

Patterns of general practitioner's consultation among patients with different reasons for visits in primary care: a direct observational study in China

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BACKGROUND

- Patients' reasons for visits (RFV) reflect patients' needs and health problems upon seeking medical care.
- General practitioners (GPs) play a crucial role in identifying and delivering suitable healthcare services to patients based on their distinct RFV.
- Nature of GP-patient interactions remains unclear for patients with varying RFV in the Chinese context.

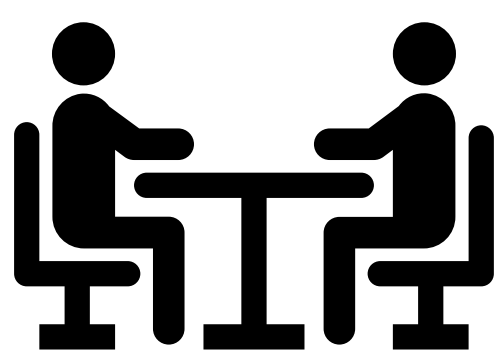
OBJECTIVE

- To explore the pattern of GP's consultations among patients with different RFV in community health centers (CHCs) in China.

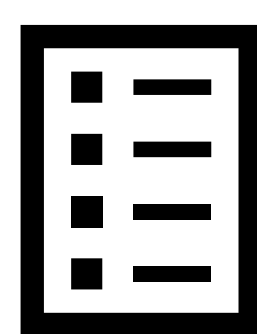
GPs allocated **more time to discussing drug costs** and **less time to taking medical history and conducting physical examinations** during consultations for chronic conditions, as opposed to consultations for other reasons.

METHODS

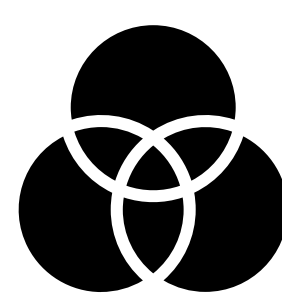
A direct observational study in eight CHCs in China



Consultation information for 445 visits to GP was collected by direct observation and audiotape.



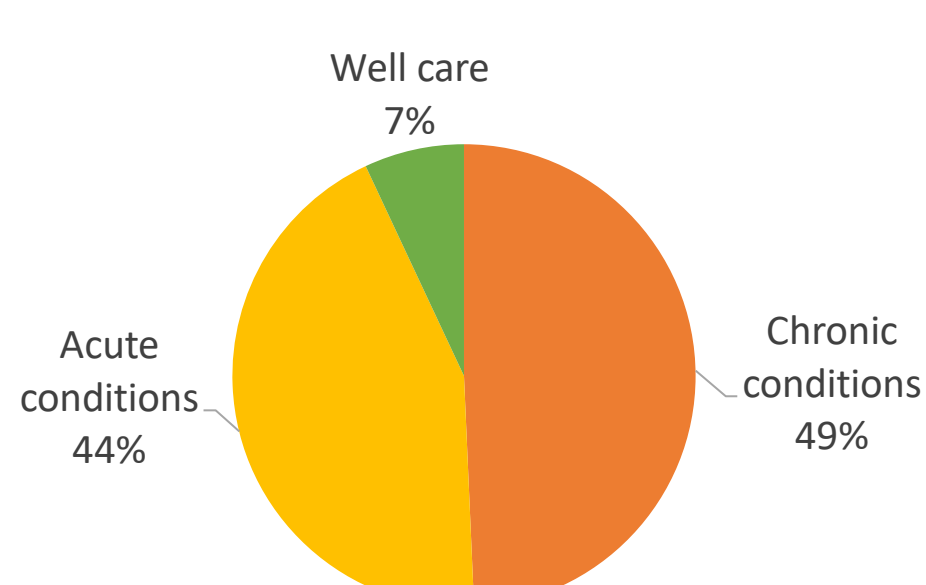
Data analysis



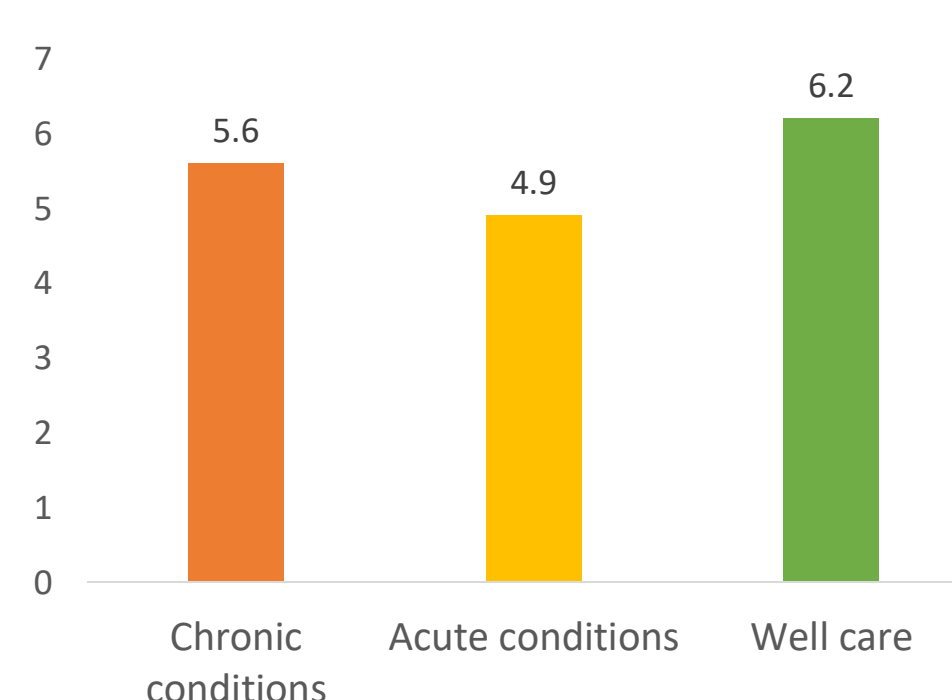
- The collected information was coded using a modified Davis Observation Code (DOC), a validated tool for investigating GP-patient interaction.
- The pattern of GP consultation among patients with different RFV was compared using general linear model adjusted for patient characteristics and health care utilization.

RESULTS

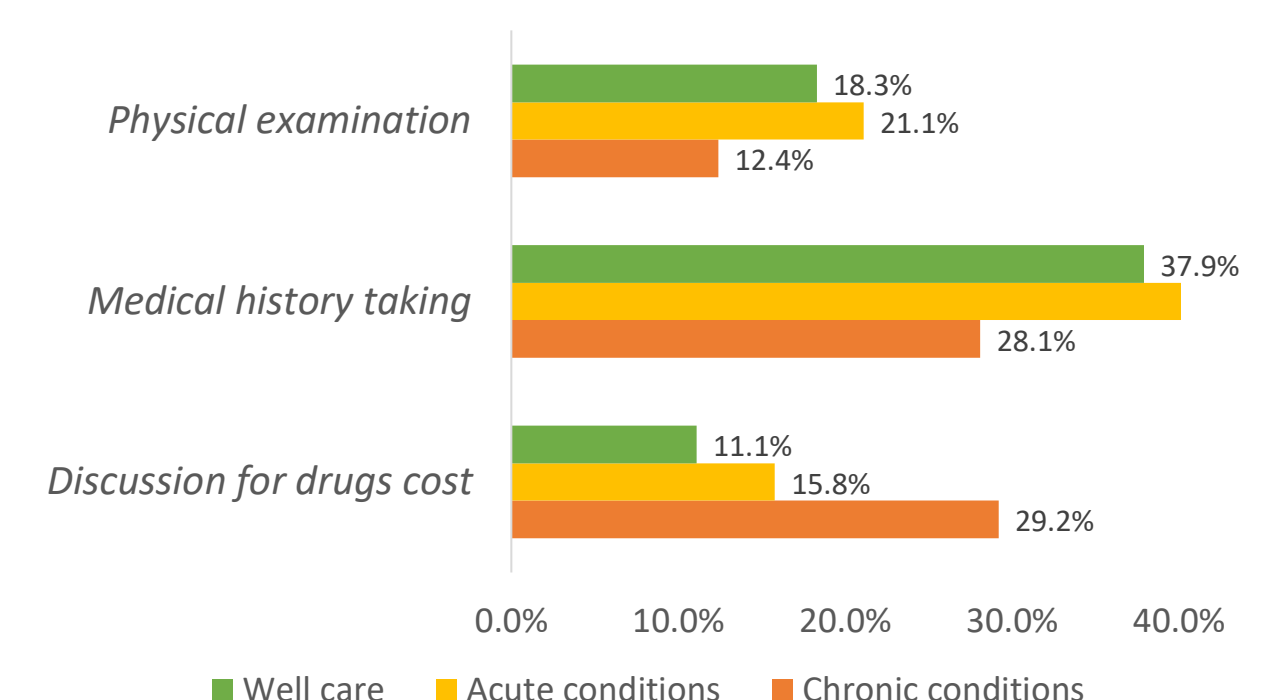
Number of RFV



Average range of GP consultation (min)



Time distribution during GP consultation



CONCLUSION

- In China, the average length of GP consultations is shorter than in other countries.
- Prescription-related matters hold greater significance during GP consultation for chronic conditions compared to consultations for other reasons.