

# 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Society of Technology Assessment in Health Care (ISTAHC). Edinburgh, United Kingdom, 1999.

## Understanding Physicians' Dedication to the Organisation

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** To explore potential factors associated with the dedication of physicians to the organization.

**Methods:** An individual's motivational structure is determined by the relative importance of three types of motivations: *extrinsic* [EXM] (e.g., earnings, praise), *intrinsic* [INM] (e.g., job interest, challenge) and *transcendent* [TRM] (e.g., the desire to help others). The degree to which the organization satisfies these motivations is determined by its compensatory structure, which is measured in terms of *extrinsic compensation* [EXC] (e.g. remuneration), *intrinsic compensation* [INC] (e.g., job characteristics), and *transcendent compensation* [TRC] (e.g., internal values). The mutual influence between motivation and compensation results in different degrees of individual *dedication* [DED]. We define *dedication* as all those behaviors beneficial to the organization that cannot be contractually required. A previously validated self-administered questionnaire designed to measure these seven variables was mailed in 1997 to a random sample of 3,272 physicians working in Madrid and Barcelona. A 5-point Likert scale was used for all items. Physicians who worked in both the public and private sectors were asked to complete two questionnaires, one for each sector. We built a multiple linear regression model in which the dependent variable was DED and the independent variables were: age [AGE]; gender [GEN]; working sector exclusivity [WSE] (1=exclusively in one sector, public or private; 0=public and private); level [LEV] (1=hospital; 0=primary care); EXM; INM; TRM; EXC; INC; and TRC. An independent variable was considered to be significantly associated with the dependent variable if its regression coefficient had a p-value < 0.05.

**Results:** The questionnaire was completed by 1,185 physicians (36%), of whom 941 (79%) met the inclusion criteria. The average age of respondents was 44 years; 597 (63%) were male; 525 (56%) worked only in the public sector, 83 (9%) worked only in the private sector, and 333 (35%) worked in both. Physicians working in both sectors completed 333 questionnaires for the public and 158 for the private sector. The adjusted independent variables significantly associated with DED were: A) In the public sector ( $R^2=0.30$ ): EXM (regression coefficient -0.10); INM (0.40); TRM (0.22); INC (0.07); TRC (0.10); WSE (0.33); LEV (0.28); B) In the private sector ( $R^2=0.52$ ): EXM (-0.17); INM (0.25); TRM (0.28); INC (0.24); TRC (0.28).

**Conclusions:** The importance physicians give to job characteristics and organizational values, as well as the degree to which the organization satisfies these characteristics and values, has a positive influence on their dedication to the organization. However, the importance given to remuneration has a negative influence. In the public sector, working at hospital level has a more positive effect than working at primary care level and, interestingly, working exclusively in the public sector is associated with a greater degree of dedication than working in both the public and private sectors. A better understanding of the factors affecting physicians' dedication to the organization can help policy makers implement mechanisms to increase individual job satisfaction and identification with organizational objectives.

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