

Public trust in medical research

Exploring the level of trust in professions and institutions involved in both the production and communication of research

Doctors, nurses and other medical practitioners emerge as the most trusted of the professions asked about in the survey in terms of providing accurate and reliable information about medical research, with scientists coming after that. However, trust in scientists varies depending on the institution they work for. Unsurprisingly, the reasons for trusting (or distrusting) certain professions are not always the same. Health professionals, scientists and journalists need to bear this in mind when engaging with the public about medical research.

The Wellcome Trust Monitor is a unique survey of the UK public that is conducted every three years to look at changing knowledge and attitudes to medicine, science and health. For more findings on this topic, you can look in Chapter 2 of the Wellcome Trust Monitor Wave 3 Report (wellcome.ac.uk/monitor). This chapter gives more detail on the findings displayed here and also covers: the subgroups that are most and least trusting of these professions; and how trust in these professions has changed over time.

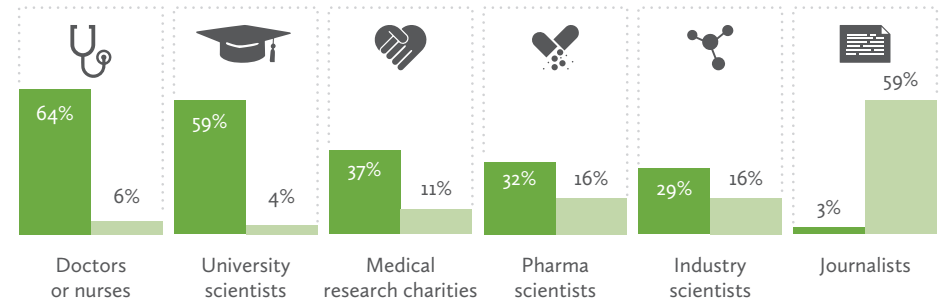
Bases: 1,524 UK adults aged 18+ interviewed face-to-face by Ipsos MORI; 949 who trust doctors, nurses or other medical practitioners; 868 who trust university scientists; 554 who trust medical research charities; 923 who lack trust in journalists; 122 who lack trust in private industry scientists; 127 who lack trust in scientists working for pharmaceutical companies. Fieldwork dates: 2 June to 1 November 2015.

We suggest that you cite this infographic as follows: Ipsos MORI (2016) Wellcome Trust Monitor, Wave 3. London: Wellcome Trust (<http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/mg.figshare.3145744>).

Trust in professions

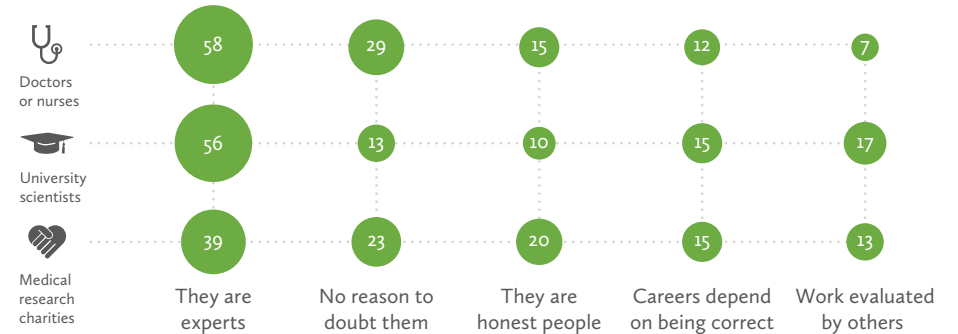
Trust completely or a great deal
Trust very little or not at all

Who is trusted as a source of medical research information?



Reasons to trust professions

% among those who trust them completely or a great deal as a source of medical research information



Reasons to distrust professions

% among those who trust them very little or not at all as a source of medical research information

