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Patient Transformers



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Online knowledge, self-help groups and special interest forums have transitioned physicians from almighty omniscient 'demigods in white' to professionals heftily challenged by patients and their Dr Google.

As a result, physician self-reflection and patient participation have become the pillars of modern medical ethics and treatment programmes. Today's empowered patient has the ability to manage their own affairs, take responsibility and share the decision-making power with the physician.

As much as physicians have expertise and authority over matters related to science and disease, the patient is no longer a silent party but a customer who knows their rights.

Our contributors talk about Patient Transformers and how the role of the patient has evolved. As healthcare consumers, patients are demanding better quality, faster care and improved outcomes.

Ian Weissman writes about the prevalence and consequences of health disparity and suggests strategies to solve this crisis. Maria Gutiérrez-San Miguel Guilera talks about the transformation of her hospital in Spain to VBHC, and the challenges and achievements during this journey.

Fabian Bolin discusses the power of the patient voice in accelerating cancer care improvement. Begoña San Jose explains how access to patient data can help provide patient-centric care.

Sue Farrington covers the importance of patient/citizen participation and access to quality health information. Then, Ton Hanselaar and Matthijs van der Linde highlight problems that can be solved by applying value-based healthcare.

Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber and co-authors talk about Body Dysmorphic Disorder, and the obsessive and debilitating preoccupation patients have with perceived physical flaws and how this obsession often goes undetected and untreated. Michael van den Berg and Frederico Guanais reflect on the growing interest among stakeholders to transform health systems by putting people at the centre.

Olivia Lounsbury and Donna Prosser highlight how patients and family members are equipped to facilitate involvement in their care. Peter Kapitein questions some of the hyped patient-engagement concepts and the reality of their practical application. Pilar Manchón Gabás talks about patient communication in radiology and its role in strengthening professional relationships and deepening patient engagement.

While patients must be at the centre of all healthcare activities, a balance of power between patients and physicians must be maintained. The transformed, actively engaged individual can help promote patient-centred care. But this can only be achieved in partnership with physicians. Respect, collaboration and harmony will deliver satisfied patients and improved outcomes.

Enjoy Issue 9 of this year's calendar. We welcome your comments, news and views.

Thank you!

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