

# “Whole Person” Assessment: A Systematic Review

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## AIM

To identify and compare existing approaches to whole person assessment that are translatable to the general practice context.

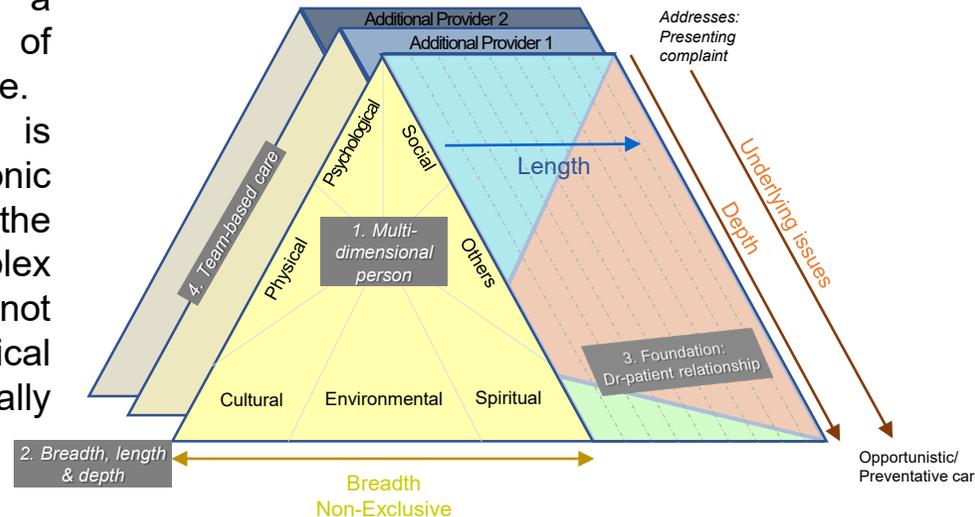


## ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

This research will provide a basis to implement existing approaches to whole person assessment in general practice and/or to develop a suitable approach. This will support GPs’ practice of WPC, enhancing care for patients whose complex needs are not amenable to reductionistic frameworks.

## Background

- Providing “whole person care” (WPC) is a defining value of generalist primary care.
- The value of WPC is evident with chronic multimorbidity on the rise, and complex situations that do not neatly fit a biomedical paradigm (eg. ‘medically unexplained symptoms’).<sup>1</sup>
- Australian GPs describe WPC as built on the doctor-patient relationship, with *length* (continuity), *breadth* (inclusiveness) and *depth* (delving beyond the presenting complaint) of scope. It may involve team-based care<sup>2</sup>
- In previous research, GPs have expressed a need for a framework that provides a ‘whole person’ approach to patient assessment.<sup>3</sup>



## Method

4 databases searched with strings combining synonyms for “whole person” and “patient centred” with synonyms for “assessment”  
6619 hits

445 full text articles selected for second pass screening  
Approximately 50 articles included

Included articles will be critically appraised using JBI checklists<sup>4</sup>

Data extraction:

- What is included in the ‘whole person’ assessment?
- Is there an underlying framework to define the ‘whole’?
- How is biomedical and biographical information integrated?
- How does it undertake the relational aspect of the assessment?

Framework and narrative synthesis

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### References:

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3. Lynch JM. Sense of safety: a whole person approach to distress in primary care. Australia: The University of Queensland; 2019
4. Johanna Briggs Institute. Critical Appraisal Tools. <http://pannabriggs-webdev.org/research/critical-appraisal-tools.html>. (Accessed 27 July 2020).