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### Patient-centred general practice – what does it mean?

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**Background & Aim:** From the mid-1960s general practitioners began to locate the basis of the intellectual autonomy of general practice as a distinct discipline. This process focused on the general practitioner's own person as the main instrument of treatment in general practice and the foremost inspiration came from Michael Balint. Patient-centredness was described as 'understanding the patient as a unique human being' or a special consultation style where the doctor used the patient's knowledge and point of view to guide the interaction. Nevertheless, it was not a well-defined term, which was described in a systematic review by Mead & Bower (2000) which identified five different dimensions of the concept. The aim of this study is to perform an update of Mead and Bower's review.

**Method:** A systematic literature review based on search in PubMed. 1563 articles were identified, 140 were included in the review.

**Results:** Patient-centredness has since 2000 developed into an even more comprehensive model identifying different interconnecting components and with different definitions. Mead and Bower's analysis focused much on dimensions of interaction with the patient in the consultation. Since then sharing power has got increased importance, and now health promotion, continuity and coordination are also seen as ingredients in patient-centredness. In addition, many different concepts are covering the same meaning but from different positions.

**Conclusion:** The lack of a universally agreed definition of the concept still hampers its usefulness and theoretical and empirical development. Nevertheless, patient-centredness has increasingly been regarded as a proxy for the quality of the interpersonal aspects of care in general practice, encompassing the generalist perspective and a generalist identity of the general practitioner. In addition, it has been shown that although general practitioners claim to follow the ideology of patient-centred care, they have increasingly adopted a biomedical approach.