

## Appendix A

### **Research Participant Information Sheet**

#### **The Challenges of Developing/Evolving Empathy in Junior Doctors: Understanding their Perspective**

##### **Principal Researcher**

Dr Atiya Rahman

Associate Professor, Department of Dermatology, CMH Lahore Medical College, Lahore, Pakistan

##### **Supervisor**

Dr Linda Jones

Senior Lecturer CME Univeristy of Dundee/ Dissertation Module Lead

Dear Participant,

First of all I would like to inform you that I am doing my Masters in Medical Education from the University of Dundee, UK. For my research project I have chosen this topic as I believe the study results can expand our clinical environments in offering better healthcare facilities. I would like to invite you to join this study. It is a qualitative study designed to understand your perceptions about empathy, as junior doctors. You will be asked to consider your understanding of empathy.

In my experience we all aspire to be a great clinician, to have excellent clinical skills and to deliver patientcare efficiently. Some argue that another facet of efficient patientcare is compassion, the ability to care about the patient and empathize with his or her situation. I want to find out how you, as junior doctors, perceive concepts and practice of empathy, compassion and patient care and how the current clinical learning environment influences it. By being a part of the study you will help me understand young doctors' perceptions of empathy; and whether and how the curriculum might be enhanced in ways that optimize patient care. I would like to know your views about which aspects/facets in the clinical learning environment positively and negatively influence empathy towards and compassion for the patients? There will be no right or wrong perspectives and all views will be acceptable.

The study aims to make a difference to how we address empathy within the curriculum; to identify these issues and to present the study findings at relevant symposium. The study findings can potentially provide a platform to enhance the learning and developmental opportunities in future, in our clinical setup.

##### **Procedures**

Ethical approval has been awarded by the local Research Review Board of Combined Military Hospital Lahore, as well as, University of Dundee's relevant School Research Ethics Committee (SREC).

Attachment 1 to: Rahman A, Jones L. *Perspectives and understanding of empathy development amongst junior doctors in Pakistan: Challenges and opportunities*. GMS J Med Educ. 2022;39(3):Doc33. DOI: 10.3205/zma001554

The data shall be gathered by focus group (approximately 6 participants) discussions which will last no more than one hour. You will be invited to make comments, express ideas and share views about your own experiences as junior doctors. There will be no right or wrong opinions as I am interested in your views. The dates and venues of these discussions will be negotiated and agreed at convenient times.

The discussions will be audiotaped during the entire period, to capture the conversation. I will take notes during the interview to help me capture details of our discussion. The audiotape and my notes will be transcribed verbatim, anonymized and held securely. After the completion of my Masters Programme the audiotapes shall be destroyed and only anonymized data will be held securely after the completion of the study will be the property of the hospital. After a lapse of ten years it shall be destroyed.

### **Possible risks/ mitigating circumstances and benefits to subject &/to society**

There may be no direct benefit to you as an individual but hopefully you will contribute to CMH Lahore Medical College Lahore developing strategies to optimize our learning processes in ways that optimize the quality of health care provision.

There is apparently no risk involved in this study except your valuable time. I acknowledge that there is a remote risk of emotional or psychological distress to you while focus groups are going on. I would ensure referral to the concerned staff for counselling or emotional support. Similarly, if during the interview, you or any other participant reveals something that has the possibility to put themselves or others at risk; it needs to be reported to the concerned authorities.

### **Researcher Role**

My role in this project shall be of a researcher and of a Masters student undertaking my dissertation. The interviews are not an assessment of any kind. Confidentiality will be maintained about the contents of the focus groups. I want to conduct this study to genuinely understand the perceptions and development of empathy in the junior doctors in our hospital setting.

### **Right of refusal to participate and withdrawal**

You are free to choose to participate in the study or not. Your residency/internship status shall not be affected by whether or not you choose to participate in the study. If you choose to participate you still may choose not to answer some or all the questions if you don't feel comfortable with those questions. If a participant wishes to withdraw from the study after the data has been gathered, in case of focus group interviews it wouldn't be possible for me to withdraw specific data once collected. Thus, you can withdraw from the study at certain stages if you wish to. You are not expected to give an explanation for your withdrawal.

### **Payment for participation**

You will not receive any payment or other compensation for participation in this study. There is also no cost to you for participation.

Attachment 1 to: Rahman A, Jones L. *Perspectives and understanding of empathy development amongst junior doctors in Pakistan: Challenges and opportunities*. GMS J Med Educ. 2022;39(3):Doc33. DOI: 10.3205/zma001554

## **Confidentiality**

The information provided by you will remain confidential. The University of Dundee dissertation team has the sole role of 'researcher' during this study project. The researchers are bound by the code of ethics to maintain confidentiality. The audiotapes of the group discussion shall be transcribed and anonymized. All the hard copies of the data collection tool will be kept in lock and key and only the team members will have access to the dataset which will be saved on a password protected computer. Your name and identity will also not be disclosed at any time. Anonymous signifiers shall be used. I intend to present the study findings in scientific seminars/symposiums/ conferences/journals. They may be displayed in web pages and other research outputs without breaching confidentiality.

## **Identification of investigator:**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Dr Atiya Rahman

Principal Researcher

Associate Professor, Department of Dermatology

CMH Lahore Medical College

Lahore, Pakistan

## Appendix B

Consent Form for:

### The Challenges of Developing/Evolving Empathy in Junior Doctors: Understanding their Perspective

*Please tick the appropriate boxes*

Yes

#### Taking Part

I have read and understood the research participant information sheet.

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I agree to take part in the project :

**focus group interview**

I understand that my taking part is voluntary; **I can withdraw from the study at any time before the write-up of study in case of individual interviews and before the collection of data in case of focus group discussion.** I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part.

**I understand that my withdrawal from the study will not incur any negative effects on my residency/internship**

I understand that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs but never ascribed to me by name.

**Use of the information I provide beyond this project**

I agree for the data I provide to be archived at the Combined Military Hospital, Lahore, Pakistan.

I understand that other researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.

I understand that other genuine researchers may use my words in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of participant [printed]                      Signature    Date

**Project contact details for further information:**

Dr Atiya Rahman  
Associate Professor of Dermatology  
CMH Lahore Medical College, Pakistan

**Notes:**

The audiotapes shall be destroyed after the completion of the study. The transcripts shall be destroyed after a lapse of ten years, after the completion of the project.

## Appendix C

### Question Guides

#### The Challenges of Developing/Evolving Empathy in Junior Doctors: Understanding their Perspective

##### Focus Group Discussion (modified from Creswall, 2012)

*Time of Interview:*

*Date:*

*Place:*

*Moderator/Facilitator:*

*Allocated identification codes of the participants:*

[Give a brief introduction here the project, telling the participants about (a) the purpose of the study, (b) the individuals and sources of data being collected, (c) what will be done with the data to protect the confidentiality of the participants (d) how long the interview will take.]

[The observer turns on the tape recorder]

*Questions:*

1. What do you understand by the term empathy?
2. How do you think the clinical environment/ experiences influence the empathic ability positively?
3. How important do you perceive empathy is in patient care?
4. Which clinical experiences do you believe helped you to develop empathy?
5. How do you think the clinical environment/ experiences influence the empathic ability negatively?
6. What educational strategies, do you think, might optimize the development of empathetic junior doctors?
8. Anything else which you think as relevant aspect about empathy worth discussing?

[Thank the individuals for their cooperation and participation in this discussion. Assure them of the confidentiality of the responses and the potential for future clarifications/elaborations once data is analyzed]

Using probes as needed. For example:

- Would you give me an example?
- Can you elaborate on that idea?
- Would you explain that further?
- I'm not sure I understand what you're saying.
- Is there anything else?

### **Researcher's introductory remarks and laying down ground rules in FGD**

Greetings,

Thank you for coming here. I appreciate your efforts to take out the time from your busy schedules. Let me first introduce myself. I am Dr Atiya. You may know me in a different capacity but here I am as a researcher only. As I have mentioned in the participant information leaflet this study is for my masters in medical education.

I want to assure you that this discussion is not an assessment of any kind. It has absolutely no bearing on your work. Whatever you say or you decline to say during this FGD will not impact your internship/residency.

Confidentiality shall be maintained about the contents of the discussion. I shall transcribe the data verbatim and every individual shall be given a specific code not traceable to them. I will also take few notes to capture the essence of the discussion. All the hard copies of the data collection tool will be kept in lock and key and only the team members will have access to the dataset which will be saved on a password protected computer.

The discussion shall not last more than an hour. I have jotted down a few pertinent questions and I shall put them across one by one for all the group members to discuss amongst themselves. I would appreciate if you all contribute. At the same time, it's your free choice to decline to answer any or all of the questions.

I genuinely want to understand the perceptions and development of empathy for junior doctors learning in the clinical environments in our part of the world. I want you to share your experiences with all of us. They may also be of hospitals other the current one you are working in.

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Let us first determine **some ground rules**. And **“we” will all stick with them** (I included myself in following the rules):

- Please keep your phones on silent mode
- The discussion will be done primarily in English language. (English is not our mother tongue. However, all our schooling is in English language so all are quite proficient in English)
- Please speak one person at a time so we are able to hear every view clearly.
- Please don't interrupt others; let them finish first.
- Please don't force your opinion on others. We don't have to reach a consensus. Rather I anticipate diverse opinion and every opinion is important for me. So please let everyone talk and air their opinion.
- And talk a bit loudly and clearly for a clear audio recording.

We shall start now. Will you please introduce yourself one by one.