

TSS Kick off
9/12/2025

Family involvement in medical decision-making: a vignette study

Presenters

Amina Yakhlaf & Veerle Buffel



Universiteit
Antwerpen



MEDIMIG

MEDical decision-making in MIGrant
populations within a super-diverse
society

Interdisciplinary project



BACKGROUND



- Medical decision making process
 - Patient-centeredness and autonomy: core values
 - Shared decision-making: focus on role of doctor and patient
 - What with **family involvement** ?
- ➔ increasingly diverse world: diverse preferences?

Research questions

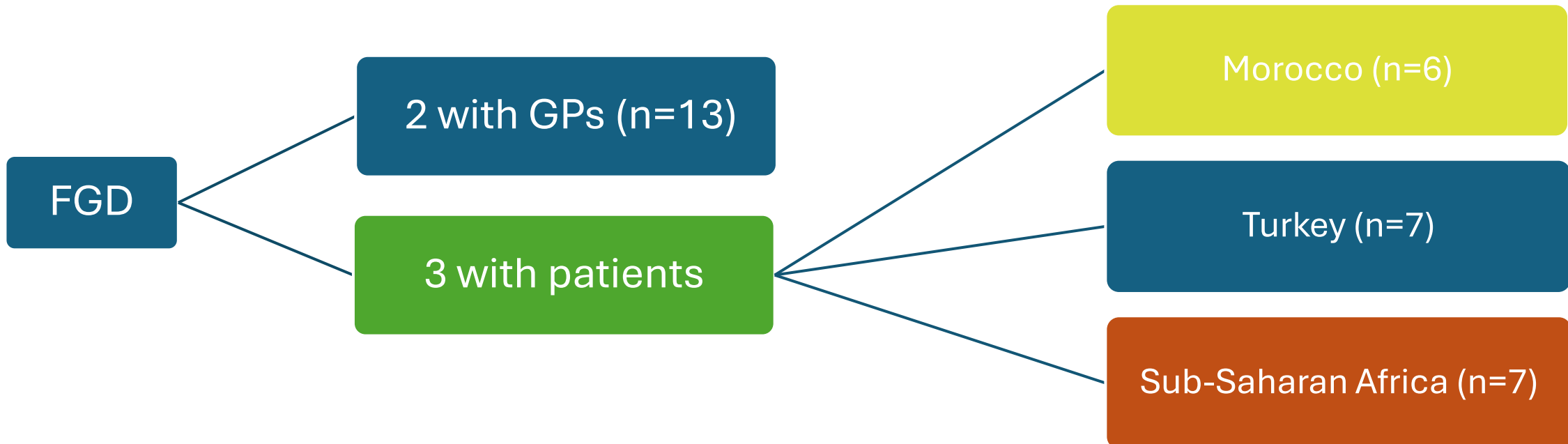
I. What is the desired level of family involvement in MDM?

II. What individual factors determine the desired level of family involvement in MDM?

And how does this vary by (a) type of disease and (b) severity of the disease

Focus group discussions

To explore challenging and sensitive medical cases in primary care decision-making



Vignettes

3 hypothetical scenarios

Cancer

Mild depression

Severe depression

OR

You have been suffering from insomnia for the past few weeks, which has left you exhausted. You have dark thoughts and overwhelming feelings of hopelessness, which have increased since your last visit to the family doctor. You decide to consult your family doctor again. After a thorough examination, you are diagnosed with major depressive disorder. The doctor discusses treatment options, such as starting antidepressants, psychotherapy and possibly admission to a psychiatric hospital.

MEASURES

The role of your family in MDM

1. I will make a decision with little or no input from my family
2. I will make a decision after considering my family's opinion

Low family
involvement
(more or less alone)

3. My family and I will make a decision together
4. My family will make a decision after considering my opinion
5. My family makes the decision

High family
involvement

→ *based on the Control Preference Scale*

DATA

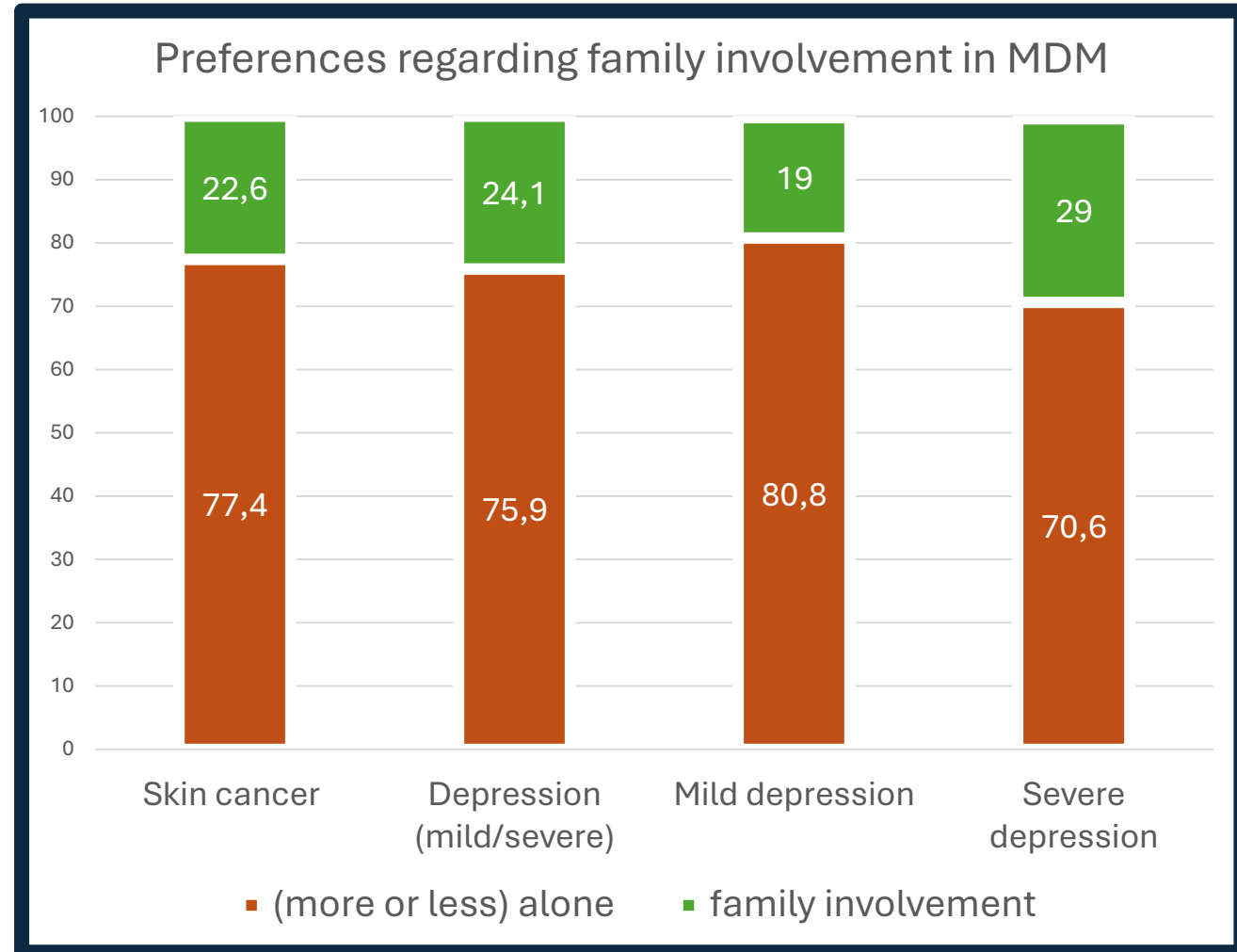
Medical decision-making module

- Survey time: +/- 5 min
- During the panel build-up phase
- Sent to a subsample of TSS: +/- 1600 respondents
- Final sample of 1175 completed surveys
- Access to all other variables

RESULTS (I): Desired level of family involvement in MDM

Majority of respondents prefer to decide more or less alone

- **Type of disease**
cancer vs. depression
(*mcNemar's test, within individuals*)
More preference for FI in depression vignette
- **Severity of disease**
mild vs. severe depression
(*Chi2-tests, between individuals*)
More preference for FI in severe depression vignette



RESULTS (II): Factors related to preferred family involvement in MDM

Logistic regression analysis:

Preference for family involvement (=1)

	Cancer			Mild depression			Severe depression		
	OR	p		OR	p		OR	p	
Age (ref. 16-34)		0,191			0,389			0,933	
35-54 years old	1,485	0,151		1,266	0,575		1,010	0,976	
55 years old or older	1,674	0,072	a	1,755	0,202		1,108	0,756	
Men (ref. women)	1,083	0,636		0,877	0,611		1,354	0,150	
Migration background (ref. born in Belgium)		0,001	***		0,001	***		0,393	
born in EU	2,669	0,002	**	3,478	0,007	**	1,812	0,181	
born in non-EU	2,954	0,012	*	9,275	0,006	**	1,227	0,706	
Living situation (ref. alone or only with children)		0,028	*		0,164			0,027	*
with parents and/or others	2,231	0,037	*	1,443	0,576		2,217	0,068	
with partner (with or without children)	2,025	0,010	**	2,189	0,064	a	2,343	0,008	**
Non-employed (ref. employed)	1,096	0,650		1,270	0,425		0,708	0,184	
Education (ref. low)		0,072			0,609			0,630	
moderate	0,799	0,405		1,531	0,380		0,749	0,392	
high	0,579	0,039	*	1,233	0,653		0,737	0,359	
Difficult financial situation (ref. no)	0,630	0,060		0,793	0,519		1,244	0,452	
Beliefsystem (ref. not religious or liberal)		0,078			0,616			0,009	**
Christianity	1,473	0,025	*	1,040	0,881		1,918	0,003	**
Other belief (Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, ...)	1,064	0,867		0,493	0,355		0,972	0,948	

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Discussion

- **Sociocultural factors:** Migration background and religion
- **Education** ~ preferences for autonomy?
- **Stigma & mental health:** Preference for FI drops in specific subgroups for severe depression
- **Implication for care**

Thanks

Questions?

CONTACT:

MEDIMIG, <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/medimig/>

Veerle.buffel@vub.be

Amina.Yaklaf@uantwerpen.be

Sarah.Vandevelde@uantwerpen.be