

## The type of psychiatrists that patients want; a study in secondary care

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areas

important. This indicates specific areas of improvement for training and further research.



### Abstract

Patient involvement and considering patient preferences are central principles in healthcare. There appears to be no research to-date investigating patients' preferences for socio-cultural characteristics or behavioural qualities of psychiatrists. In addition, there is a dearth of literature examining patient involvement for improving professional performance in medicine. It can take up to 17 years for research to translate into practice in the UK, but this could be decreased if we maximise the role of patients in professional development.

### Aims

We aimed to assess which characteristics of psychiatrists are most important to patients. This examined socio-cultural characteristics, behaviours and gender bias.

### Method

We conducted a survey of patients (132) in community mental health teams across two sites (East Cornwall, East London). Patients completed a brief questionnaire ranking the importance of different socio-cultural characteristics and behaviours of psychiatrists.

### Results

Patients cared more about age and gender than religion, social background or marital status, but the majority were not concerned with any of these factors. Four clear preferences (from a choice of ten) regarding behavioural qualities were identified as important: explaining things clearly, dedication to personal treatment, being friendly and polite and up to date with medical knowledge. Optimism and recommendation by patients or general practitioners were not as important.

### Conclusions

Patients are fairly unconcerned about age, gender, religion and social background of psychiatrists. Characteristics they care about most include communication skills, competence, dedication to personal treatment and friendliness. Explaining things clearly is particularly

### Biography:

Rajaei Sharma is a 26 year old medical student at the University of Exeter. Before studying medicine he completed a BSc (Hons) at St George's University, London and a PGCert at University College London. He has published several papers including, most recently, in RadioGraphics.

### Speaker Publications:

1. Rajaei Sharma, Mental health in the Covid-19 pandemic, *QJM: An International Journal of Medicine*, hcaa110, 30 March 2020
2. Rajaei Sharma, North, C. Mental Health and the Covid-19 Pandemic, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 13 April 2020
3. Rajaei Sharma, et al. Long-term psychological and occupational effects of providing hospital healthcare during SARS outbreak. *Emerg Infect Dis* 2006;12;1924-32

[30th Euro Congress on Psychiatrists and Psychologists;](#)  
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<https://europe.psychiatryconferences.com/speaker/2020/rajaei-sharma-r-nuniversity-of-exeter-medical-school-r-n>