

Consultation time for the pulmonary patient

Sir,

I read with interest the article on the appropriate minimal time that should be spent on the pulmonary patient in the outpatient clinic.^[1] After studying 49 researchers who noted the time required for 1680 patients in different settings, authors concluded that the appropriate average time was 20 min.

Although authors raise an interesting practical and important question, I wonder whether the question was really answered. Authors, rightly, believe that adequate time should be given for “the *sine qua non* of the art of medicine,” i.e., the physician-patient communication. Furthermore, they state that poor communication may lead to “deficient or erroneous diagnosis, inappropriate prescriptions, less frequent use of preventive medicine measures, reduced patient satisfaction, and acts of violence against health-care staff”.^[1]

However, there is no data to show that the time found by authors was related in any way to any of these outcomes. Was this time superior to a lesser time in terms of diagnostic yield, appropriate prescription, patients’ satisfaction, etc. Or, would a longer time be indeed a waste or give better outcomes? The answer is unknown because the time recommended by authors was merely the time a group of researchers felt they needed in their particular setting with no proof that such time altered outcomes or patients’ satisfaction.

I feel the question on the appropriate time required for pulmonary consultation requires further research.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.


Abdullah Mobeireek

King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre, College of Medicine, Alfaisal University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
E-mail: mobeireek@yahoo.com

Reference

1. Musellim B, Borekci S, Uzan G, Ali Sak ZH, Ozdemir SK, Altinisik G, *et al*. What should be the appropriate minimal duration for patient examination and evaluation in pulmonary outpatient clinics? *Ann Thorac Med* 2017;12:177-82.

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as the author is credited and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code: 	Website: www.thoracicmedicine.org
	DOI: 10.4103/atm.ATM_265_17

How to cite this article: Mobeireek A. Consultation time for the pulmonary patient. *Ann Thorac Med* 2018;13:62.

© 2018 Annals of Thoracic Medicine | Published by Wolters Kluwer - Medknow