

INTERNATIONAL PEDIATRICS, INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND  
HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

&  
8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on  
BACTERIOLOGY AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES  
November 22-24, 2018 Cape Town, South Africa



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### Rural health care users prefer a paternalistic doctor-patient approach

**Introduction:** A paternalistic doctor-patient relationship has become the perfunctory approach in rural healthcare. This setting lacks resources such as health care counselors, interpreters and doctors with training in the indigenous culture all of which are fundamental components of informed consent and patient autonomy.

**Study Design:** A qualitative research was conducted in the form of focused-group discussions. Participants were placed into homogenous groups by means of purposive sampling. Questions were prepared in Xhosa and English. 210 voluntary participants took part in this study. Participants included; Foreign-Qualified medical officers (FQ, 4 participants), patients presenting to the Outpatient department with non-emergencies (OP, 200 participants), community service Clinical Associates (CA, 2 participants) and South-African Qualified medical officers (SQ, 4 participants). All questions focused on patient autonomy, shared decision making and informed consent.

**Results:** Language barriers and cultural factors emerged as key barriers in the provision of a patient-centered care approach. Doctors found it challenging to apply a biopsychosocial model since patients disregarded psychosocial influences as possible disease determinants. Biomedical consultations with limited verbal interaction were preferred by most health care users. The culture of healthcare was not mutually advantageous, doctors felt detached from their role as a holistic health care provider.

**Conclusion:** Sociocultural demographics and past marginalization, patient-centered care has become mutually disregarded by both the patient and the doctor.

### Biography

Steve Geo Feris has completed his MBChB from Stellenbosch University in Cape Town and is currently doing a Master's degree in Medical Sciences at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban. He works as a Community Service Medical Officer at Dr Malzio Mpehle Memorial Hospital, a rural district hospital in Eastern Cape. He has a special interest in emergency medicine and presented at the 6th International Conference hosted by the Emergency Medicine Society of South Africa in 2017.

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