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The future of the bio-psycho-social model in the age of systems medicine

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OBJECTIVE: To review the impact of current scientific developments on the bio-psycho-social model

METHODS: Narrative review

RESULTS: Systems medicine has the potential to bring the bio-psycho-social model to a highly needed new level of methodological precision beyond the eclecticism often found in the field. However, most current applications of systems medicine do not integrate psychosocial data, and there are open questions whether this will happen soon. Computational psychosomatics based on the predictive processing model may offer a focussed scientific approach more suitable for the bio-psycho-social model. What we will need in addition is more knowledge about modes of valid explanation in multilevel systems like the bio-psycho-social one – there is more to it than biological reductionism.

CONCLUSIONS: In order to remain alive and well in the 21st century, the bio-psycho-social model should make use of new conceptual and empirical developments in science – “riding the wave the psychosomatic way”.

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