



A Challenge in Taiwanese National Healthcare System Healthcare Workers Perspectives

Daisy Chan^{1,*}, Kevin Hsu^{1,*}, Derek Ochi^{1,*}, Athena Lin¹, Ph.D., Annie Chen²

¹Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Vallejo, CA, 94592,

²Taipei Hospital, New Taipei City, Taiwan, *Equal authorship

Introduction

- Touro University California Class of 2020
- Global Health Summer Internship in Taiwan in Summer 2017
- Taipei Hospital in Xinzhuang district, New Taipei City
- Regional hospital where most patients rely on Taiwan's National Health Insurance (NHI)



Introduction

Single payer healthcare: basic healthcare needs are covered by the government.

- Canada and Taiwan are the only two countries that currently have a single payer healthcare system.
 - Other countries like United Kingdom, Australia and France have a hybrid of single payer health insurance with private insurance

Introduction

- A major advantage of adopting this system is greater accessibility to coverage, regardless of:
 - Age
 - Income
 - Occupation
 - Preexisting medical conditions



Introduction

Countries facing healthcare reform, including the United States, are considering adopting a single payer system.

- However, it remains unclear if the single payer healthcare system promotes cost-effective quality of care.



One approach to understanding this issue is to analyze the opinions of healthcare workers in Taiwan, where the NHI has been well established for 22 years (1995).



Taiwan's NHI is characterized by:

- National data collection systems for planning and research
- Good accessibility
- Comprehensive population coverage
- Short waiting times
- Low cost

Patient satisfaction is high!



Study Objective

Objective: Survey healthcare professionals regarding their opinions on the NHI.

Goal: Shed light on the existing challenges and promote quality of care from the perspective of healthcare providers.

Methods

- We surveyed healthcare workers (physicians and nurses) at Taipei Hospital, using a likert scale, on their opinions of the Taiwanese NHI.
- Hardcopy surveys, written in Chinese, were distributed on June 19, 2017, and a total of 287 surveys were collected anonymously on June 28, 2017.
- The Chi square test was used to determine whether the perceptions on NHI are significantly different between physicians and nurses.

Methods

Survey of Healthcare Workers on the Taiwanese National Health Insurance

Title: _____

Specialty: _____

Years in practice: _____

Age: _____

Gender: M or F

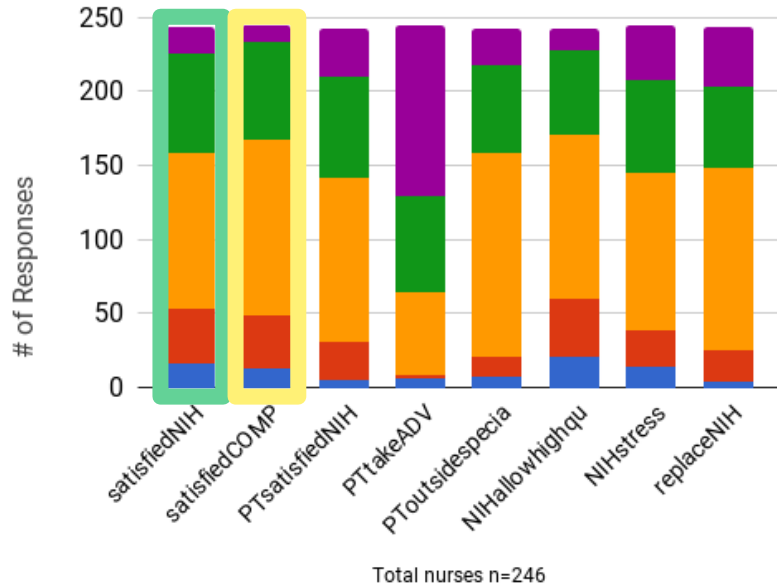
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am satisfied with the national health insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I am satisfied with my pay through the national health insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I believe my patients like the national health insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I believe that the patients take advantage of the national health insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I see patients in my specialty that I believe should be in another specialty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I believe that the national health insurance allows me to give quality care to my patients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I believe Taiwan should have private insurance instead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The national health insurance is a factor to why I feel stressed at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How do you think we can improve the national health insurance system

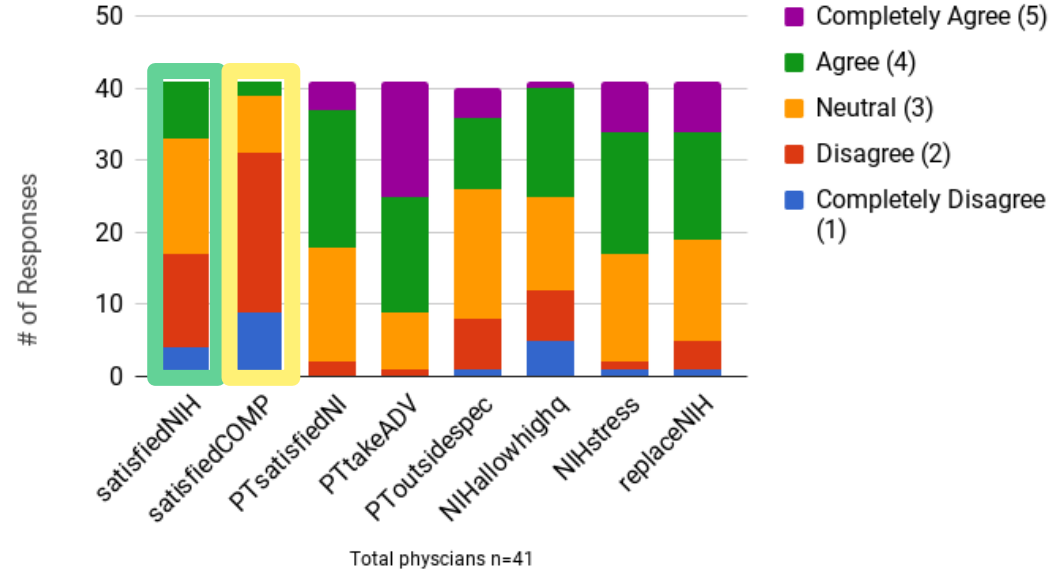
Other thoughts?

Results

Nurses

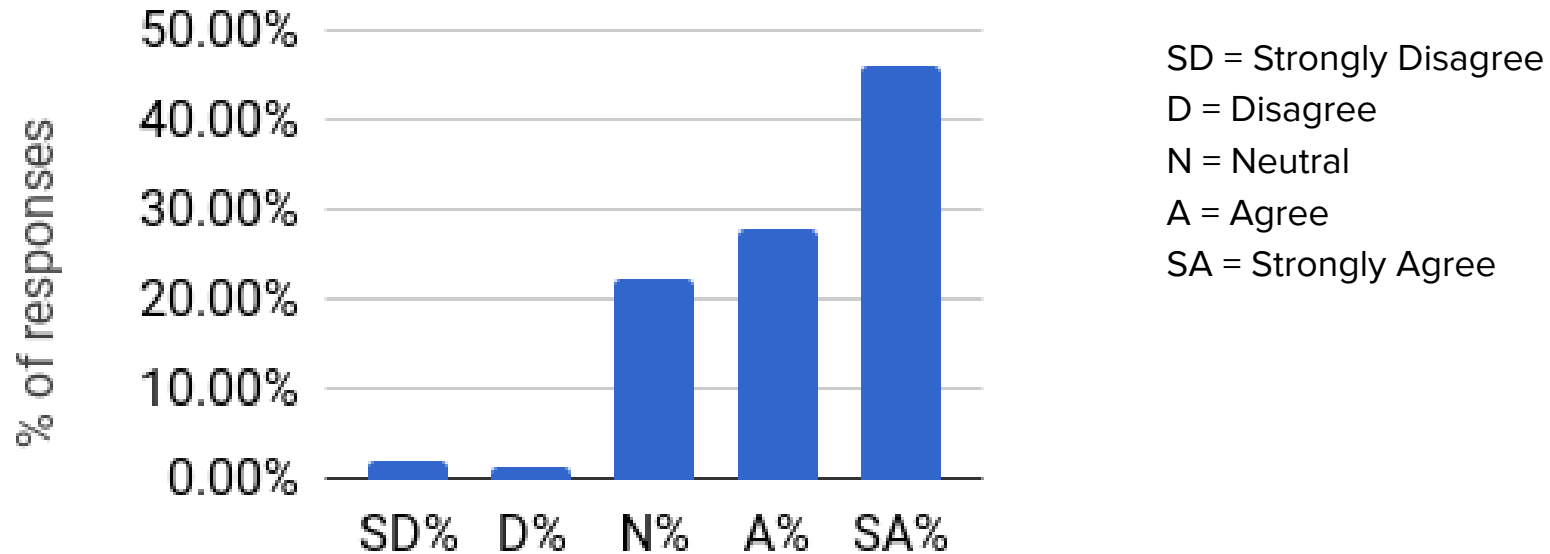


Physicians



- 35% (n=244) of the nurses, compared to 20% (n=41) of the physicians, agreed or strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the NHI ($p = 0.039$)
- 31% (n=245) of the nurses, compared to 4.9% (n=41) of the physicians, agreed or strongly agreed that they are satisfied with their pay through the NHI ($p < 0.0001$)

Results



- 74% of the healthcare workers strongly agreed (46%, n=132) or agreed (28%, n=80) that patients take advantage of the NHI ($p < 0.0001$)

Discussion

- Through the Taiwanese NHI, patients can be seen by specialists without a referral from a primary care doctor.
- Management and distribution of healthcare is often fragmented, allowing patients to over utilize medical resources.
 - This might explain, at least in part, why most healthcare workers believe patients take advantage of the NHI.

Discussion

- Future studies should examine how healthcare workers from different specialties view the NHI, as the ability of patients to bypass their primary care physician may lead to greater demand on specialists.
- A better understanding of the challenges faced by NHI will help develop cost-effective quality care.

Thank you!

Questions?