



MEDIA RELEASE

Singaporean doctors unimpressed with their own services: new survey

A new survey of 1,000 doctors in four countries shows that doctors in Singapore are less satisfied with the quality of care they provide than their peers in other countries. The survey was conducted for *Medicine and Liberty*, an independent, non-partisan physician network, based in Switzerland.

Only 29% of Singaporean doctors are satisfied with the quality of healthcare they deliver, significantly fewer than their counterparts in the US and Switzerland (75% and 64% respectively). 30% of German doctors are satisfied with this area – comparable to Singapore.

However, most of Singapore doctors' dissatisfaction is down to bureaucracy and other 'non-clinical' factors, with their biggest complaint being the limited amount of time they have to spend with each patient.

However, only 9% of Singaporean doctors are dissatisfied with the levels of freedom they have to choose which medicines, treatments and procedures to give their patients. This compares very favourably with Germany (62%), the United States (47%) and Switzerland (17%). Importantly, around 70% of doctors across all four countries cited physician autonomy as one of the most important elements of good healthcare.

These criticisms notwithstanding, 96% of Singaporean doctors -- knowing what they know today -- would still select a career in medicine if they had to make that choice today; compared to only 76% in the US and 80% in Germany. Fortunately for the integrity of the Singapore health system, only 8% of doctors say they are likely to take early retirement.

Dr Alphonse Crespo, director of Medicine & Liberty, and Swiss orthopaedic surgeon commented: "Although Singaporean doctors seem to be unhappy with the quality of their healthcare system, they should be grateful they have among the highest levels of professional freedom in the world. It is this element that makes the Singaporean health system world class, and it should be jealously defended."



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Notes for editors:

The study was commissioned by Swiss organisation Medicine and Liberty, and was conducted by the Consensus **Research** Group, Inc.

. A total of 1,000 doctors surgeon and general practitioners (65%) in the four countries were interviewed via an online questionnaire. The questions covered topics from how the role of doctors in society, the influence of insurance companies on the doctor-patient relationship to access to medical innovations. The interviews were carried out August and September 2010.

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