

## PRESENTATION 4

## Are Female Patients More Satisfied with Female Doctors? A Systematic Review

*Jennifer R Shone, Helen Nolan  
University of Warwick*

### Background

Gender bias in biomedical research and the clinical environment has led to health inequalities between men and women, potentially leading to poorer clinical outcomes for female patients. In some cases, female doctors have been seen to improve clinical outcomes for female patients. Therefore, is it possible that patient satisfaction also improves when women are treated by doctors of the same gender?

### Methods

A literature search was performed, and articles were included if published in a peer-reviewed journal, focused on measuring the impact of a doctor's gender on patient satisfaction, disaggregated patient data by gender, and were available in English. 16 papers were included for data extraction.

### Results

16 papers were included for data extraction. Out of these 16 papers, 14 measured global satisfaction and statistically compared patients treated by female doctors with patients treated by male doctors. 4 studies observed female patients to be more satisfied with female doctors, 4 studies observed female patients to be less satisfied with female doctors, and 6 studies observed female patients to be neither more nor less satisfied with female doctors.

### Key messages

The findings of this review neither support nor discount the hypothesis that female patients are more satisfied when treated by female doctors. However, the highest quality studies showed that women were more satisfied with female doctors compared to male doctors. A standardised tool is required that can accurately measure the experiences of women from different backgrounds within a variety of clinical settings. Additionally, the gender gap in certain medical specialities must be addressed so women have an equal opportunity to be treated by a female or male doctor.

