

Analysing patient attitudes towards medical student participation in HIV consultations

Tiral Kothari, Emily Chung, Laura Waters

Background

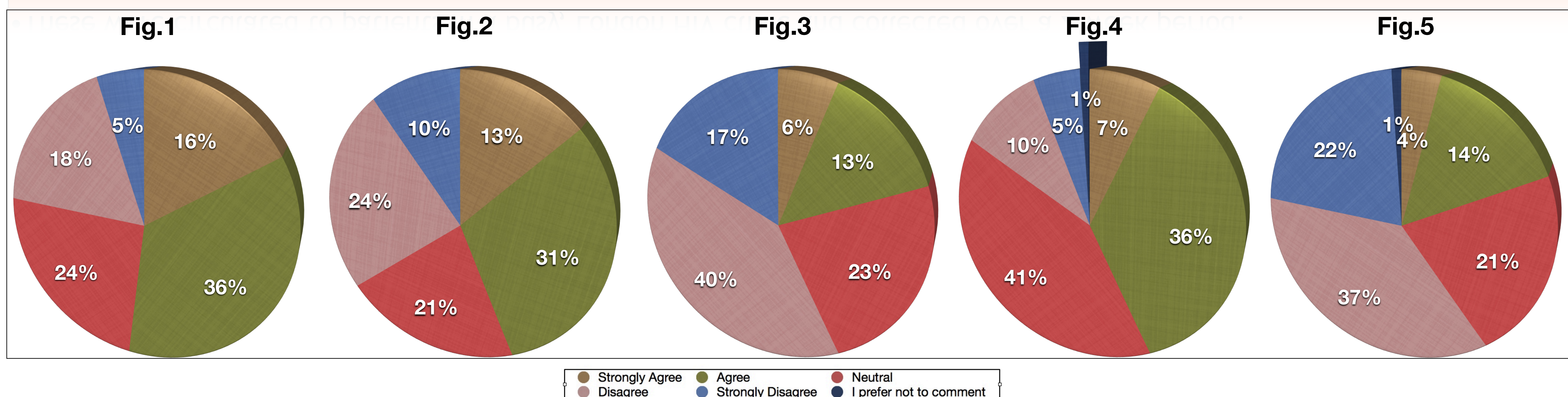
In highly sensitive consultations regarding HIV, there are often medical students present and it is essential that patients are comfortable and have full autonomy over the role that the student assumes within the consultation itself. With minimal literature based on patient experiences with medical students, it is key to understand the improvements required when incorporating students into medical consultations.

Aims of the project

- Explore patient attitudes regarding medical student participation.
- To investigate what improvements can be made in facilitating student/patient interaction

Methods

- We have conducted a pilot study in the the HIV outpatient department in the Mortimer Market Centre, London
- A brief questionnaire composed of 6 questions and an information leaflet explaining the purpose of the study was developed and distributed.
- Questionnaire responses were recorded as per a 5-point likert scale.
- These were circulated to patients in a busy, London HIV clinic and collected over a 2 week period.



Results

- 98 questionnaires were completed in December 2012.
- The results were largely positive, with 76.5% of patients recording positive or neutral responses to medical students observing a consultation (Fig.1)
- However, 34.7% felt reluctant towards students undertaking an active role in the consultation (Fig.2)
- Of concern, 19.4% of the sample associated the presence of students with potential breaches of confidentiality (Fig.3)
- 42.3% believed a leaflet explaining the presence of medical students was helpful (Fig.4)
- The vast majority (92.9%) felt it was necessary to inform them of the presence of a student before they entered the room
- Interestingly, just 18.4% of patients were averse to use of jargon between student/doctor while they were in the room, just 4.1% strongly against this (Fig.6)

Conclusions

Having investigated student/patient interaction it is clear improvements need to be made.

- This could be achieved through leaflets; unfortunately our questionnaire did not elicit which method of communication would be preferred by the patients (more than 50% did not find the leaflet helpful) - a follow-up project is planned.
- Informing patients as to the presence of students, before the patient enters the consultation room was important.
- Finally our questionnaire reveals that in our clinic we particularly need to make efforts to alleviate confidentiality concerns.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all ward staff for distributing and collecting questionnaires and leaflets

Thank you to boehringer-ingenelheim for supporting this research

Central and North West London **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust