

# Unmasking Factors Influencing Clients Enrolment in a Primary Health Care Initiative: The Bahrain "Choose your Doctor Program" Experience

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** This study investigates the "Choose Your Doctor" program, implemented in Bahrain (2018) to empower patients by granting them physician selection in primary care. The program aims to foster continuity of care and enhance client satisfaction.

**Aim:** the study aims at studying the factors influencing program enrolment, motivations for choosing and changing doctors, and overall program satisfaction.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey of 412 adult Bahrainis registered at Aali center which is the pilot center for applying the program.

**Results:** over half (53%) were actively enrolled, with men more likely to self-register than women. The primary motivators for joining were the desire for continuity of care and managing chronic conditions. Despite high program awareness (74%), knowledge about chosen doctors' qualifications was lower (40%). Social media, friends/relatives, and health center advertisements served as the main information sources. The program garnered high satisfaction, with 76% expressing satisfaction and 67% indicating no desire to change doctors. Notably, self-registered clients exhibited a stronger attachment to their chosen doctors compared to those who were auto selected. Doctor communication skills and consultation time emerged as potential reasons for switching doctors, particularly for auto-selected clients.

**Conclusion:** the "Choose Your Doctor" program has achieved remarkable success in boosting patient satisfaction and encouraging active enrolment. However, targeted interventions to improve doctor information accessibility, potentially extending consultation times, and leveraging social media for program promotion could enhance participant engagement. This initiative's positive outcomes highlight the effectiveness of patient-centered approaches in transforming primary healthcare delivery.

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