



PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTHCARE IN SINGAPORE



foundation



Health Services Research Network

Commissioned by: Ministry of Health Singapore

4 Sept 2006

INTRODUCTION- INCREASING CONCERN OVER AFFORDABILITY OF HEALTHCARE BY THE AVERAGE SINGAPOREAN



- The Ministry of Health commissioned a survey to determine public perceptions on healthcare in Singapore; this was to be modelled on the survey carried out by the Feedback Unit in 2003
- SingHealth Health Services Research Network undertook the survey design, questionnaire preparation and testing; approximately one-third of the questions were repeated from the Feedback Unit survey to assess changing public perceptions
- The survey was carried out by nurses from the SingHealth Silver Connections from 4-23 Aug 2006

SURVEY METHOD- RANDOM TELEPHONE SURVEY BY SPECIALLY TRAINED NURSES



- The absence of a sampling frame required random telephone numbers to be drawn out of the telephone directory
- 6,146 random telephone directory listings were generated
- Specially trained nurses contacted members of the public and conducted the survey via telephone
- Data was captured by the nurses using a specially designed data form and the data subsequently entered by 3 dedicated data entry staff into a common database
- Audit of data quality was conducted and found to be 0.2%
- There were 1,783 respondents. Of the non-respondents, approximately half were un-contactable at the number listed and the other declined to participate.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS- ETHNIC COMPOSITION AND HOUSING TYPE SIMILAR TO GENERAL POPULATION, BUT LOWER INCOME PERSONS WERE OVER-REPRESENTED



<u>Variables</u>	<u>Survey participants</u> (N= 1783)	<u>National</u> (N= 4.5million)
Race	missing 1.7%	
%Chinese	74.2	75.56
%Malay	12.6	13.64
%Indian	10.5	08.70
%Others	02.6	02.10
Monthly Household Income (S\$)	missing 11%	
<1500	17.92	19.06
1500 – 3000	36.54	22.26
3000 – 5000	28.49	18.72
5000 – 7000	09.1	19.12
7000 – 10,000	05.69	10.60
>10,000	02.83	00.09
Housing type	missing 8%	
HDB	86.7	87.15
Condominium	06.7	08.11
Landed property	06.7	04.74

A 5-POINT LIEKART SCALE WAS USED FOR THE MAJORITY OF QUESTIONS



- Respondents were asked to score their agreement with specific statements using the scale below:

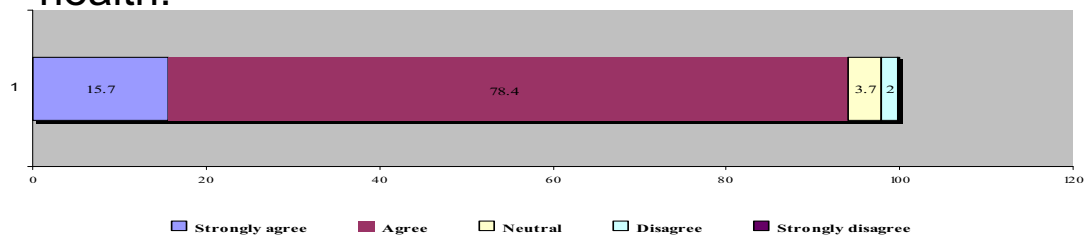
Strongly agree
 Agree
 Neutral
 Disagree
 Strongly disagree

- The questions are grouped in 5 domains:
 - Healthcare Philosophy
 - Health seeking behaviour
 - Healthcare Financing
 - Healthcare Quality
 - Confidence in healthcare system

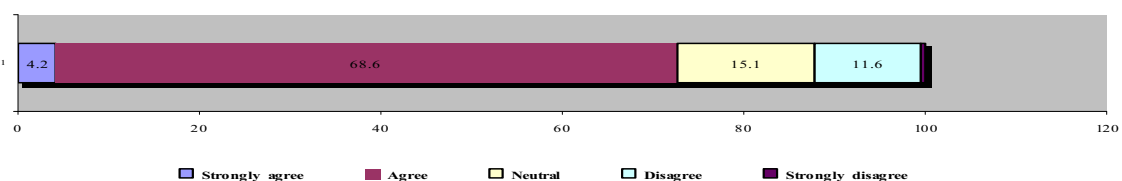
HEALTHCARE PHILOSOPHY- THE MAJORITY OF SINGAPOREANS FELT THEY SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN HEALTH



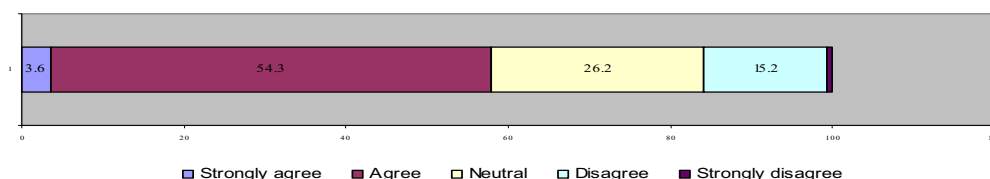
- I should be personally responsible for my own health.



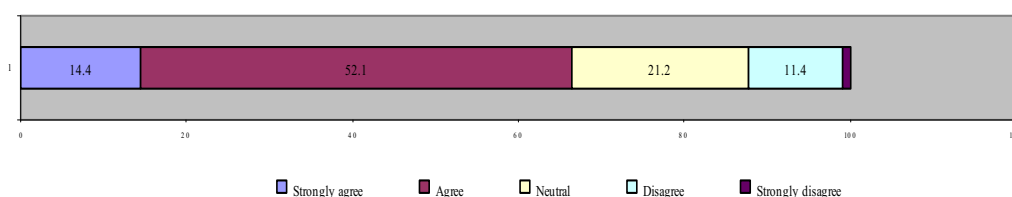
- It is my personal responsibility to build my own savings to help pay for my healthcare expenses.



It is my personal responsibility to buy medical insurance to help me pay for high medical bills.

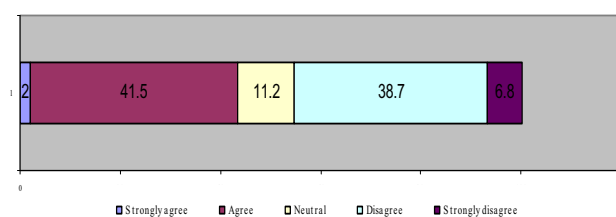


The government should fix the price of medicines in Singapore.

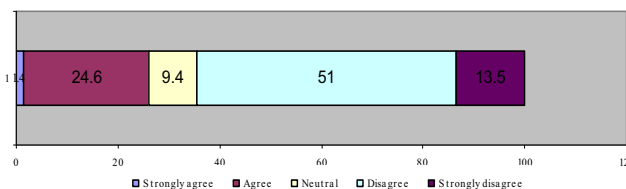


HEALTHCARE PHILOSOPHY- RESPONDENTS WANTED MORE DISCRETIONARY USAGE OF MEDISAVE

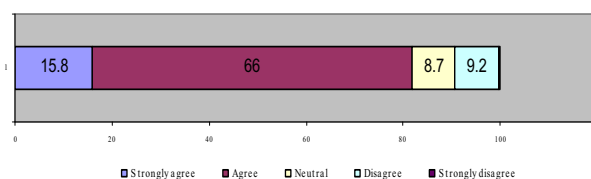
- Medisave should be used mainly for hospitalization expenses



- Medisave should be used mainly for the person whose account it is



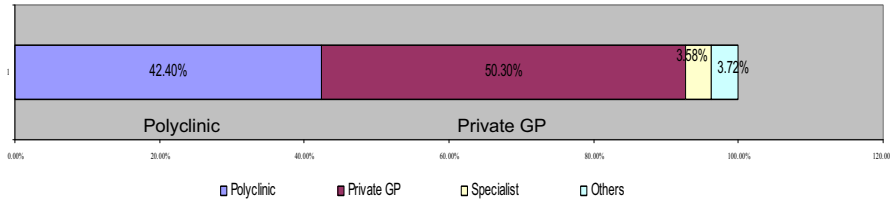
- Medisave should be used at the discretion of the account holder



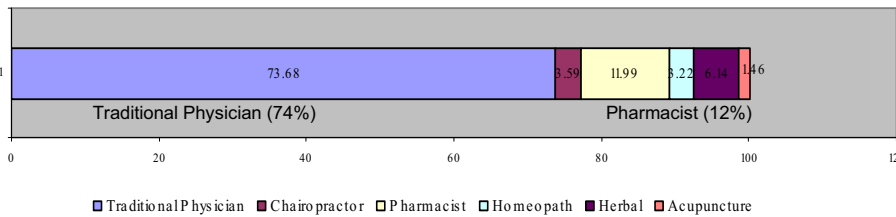
HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR- MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS UTILIZE WESTERN MEDICINE SERVICES



- Where do you go for primary healthcare?



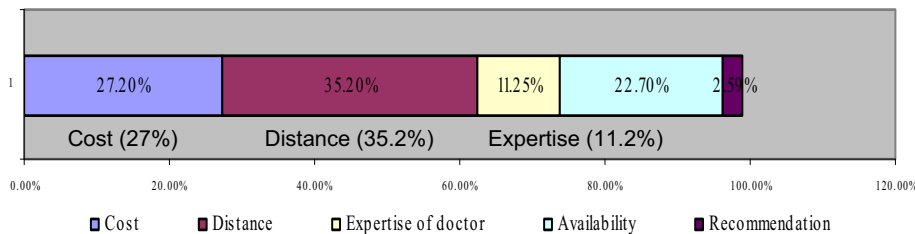
- Do you see any healthcare provider other than a Western trained doctor? (YES = 34.2%) Which category?



HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR- COST AND PROXIMITY WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRIMARY CARE



- What is the most important factor in deciding where to seek primary healthcare services such as a GP?



Where would you go if you needed hospitalization?

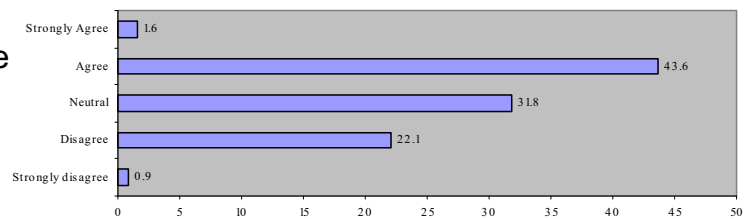
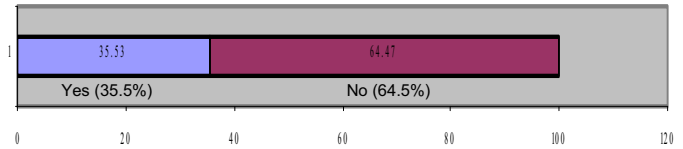
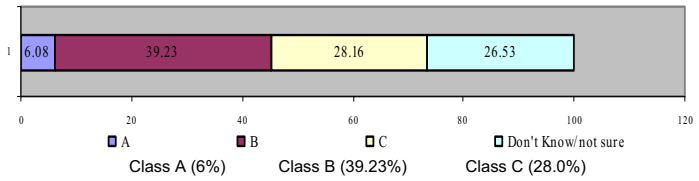
Public (89.8%)

Private (10.2%)

HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR- MOST RESPONDENTS WOULD OPT FOR SUBSIDISED HOSPITALIZATION; LESS THAN HALF EXPRESSED FAMILIARITY WITH THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WORKINGS



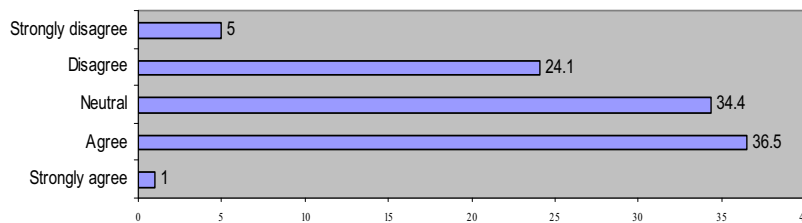
- Which type of ward would you stay in?
- Is anyone in this household seeking medical treatment for a disease such as diabetes, cancer etc at present?
- I am familiar with the way the healthcare system in Singapore works.



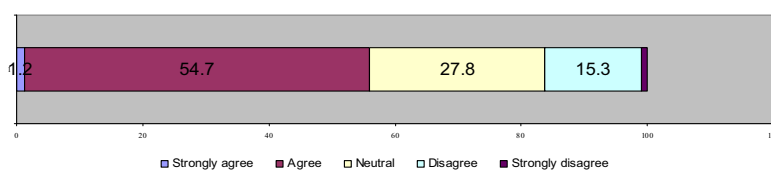
HEALTHCARE QUALITY- RESPONDENTS FELT THEY COULD RECEIVE GOOD MEDICAL CARE IN SINGAPORE, REGARDLESS OF PAYING STATUS



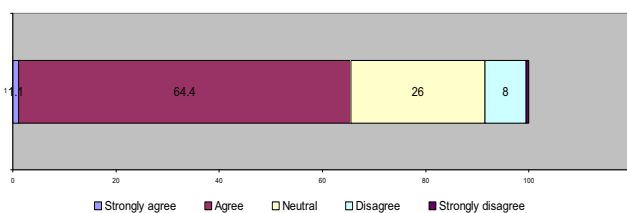
- Both A and C class patients receive good hospitalization care.



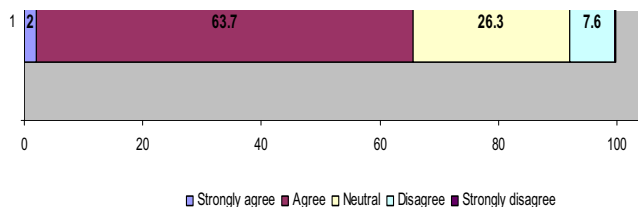
- I can receive good medical treatment at Polyclinics.



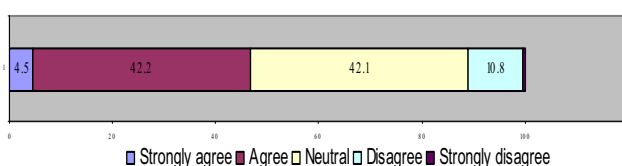
- I can receive good medical treatment at restructured (Government) hospitals.



- I can receive good medical treatment at GP clinics.

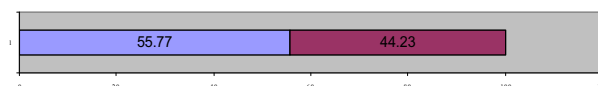


- I can receive good medical treatment at private hospitals.



HEALTHCARE FINANCING-

- I have health insurance on top of my Medisave and Medishield.



- How much of your monthly salary goes into your Medisave account?

Most of the respondents did not know.

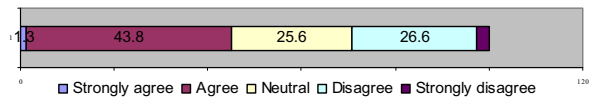
- How much do you spend a month on medicines?

Amount (S\$)	%
None	37.6
<\$100	51.8
\$100 - \$200	8.0
\$200 - \$300	1.5
\$300 - \$400	0.4
\$400 - \$500	0.3
>\$500	0.3
Total	100.0

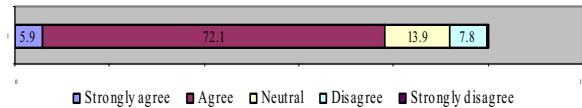
HEALTHCARE AFFORDABILITY- RESPONDENTS FELT THAT HEALTHCARE WAS GENERALLY AFFORDABLE, ESPECIALLY AT GOVERNMENT PRIMARY HEALTH LEVEL



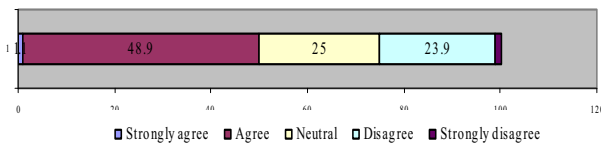
- Healthcare in Singapore is generally affordable.



- Medical services provided at the polyclinics are affordable.



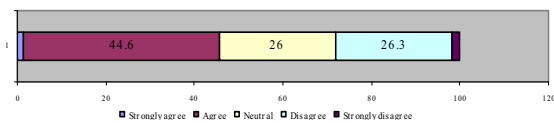
- Medical services provided at the government hospitals are affordable



HEALTHCARE AFFORDABILITY- THERE WAS LESS CONFIDENCE THAT PRIVATE HEALTHCARE WAS AFFORDABLE OR THAT THE 3M FRAMEWORK WAS SUFFICIENT



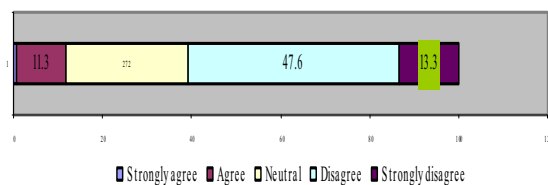
- Medical services provided at the GP clinics are affordable.



Strongly Agree (1.2%)

Agree (44.6%)

- Medical services provided at private hospitals are affordable.



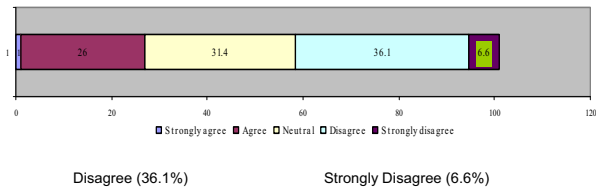
Disagree (47.4%)

Strongly Disagree (13.3%)

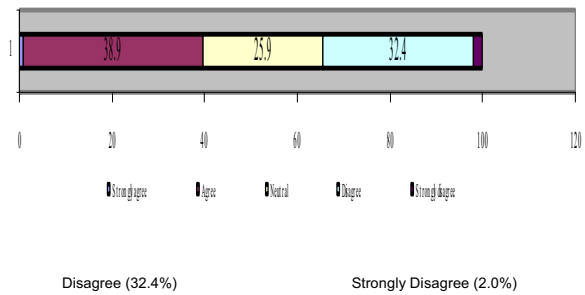
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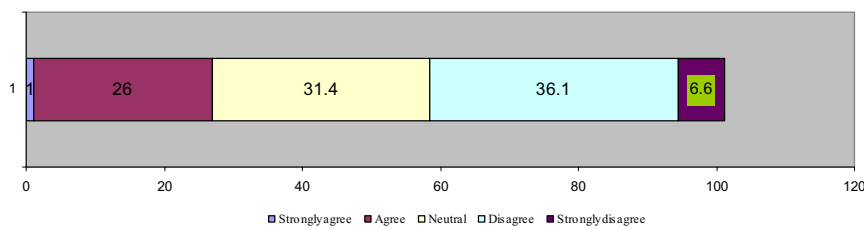
- Medisave, Medishield and Medifund are sufficient to help Singaporeans.



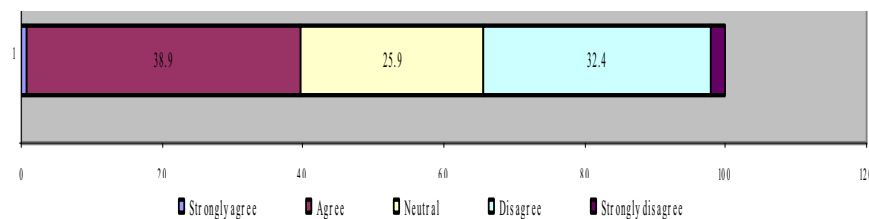
- The cost of medicine in Singapore is affordable.



- Medisave, Medishield and Medifund are sufficient to help Singaporeans.



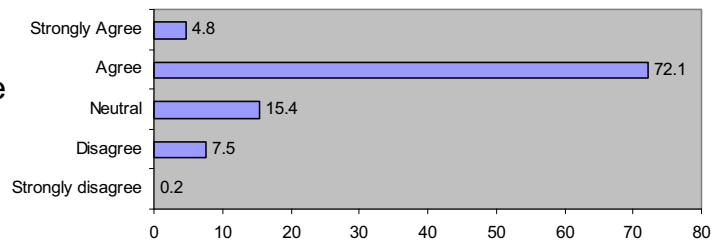
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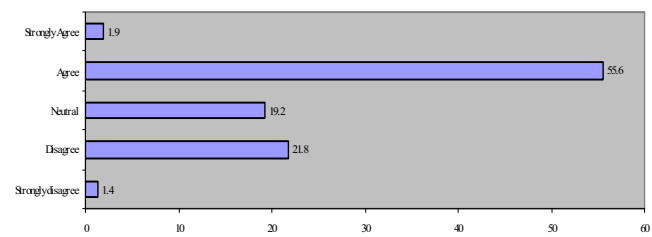
CONFIDENCE IN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM- RESPONDENTS WERE GENERALLY SATISFIED AND CONFIDENT IN THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM



- Singapore has a good healthcare system.



- Government will provide good & affordable basic medical care to Singaporeans.



CONCLUSION



- There is a strong sense of personal responsibility in the financing of healthcare
- Majority of respondents utilize public sector healthcare services
- Majority of respondents are confident in the healthcare system
- In general respondents are satisfied with healthcare quality and affordability
- There is greater confidence in the public sector as compared to the private sector
- However there is a general lack of knowledge of the healthcare system
- Respondents were concerned about the price of medicines and also wanted greater discretion in usage of Medisave

THANK YOU