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## Original articleAre patients satisfied with medical care in public hospital outpatient services?

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Hospitals are an important aspect of society having the tremendous responsibility to promote the health of the community it serves. The role of healthcare providers is not merely to cure diseases and provide medical treatment to their patients but to deliver a patient centered service which is closely matched and responsive to patient needs, wants and preferences.

**Objective:** To study patient satisfaction in the medical (specialty) and cardiology (super-specialty) outpatient departments of a general hospital and the need to improve the same

**Method:** The study was initiated in 50 patients each attending the OPDs of medicine and cardiology after institutional ethics committee approval and informed consent. A semi structured proforma was prepared to collect information and Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire & Improving Practice Questionnaire were used to study patient perceptions.

**Results:** Both groups were comparable on the demographic variables. Patients attending cardiology OPDs felt more satisfaction than the medical patients on the subscales of technical quality and communication by doctors which was statistically significant. No differences were seen in both group on the need to improve practice or doctor/staff behavior.

**Conclusions:** This study highlights issues of patient satisfaction in a large public hospital. Communication skills should be introduced as a module for doctors, staff nurses and other employees with a regular feedback obtained from the patients every 6 months to see if it is being implemented.

**Key words:**  Patient satisfaction, public hospital, outpatient services