



**International Medical Workforce Collaborative Conference
Edinburgh, Scotland, 16th – 20th September 2008**

Guideline - Morale of Physicians and Trainees

Lead: US

Overview

The following provides a guide to preparing your paper for the *Morale of Physicians and Trainees* session. As a guide, we suggest that each of the papers covers the following sections – overview, background, focus and research questions, discussion of findings and issues for the future.

Background

Research suggests that physician morale (satisfaction) is associated with the quality of medical care provided by physicians and patient satisfaction.

In addition, morale influences practice decisions, such as whether to continue to practice medicine or do something else. As many countries face emerging shortages of physicians, understanding the determinants of morale and developing strategies to improve morale will become increasingly important in efforts to improve the retention of physicians in clinical practice.

A variety of factors are believed to influence physician morale. Major categories include:

- The practice environment (such as hours worked, pace of work, after-hours call, quality of staff, professional interactions, and clinical autonomy);
- The regulatory environment, such as government policies and regulations;
- Health system financing and care management expectations;
- Income and benefits;
- Personal characteristics such as gender, age, family needs and peers;
- Educational background, such as medical school location; and
- Opportunities for recreation and self-renewal.

Focus and Research Questions

This session will draw from studies of physician and trainee morale that focus on questions that include:

- How is morale measured?
- What factors appear to have the most substantial impact on morale?
 - Are there differences by gender?
 - Specialty?
 - Age?
- What strategies have been tried to improve morale and how effective have they been?
- What is the relationship between physician morale and:
 - Practice patterns?
 - Retirement patterns?
- Does morale in a specialty influence specialty choice by medical students?

References

To be developed by authors.