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Understanding the back patient

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Background

- Research shows that back patients' illness experiences greatly effect their meeting with the health-care system.
- The purpose of this qualitative literature review is thus to gain a better understanding of back patients' illness experiences.

Methods

- The literature review is based on thematic analysis used by Thomas and Harden (1).
- The purpose of the review is to identify, systematise and integrate the findings of different qualitative studies that may elucidate consequences in connection with the care and treatment of back patients.

Results

In-between patients

- The analysed material reveals that some back patients feel like "in-between patients" for years and have to endure a feeling of marginalisation until a diagnosis has been made.



They assumed that I knew things that I didn't

- Procedures that may seem straightforward to the healthcare professionals, such as why a patient has been moved to the recovery ward or given a drip, need to be explained to the patient.

Putting yourself forward

- The patients life experiences have affected their sense of identity and that determines what the patients hear, understand and dare ask questions about.



Conclusions

- It is through experiences and memories that we create our identity and consciousness.
- Ignoring the back patient's illness experiences can therefore be seen as disregard for the patient as a human being.

With this in mind, it is easier to understand why back patients often feel marginalised, mistrusted and disrespected. It is fundamentally about acknowledging the back patient as a human being.

- There is a need to pay attention to back patients' narratives in order to acknowledge them as human beings.