

## **Openings**

On average, patients tell their story 3.6 times, to other people, before they see their doctor.

- Average doctor interruption – around 18 seconds
- Average patient opening statement - around 54 seconds
- Only 2% of opening statements exceed 2 1/2 minutes

This may mean that the patient fails to give the doctor important information.

Average number of problems per patient in GP - 2

Serial order of presentation (by the patient) is unrelated to medical significance!

So it's important to get the full list before setting the agenda for the consultation.

The best phrase for a really making sure that the most important issue is tabled at the beginning of the consultation seems to be along the lines of: “Is there some other concern you planned to raise today?”