



In general, would you say your health is: (Tick one box)

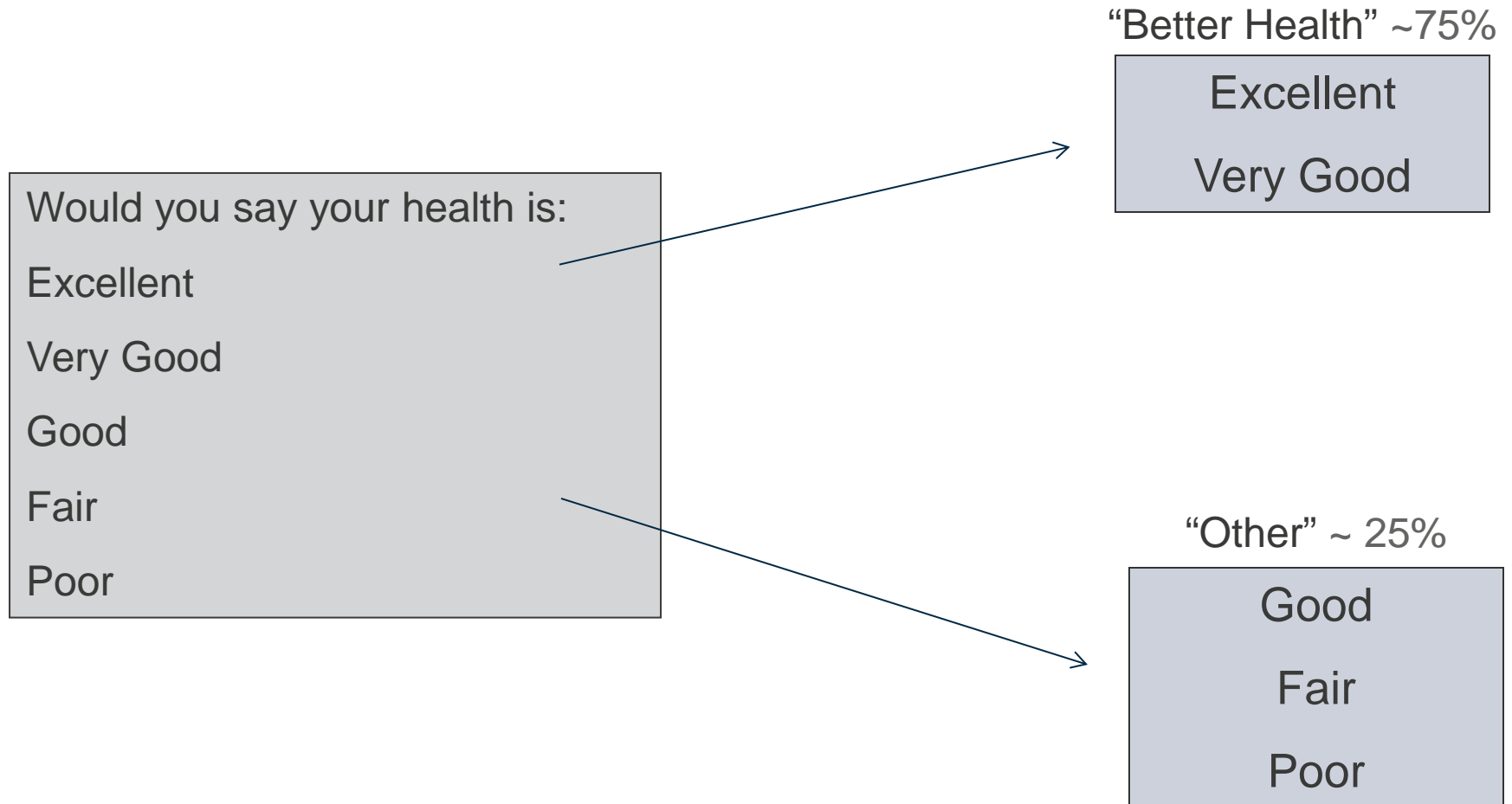
- 1  Excellent
- 2  Very good
- 3  Good
- 4  Fair
- 5  Poor

- Doctors' health matters (Wallace et al, The Lancet 2009)
- Very small literature concerning the Self Reported Health Status (SRHS) of doctors.
- Previous studies (between 300 – 1500 subjects) have focused on the effects of age, gender, hours worked and Public/Private work setting.
- Effect of medical specialty, patient profile, residency status and family situation have not been investigated.
- No literature specific to Australian doctors

## Project Design and Aims

- An exploratory analysis of *cross sectional* data, investigating the determinants of SRHS for Australian doctors.
- Identify and investigate factors determining SRHS, sub-groups who may be at risk, and compare Australian results to existing international studies.

## Outcome of interest – “Reporting Better Health”



## Explanatory Variables

- Age
- Income
- Gender
- Number of dependent Children
- Living with a partner or spouse
- Overall Life Satisfaction
- Doctor Type
- Overall Job Satisfaction
- Hours worked
- Holidays taken in the past year
- Ease of taking time off
- Unpredictable working hours
- International Medical Graduate status
- Satisfaction with physical working conditions
- Patient expectations
- Satisfaction with IT systems in the workplace
- Complexity of Patient Problems
- Support Network

## Results: Demographic Characteristics

Variables significant at  $\alpha=0.05$

Characteristic	All Doctors	Male Doctors	Female Doctors
	OR	OR	OR
Income	1.01 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>	1.01 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>	NS
Dependent Children	1.08	1.06	NS
Weeks Holiday taken last year	1.04	1.02	1.06
Overall Life Satisfaction	1.33	1.30	1.35

Getting 5 years older	0.86	0.87	0.84
International Graduate Status	0.84	NS	NS

## School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine

### Results: Perception of working conditions & Practice environment

Variables significant at  $\alpha=0.05$

Explanatory Variable	All Doctors	Male Doctors	Female Doctors
	OR	OR	OR
Right balance between personal and professional commitments	1.27	1.23	1.33
The IT systems I use are very helpful in day-to-day practice	1.05	1.07	NS

I have a poor support network of other doctors like me	0.86	0.85	0.85
My patients have unrealistic expectations about how I can help	0.94	NS	NS
The hours I work are unpredictable	0.95	0.93	NS

## Results: Professional Characteristics

Variables significant at  $\alpha=0.05$

Doctor Type (Reference =GP)	All Doctors	Male Doctors	Female Doctors
	OR	OR	OR
Specialist	1.28	1.26	NS
Hospital Non-Specialist	NS	1.49	NS
Specialist In Training	NS	NS	NS

Hours worked (Reference = 40.1- 60 hours)	All Doctors	Male Doctors	Female Doctors
	OR	OR	OR
1 = <20 hours	0.72	NS	NS
2 = 20.1- 40 hours	0.75	0.72	NS
3 = 60.1 - 80 hours	NS	NS	NS
4 = >80 hours	NS	NS	NS



## General Findings

### Doctors reporting better health:

- Are **Specialists** (more likely than GPs)
- Have higher **incomes** (*male doctors only*)
- Also report **high life satisfaction**.
- Have **dependent children**
- Feel they a good **support network** of peers
- Report satisfaction with the **IT systems** in their practice
- Work at least **40 hours per week**
- Have taken **holidays** in the past year.
- Report good **Work Life Balance**
- Were **educated in Australia**.

# Policy Implications

- The majority of Australian clinicians report “Excellent” or “Very good” health.
- The relationship between doctors health status and working hours may be different in Australia.
- Many factors associated with poorer health are outside the control of policy makers, however:
- Predictable working hours, taking holidays, work-life balance, peer support networks and IT infrastructure appear important.