

## FM REVIEW 2018 35 COMMENTS

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR:** This essay is ostensibly about introducing a team-based smoking cessation program into a small group practice; but it is really about a physician who was too busy to implement smoking cessation counseling until a young patient died of lung cancer. In his regret, he became a stop smoking champion, and persevered with reluctant partners until they adopted an effective program that fulfilled his desire to discharge his responsibility to the patient who'd died. I don't know if this author can tell this story because of its personal nature, but I think he deserves a chance to attempt it.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR:** 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 EDITOR II:** This is a heartfelt submission about a family doc who loses a young patient to lung cancer, resolves to introduce better smoking cessation practices into his clinic, and does so. It does not have a great deal of insight or reflection; but I think it will speak to many family physicians' desire to always do better by their patients. It is still a bit long and the writing rough in a few places, but with some minor edits it should have a place among our essays.

**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, 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.**