anxiety.

**Conclusion:** More than half of the medical students have significant social anxiety symptoms. Students with social anxiety symptoms may find clinical training difficult and this may lead to additional stress and anxiety. This may further decrease academic performance. There is also evidence to suggest that stress during undergraduate training may result in psychological or emotional impairment during professional life and therefore affect the quality of patient care. Furthermore, untreated social anxiety may lead to other complications such as depression and substance abuse. It may also affect their choice of future specialties and prevent them from pursuing what they really want. It is recommended that medical undergraduates be routinely screened for social anxiety in view of its high prevalence, and interventive measures can then be instituted.