Abstract for the ESH-ISH 2014, Greece

TITLE: Doctors’ views on hypertension care in an academic primary care centre: A qualitative study

Authors: Hanafi NS\textsuperscript{1}, Ng CJ\textsuperscript{1}, Lee PY\textsuperscript{2}, Chia YC\textsuperscript{1}, Wong S\textsuperscript{3}, Lai PSM\textsuperscript{1}, Khoo EM\textsuperscript{1}

Affiliations: \textsuperscript{1}Department of Primary Care Medicine, University of Malaya Primary Care Research Group (UMPCRG), Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, \textsuperscript{2}Department of Family Medicine, University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia, \textsuperscript{3}University of Malaya Primary Care Research Group (UMPCRG), Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Objectives
Hypertension is one of the chronic diseases commonly managed in the primary care setting. Despite having a national Clinical Practice Guidelines on hypertension, its control has not improved. The latest Malaysian National Health and Morbidity Survey reported that only 26% of hypertensive patients treated with medication had achieved target blood pressure. We thus embarked on a study exploring doctors’ views on hypertension care in their local setting. This is an explorative phase to develop an innovation in practice aiming to improve the quality of care among hypertensive patients.

Design and method
We conducted a qualitative study using focus group discussions (FGDs) among doctors in a primary care clinic of University of Malaya Medical Centre. An interview topic guide was developed based on literature review. Four focus groups were conducted among 15 medical officers and four academic staff using purposive sampling. The FGDs were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Framework analysis was used to analyse the data. Two researchers analysed the data independently.

Results
A total of 19 doctors were involved. Participants felt that hypertension care was appropriate. This was supported by the availability of clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) as well as patients being more informed about hypertension. CPGs have improved their knowledge on hypertension, although the challenge lies in implementing the CPGs. Confusion exists when doctors follow certain aspects of guidelines but specialists seemed to have their own way of managing hypertension. Provision of hypertension care varies according to doctors’ clinical experiences. Poor control of hypertension was contributed mainly to patients’ co-morbidities, their non-compliance and therapeutic inertia.

Conclusion
There is a mismatch between current state of blood pressure control and doctors’ views on the care they provide for hypertensive patients.

Keywords: hypertension, primary care, clinical practice guidelines

Word count: 287 (limit 340)