

LMC Pastoral Service

Working as normal, and here if you need us.

The spread of CV19 in the next few weeks will inevitably force big changes in the way the whole NHS works. We will have to focus attention on patients whose clinical need seems most urgent, particularly when there are a significant number of clinicians who are themselves unable to work due to CV19. It is likely some of the decisions you will need to make will be very difficult, and in circumstances like this some of those decisions are bound to be wrong. We won't be able to provide ideal care for everyone, and that will be particularly difficult for doctors with those slightly obsessional personality traits that often go with being a good GP. It's not easy to shift your mind set from doing your best for every individual you see, to focussing your limited capacity and resources on the people who will get the most benefit, but that is likely to be necessary. It helps that the regulators understand this.

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/news/news-archive/how-we-will-continue-to-regulate-in-light-of-novel-coronavirus>

Although it is reassuring to know that you will not have the GMC breathing down your neck so long as you are doing your best, that will not silence the nagging internal critic that most of us carry around. *You ought to work harder! Put in more hours! How dare you take time off to relax or sleep? It was all your fault that the patient died...*

Of course, it wasn't. Whether the patient had CV19 or an MI, intellectually you know it was not you but the epidemic that led to their death. But emotionally, it's a different story. It can be almost impossible not to feel to blame when things go wrong, and that is not only damaging to you and your relationships, it also makes you less effective at work just at the time when we need you most.

Normally, debriefing with colleagues and friends often helps put things in perspective but now that may not be an option so do remember that the LMC is there to help. You can contact an advocate for support and advice via our pastoral service website. www.somersetssafehouse.co.uk If you can't remember your password contact jill.hellens@nhs.net. Or if you feel you need direct one to one support from one of our pastoral officers please call or email and we will put you in touch.

Please don't suffer in silence