We are all patient-centred now aren’t we?
Lessons from new pharmacy graduates

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Background:

- Patient-centered care is central to modern health care, internationally.
- Programs have a responsibility to transform students into pharmacists who have broad and deep understanding of what constitutes contemporary patient-centred pharmacy practice.
- Pharmacy curricula have been criticised for inadequately preparing students to be effective patient-centred healthcare professionals in today's world.
Elements of patient-centred practice

- Patient involvement
- Empowerment
- Individualising care
- Holistic approach
- Shared decision-making
- Assessing and meeting patient needs
- Respecting autonomy
- Communication - talking with people, not at people, reflective listening, empathy
This study...

• This longitudinal study explored patient-centredness as part of the holistic practice of pharmacy graduates.

• Used an interpretative research paradigm and theoretical framework based on phenomenology and the work of Martin Heidegger. (1889-1976)
HEIDEGGER

I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WAS A BEER
Understanding of work

Three Stonecutters were asked: “What are you doing?”

I’m cutting stones!

I’m building a cathedral.

I’m earning a living.
Study design

• Following a questionnaire of final year students from the University of Queensland, exploring how pharmacy practice was understood, a subgroup of 12 participated in a longitudinal study following graduation.
  - 7/12 (60%) female
  - 7/12 (60%) in community pharmacy

• Each participant was observed in their workplace for 2-4 hours followed by a semi-structured interview, every six months over two years.

• Notes from observations and interview transcripts were analysed using the principles of hermeneutic phenomenology, to explore commonalities and differences in how pharmacy practice was understood, enacted and developed, with a focus on patient-centredness.
A spectrum of patient-centredness in pharmacy practice

- Graduates initially understood and enacted patient-centredness in a range of ways in both community pharmacy and hospital settings.
- For some, medicines and tasks were the frame of reference. Patients were a source and recipient of information to complete a series of required tasks.
- For others, patients featured more centrally. Completing tasks achieved a broader goal, to provide individualised care to optimise health outcomes from medicines.
The development of patient-centredness

• For 11 of the 12 participants, how they initially understood and enacted of patient-centredness in pharmacy practice remained largely unchanged over the two-year period.

• Development was mostly directed at refining current practice within existing understanding of practice.

• Participants interpreted learning opportunities and feedback based on how practice was understood.

• However, for one graduate, a transformation in understanding of patient-centredness was evident, resulting in a noticeable change in practice, subsequent development and the care that was provided.
Annie

Patient-centred meant meeting customer requests for medicines by thoroughly and efficiently dispensing prescriptions, and providing instructions and information so medicines would be taken as prescribed, while ensuring that medicines requested by customers were deemed to be appropriate.
Patient-centred meant taking the time to provide individualised care to customers to optimise health outcomes from medicines, by involving them in discussion, and identifying and addressing their healthcare needs.
Patient-centred meant knowing the products and meeting customer needs for quick and efficient supply and dispensing of medicines at the cheapest price with succinct instructions and advice.

To helping customers, with their health-related problems and needs, while building meaningful relationships with them.
Conclusion

These findings demonstrate the need:

• To clarify what patient centredness means as part of holistic pharmacy practice.

• For educators to take into account the influence of how patient-centredness is understood on practice and development, and realise that this doesn’t automatically develop over time.

The challenge lies in providing transformative learning experiences to broaden and deepen the understanding of patient-centredness to ensure pharmacists fulfil their mandate to be patient-centred clinicians.
Are we there yet?
Are we there yet?
Are we there yet?