Krithika Sundaram

Abstract

Physician extenders have begun to take on responsibilities of physicians. This change in view has occurred for many reasons including: a decreased number of primary care physicians that are available for routine physical examinations and the extensive amount of charting each patient requires. Previous studies have shown that patient satisfaction is equivalent between the two professions, and that further studies need to be done to determine what profession is preferred by patients. This study was designed to measure patient experience and satisfaction with a physician extender and how certain demographics can affect how a respondent answers. It was hypothesized that patients will be satisfied with their experience with a physician extender, but will prefer to see a physician when given the chance. To assess the general public’s opinion about the situation, 200 anonymous surveys were passed out that contained 11 demographic questions and 14 survey questions about physician extender experience and comparison of the two professions. From the survey, it was shown that patients were satisfied with their experience with a physician extender. When comparing the two professions, results showed that circumstances and cost play a role in making a decision of whether to see a physician versus a physician extender. Further studies are recommended to investigate what circumstances cause people to choose a physician extender over a physician. Also, this study concluded that the public should be educated about the different responsibilities of health care providers, so they have all the information they need when seeking medical treatment.