

## **When a doctor becomes a patient, the unique expectations and behaviours in a disease: preliminary report**

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### **ABSTRACT**

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Descriptions and interpretations of cases in which a doctor becomes a patient are rather marginal in the Polish and Western medical literature. Still, analysis of doctors' behaviours when they become patients themselves seems interesting. The available research results suggest that doctors find it difficult to adopt the role of a patient and very often delay the process of diagnosis and therapy. A substantial number of them treat themselves and have problems with following therapeutic advice. There are particular features which make doctors demanding or even tough when placed in the role of a patient. Doctors often select 'partners' in therapy among their colleagues, expect 'individual therapy' and 'special'

treatment (a longer appointment, consultation after regular working hours etc.). The problem of 'doctors in sickness' has been addressed by professional organisations. The British General Medical Council suggests that due to potential risk for one's patients' and one's own health, an ill doctor should consult his/her highly qualified colleague and follow the advice. Moreover, he/she is advised to consult a GP who is not a member of their family in order to guarantee independent and objective medical care. Similar solutions have been adopted by medical organisations from other countries.

**Key words:** 'a doctor as a patient', disease

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