

# South Asian healthcare professional’s perspectives on cultural factors affecting adherence to cardiac rehabilitation programmes: an exploratory study.

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*“Research has often suggested the need to tailor health services towards South Asian people however...”*

## Rationale

- Health disparities concerning **low** uptake of and adherence to **cardiac rehabilitation (CR)** post-myocardial infarction (MI) have been observed in South Asians.
- They have the highest prevalence of **Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)** both nationally and globally.
- South Asian healthcare professionals make up **9.3%** of the total general **NHS workforce** (Gov.UK, 2017).
- Eliciting the views of different types of healthcare professionals who **share an ethnic minority background** with patients may help make sense of the research around **balancing cultural practices** and beliefs with **medical advice**.



## Methodology

A **qualitative thematic** approach using semi-structured interviews was employed with **15 participants** (8 males & 7 females) aged 23 – 80 years. Recruited from various **national primary healthcare settings**. The interviews were conducted via telephone.

The participants were from a **range of professions** including:

- General practitioner
- Nurse
- Surgeon
- Physiologist
- Cardiologist
- Pharmacist



## Findings

**Familiarity:** influence of practitioners’ own cultural background

**Western vs eastern medical philosophy:** generation and gender influences

### Themes

**Engaging with existing services:** changing patients’ attitudes and perceptions

**Modifying doctor-patient communication:** encouraging patient responsibility

## Conclusion/Recommendation for practice

Rather than merely changing **existing services**, focus should simultaneously address the **psycho-social** aspects of South Asian health behaviour via a **multidisciplinary approach**. The findings from this study suggests **changing South Asian patients’ perceptions** of their own health and encouraging patients to **take responsibility** for developing the necessary skills to engage with current CR.