

## FM REVIEW 2018 15 COMMENTS

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR III:** The author has made a requested deletion that was something of a detour from the forward thrust of his essay; and has also cleaned up various stylistic issues. I recommend that this essay be accepted.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR I:** This essay about how you introduced a teamwork model to address smoking cessation issues in your practice has many strengths, as well as some problems. Its strengths are its honesty regarding your own difficulties in engaging in stop smoking conversations with patients; your evident grief at the death of your patient from lung cancer; and your tenacious commitment to seeking out a better, team-based approach, and implementing it in your clinic over the reservations of your colleagues. This should be the spine of your story.

The difficulties are threefold: 1) It is too long with too many unnecessary details. As one reviewer noted, she became bored halfway through. It should be possible to tell this story within the 1000 word limit the journal sets.

2) The tone is sometimes a little prosaic, and insufficiently conveys the emotions of the moments you describe and the actions you take. Try to make the writing less clinical and more as if you are simply telling a story. The title is not especially captivating - think about a title that will draw the reader in.

3) Most importantly, I would like to see a little more of you in the story, especially as it relates to any feelings you might have retained about your patient Janice's death. Did this event propel you to do more about smoking cessation? Why did this issue become so important to you? Helping us to understand your motivations will make this a more gripping story.

Please pay attention to reviewer comments. I have also provided an edited version of the manuscript which gives you some options about where you could consider cutting material. In particular, I think Dr. Solberg's visit is told in too much detail, and might be cut altogether. In its place, deeper reflection about why smoking cessation became your cause, and why you fought so hard for it will be a story worth telling and a story worth reading.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II:** Thank you for these revisions. The essay is both shorter and more focused; and your emotional commitment both to your patient and to the smoking cessation project is much more in evidence. It remains a moving essay of one physician's determination to always do better in the care of his patients.

I am suggesting one more cut for your consideration, which is the paragraph recounting your early (perhaps accidental) success with persuading a patient to stop smoking. This anecdote is really not needed, and interrupts the more powerful thrust of Janice's story. This will also help bring the essay closer to the 1000 word limit.

As well, I am suggesting that you give the second patient and his wife pseudonymous names. "Janice" having a name enhances her tragic story; and since the other couple "balances" out her narrative in a hopeful way, it would humanize them to give them names as well.

Finally, there are some minor stylistic revisions indicated on the attached file, just to close a few narrative loops and clarify the writing.

Please consider these suggestions and if you would, make a final revision of the manuscript. Your story is an honest and humble exemplar of a physician's devotion to the overall wellbeing of his patients and his persistence in implementing an effective way to improve their care.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: Thank you for your patience with the review process and the revisions. A brief essay in some ways is harder to write than a more lengthy piece because each word has to be as perfect as possible to sustain the momentum and carry the writing forward. You've told a very touching tale that I think many of our readers will respond to, both in thinking about smoking cessation and in the commitment family physicians make to their patients even beyond the grave.**