

## P02-118 - STUDENT CAREER CHOICE IN PSYCHIATRY - PHASE 1 - A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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**Introduction:** The chronic worldwide shortage of psychiatrists has impaired the delivery of first class mental health care (WHO 2008). This international project funded by a World Psychiatric Association grant proposes to examine and compare the effects of country-specific undergraduate and postgraduate factors involved in medical student choice of a psychiatric career. Phase 1 focussed on identifying published proven and novel modifiable factors to improve psychiatric recruitment.

**Method:** We searched EMBASE, PsychInfo and Medline using the keywords 'career psychiatry', 'medical education', and 'career choice'. All 206 papers retrieved using the combined search were reviewed and categorized thematically.

**Results:** Findings are summarised under three themes:

- Pre-medical school factors: arts & social sciences qualifications, attitudes towards mental illness, high uncertainty tolerance, liberal political views, gender and life goals.
- Medical school factors: availability of psychology/sociology/special-studies modules, electives; length of clinical placement; exposure to motivated patients and effective treatment; quality of teaching and good role models; and conversely negative attitudes from other specialities.
- Post-graduate factors: availability of early clinical posts in psychiatry, work-life balance, remuneration.

### **Conclusions:**

- Studies have been limited by small sample sizes, unicentricity, and datedness, given the major reorganisations of mental health services and postgraduate training in many countries.
- During the next stage we will generate the first multicountry comparison, with sufficient power to detect differences in factors influencing a psychiatric career choice at personal, institutional and national level. We will focus on factors that may be modifiable by policy to positively influence career choice towards psychiatry.