

FM REVIEW 2015 30 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This is a thoughtful essay by a third year medical student reflecting on how her longitudinal family medicine clerkship enabled her to grow as an emerging physician. One reviewer recommended reject because he thought it was too naïve and added nothing new to the literature. However, the second reviewer was enthusiastic about it, and already imagined using it in teaching situations! My reaction leaned more toward that of reviewer 2, and X and Y liked the essay as well. X also reviewed and provided valuable edits, as did Y. I added specific edits in addition to the comments below.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: This is a thoughtful essay about what you learned from your longitudinal family medicine clerkship and how that experience helped shape you on your road to physicianhood. You discuss issues of continuity and relationship with patients/families really well. You also illustrate ways in which your physician role models gave you hope that you could indeed strike the right balance one day between doctoring and other aspects of your life. Your essay shows how third year, instead of being "negatively transformative" (nice phrase!), can lift up and inspire those who go through it.

In addition to reviewers, three journal editors have read and line-edited your manuscript. Please consider these changes carefully, as in our view they offer improvements in style and/or clarity. Please pay attention to these points in particular:

1) Pg. 5 (attached) - the chronology is confusing. You speak of making a home visit at end of life, but the patient's wife speaks as if the patient has already passed away. Was he indeed dead when you made the visit? Clarify this point so the reader doesn't end up confused at what should be a very moving moment in your narrative.

2) Top pg. 6 - Could you show just a little more of how the information/personal knowledge of the patient aided the resident and provided a smooth transition of care? (Could probably be done in a single additional sentence).

3) We all agreed that the sentence pg. 7 - "There are, after all, humans on both sides of the doctor-patient relationship" – is insightful, beautifully crafted, and a powerful concluding line. What follows is too didactic, too much of an opinion, and not really in the spirit of the narrative essay (please note same issue- para 1, p. 6). The narrative essay should be about your experience, not generalizing to others (let readers draw their own conclusions). If you cut what is currently your last sentence, you could use the words gained to elaborate on point #2 above. If you feel strongly this sentence should stay, please find a different place for it in the narrative (maybe paragraphs 2 or 3 pg. 6).

COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: The author has made all the changes requested, and the result is a well-written tribute to a longitudinal family medicine clerkship, grounded in the details of specific patients whom she cared for and specific preceptors who mentored her. The essay should be accepted, in my opinion. There are two extremely minor stylistic/grammatical changes that I indicate below.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II:

The essay reads beautifully now, and is a valuable reflection on the benefits of a longitudinal clerkship.

By the way, substituting "reciprocally" for "mutually" beneficial was a perfect choice - this is exactly what you meant, and by changing the word you instantly clarified the message you were trying to convey.

There are two extremely minor stylistic/grammatical changes that require your approval:

1) Pg 3, line 23 - "Taking a seat beside Lucille..." instead of "her." Since your last noun refers to your preceptor, the referent for the pronoun is unclear.

2) Pg 4, line 35 - "You..." "you" should be capitalized.

The ending is quite moving, and captures well an important aspect of the philosophy of family medicine.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR III: This lovely manuscript about what can be learned from a longitudinal FM clerkship is ready for publication. A really nice piece of work.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: Thank you for accepting the minor suggested changes. This essay is a lovely tribute to the benefits of a longitudinal clerkship.