Purpose
In conventional medicine, evidence-based, group-oriented protocols and guidelines are considered to guarantee the quality of interventions for conventional indications. However, whole medical system (WMS) approaches are characterized by their highly individualized diagnostic and therapeutic orientation. This orientation at the individual patient makes that group-oriented protocols and guidelines provide insufficient guidance for individualized treatments and do not guarantee their quality. The aim of the current study was to describe the elements of WMS individualizing interventions as an alternative for protocols and guidelines and to describe the related methodological issues.

Methods
The development of two Anthroposophic Medicine healthcare programs for patients with cancer and depression, and the literature on WMSs, complex interventions and individualization in therapeutic processes was analyzed.

Results
Core elements of WMS individualizing interventions are:
(1) a set of consensus and evidence-based treatment phases, related treatment goals per phase and, related therapies per goal;
(2) professionals with trained system thinking and reflection skills that are able to judge the current complex situation of the patient (individualization in diagnostics), to individualize treatment, based on this individual diagnosis and the knowledge of phases, goals and therapies, and to reflect on the progress of and steer the therapy process.

Conclusions
The quality of individualizing WMS interventions cannot be guaranteed by group-oriented protocols and guidelines. They require a set of treatment phases and related goals and therapies, that must be individualized by professionals with trained system thinking and reflection skills. Individualization of WMS interventions thus includes professional clinical reasoning.