

## P01-274 - MEDICALLY UNEXPLAINED SYMPTOMS - A PERSPECTIVE FROM GENERAL PRACTITIONERS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

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**Objectives:** In this study, we explored the attitudes towards Medically Unexplained Symptoms (MUS) of 500 GP's in Karachi, Pakistan. Using a questionnaire previously developed by Reid et al (2001), we aimed to investigate whether GP's attitudes towards medically unexplained symptoms are similar to those of GP's in the developed world.

**Methods:** 500 GP's on the database of primary care centres at the Pakistan Institute of Learning and Living in Karachi, were all sent a covering letter explaining the purpose of the survey with a case vignette, a questionnaire, and a stamped addressed envelope. One month later, non-respondents received a telephone call from an investigator to remind them of the study.

**Results:** Of the 429 respondents, 68.5% (294) were male and 31.5% (135) female. Although 80.2% of respondents felt that the main role of GP's was to provide support and reassurance, 76.9% of respondents also agreed that GP's had a role in referring patients with MUS for further investigations to identify a cause. 204 (47.55%) respondents agreed that somatization was useful concept, only 146 (34.03%) felt that there was effective treatment for it.

**Conclusion:** For the most part Pakistani GPs' attitudes towards MUS are similar to those of their counterparts in the West. Both agree that the GP had an important role in providing reassurance and counselling. However, our survey also shows that Pakistani GP's are less likely to place emphasis on an underlying psychiatric diagnosis and tend to focus on looking for an underlying physical cause.