

Found poetry is created by taking words and phrases from other sources and reframing them — the literary equivalent of a collage.<sup>1</sup> The form emerged in the 20th century, influenced by Pop Art and Dadaism, whose artists sometimes placed everyday objects into different contexts to provoke fresh responses and questions.

In this found poem, Fiona Hamilton used verbatim quotes from qualitative interviews with patients about recent experiences of test communication in a recent *BJGP* article.<sup>2</sup> Different patient voices were interwoven to capture the patient experience in a creative way. Lines from the transcripts were selected for their resonance or linguistic impact and arranged with line breaks so that qualities of voice, tone, and underlying meaning could emerge.

### CONNECTING WITH THE PATIENT'S PERSPECTIVE VIA POETRY

Blood testing is an almost universal experience — most doctors will have had a blood test themselves at some point. Although as doctors we are trained to see blood tests as a routine, perhaps relatively trivial intervention, in most other contexts blood is laden with mystery and deeper meanings: the giving of blood as sacrifice or propitiation; the duality of blood as life-sustaining and life-draining. Even in this 'trivial' exchange, there are emotions and nuances: an expectation of something in return — information, or illumination, or relief, or an end to uncertainty. Yet results could turn out to be inconclusive. Symptoms might continue despite the test showing 'nothing wrong'. The patient may be left with more questions and uncertainty. The exchange was not what they expected.

Poetry helps us to reconnect with this, and might trigger or remind us of the experience of being 'on the other side' as patients

ourselves. We hope that readers of our academic article<sup>2</sup> might find this poem offers a complementary perspective — helping them to engage in a more reflective way with patients' lived experiences of blood testing.

We also hope that this poem will help us to reach out beyond our traditional academic audience. As patient involvement and engagement becomes increasingly embedded in primary care research we suggest that found poetry may be a useful tool to help researchers connect with stakeholders and patient partners.

We plan to use our found poems in future collaborative work with patient and public partners and stakeholders to help stimulate reflections, discussions, and debate about how to improve test communication.

#### On the inside

*On the outside I could be fine  
on the inside my blood may be having  
some different story*

*When you get a text saying  
something's come up on your blood tests  
please contact your GP  
you go oh my god  
I'm dying*

*I'm guessing it's due to the elevated levels  
but I don't know what that is  
what is it you are looking to find?  
Is there a name for if this thing is elevated?  
I try to trust as much as I can  
they know better than I do  
You almost hope for a result that's going to  
come back  
with something that can be treated*

*The receptionist said yes  
oh yes, I've looked it up  
everything's fine, no further action  
you're here, all clear*

*Coming back normal is fine but  
does that mean they're going to drop it?  
does that mean there's going to be any  
further investigation?  
does that mean that this is we know  
one of the other things  
that they thought it could be?*

*It just leaves me with more questions  
I wonder if I ought to make another  
appointment with the doctor  
I wish now I'd said to him  
would you want to see me again*

*I just leave it and I think  
well if nobody contacts me  
its fine  
On the outside I could be fine  
on the inside my blood may be having  
some different story*

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### REFERENCES

1. Patrick LD. Found poetry: creating space for imaginative arts-based literacy research writing. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice* 2016; **65**(1): 384–403.
2. Watson J, Salisbury C, Whiting PF, et al. 'I guess I'll wait to hear' — communication of blood test results in primary care a qualitative study. *Br J Gen Pract* 2022; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/BJGP.2022.0069>.

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