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PSYCHIATRIC DOCTORS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS RECEIVING ECT IF THEY WERE TO NEED IT THEMSELVES

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For an established and evidence based treatment ECT has had its fair share of vilification by sections of the population perhaps due to its portrayal by segments of the popular media.

The authors of this study explored psychiatrists attitude towards ECT and in particular their willingness to undergo ECT if they were to need it.

122 doctors in psychiatry from Birmingham and London were surveyed using a questionnaire. They were asked to express whether or not they would consider ECT as a treatment option if it were indicated for themselves and also to elaborate on their reasons to accept or reject ECT as a treatment option.

A majority of the doctors had a positive attitude towards ECT (97.6%) and would consider it as a treatment option should they require it (83.6%). Yet only a two thirds of them used it in their clinical practice. Another finding of interest was that senior psychiatrists were more likely to undergo ECT when compared to junior psychiatrists. The majority of responses in favour cited the reasons for receiving ECT was because it was "fast, effective and safe". The main reasons for not considering ECT was because doctors preferred to have a combination of pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy instead.