

EDITOR'S CHOICE

The other side of the story

Dr Kate Granger learned last year she had metastatic cancer. Here she shares her experiences of being both doctor and patient

Have you ever stopped and thought about what it is truly like to be the patient?

As a third-year elderly medicine registrar I'm not sure I had, but last August I was thrown into the other side. I was on holiday in the US with my husband and developed what we initially thought was renal colic. I ended up in an American hospital with an obstructive uropathy secondary to a pelvis full of an unidentified tumour. After a retrograde ureteric stenting procedure we flew home with a provisional diagnosis of ovarian carcinoma. Seeing healthcare



Dr Kate Granger: it's the little things that patients notice

professionals as a patient is difficult at the best of times, especially when you feel you know far more than your doctor - I have lots of experience in oncology, haematology and palliative care. My GP has never been perturbed by this and is pleased with my input, but will also 'doctor' me when I need it. After numerous scans

and biopsies, a diagnosis of desmoplastic small round cell tumour was made. I had liver and bone metastases at presentation so I knew I was in a palliative situation.

I think some doctors forget the rule book when dealing with other members of their profession. I was told by a junior member of the medical team that I had metastatic disease without having a friend or relative with me, there was no clarification of what I already understood and none of the nurses were aware I had just received devastating news.

It really is the little things you appreciate as a patient - someone holding your hand when you're upset or a friendly smile. These behaviours are small and easy but make the world of difference to patients.

After five months of palliative chemotherapy and its side-effects, I decided enough was enough and it was time to stop. I have since returned to work part-time and am busy completing my 'bucket list'. I cannot change what has happened to me, but I can stay positive and live life to the full for as long as possible.

Dr Kate Granger is a third-year registrar in elderly medicine at Pinderfields Hospital in Wakefield

MORE ONLINE
Dr Granger's book is available at theothersidestory.co.uk. She also has a Facebook page: facebook.com/theothersidestory

TWITTER



This week we hit 7,000 followers on Twitter! Not only is Twitter a great way to get the latest breaking news from Pulse, but you can let us know your views and join the debate with leading GPs such as Dr Clare Gerada (@clarecgp), Dr Peter Swinyard (@phoenixdoc), Dr Richard Vautrey (@rvautrey) and our very own Dr Tony Copperfield (@doccopperfield). And if you haven't already signed up for our Forum newsletter do so today - it has our top Twitter picks every Saturday. Happy tweeting!

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WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ONLINE

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Frankly, I can't see the Daily Mail can do any more than it already has.

...on a possible media backlash to pensions industrial action

They're building the Shard in our practice area!

...on fears commuters could overwhelm practice boundary pilots

It is over 10 years since an episode of Frasier showed his father's blood pressure being monitored remotely.

...on the news that telehealth 'trebles death rate' in elderly patients



EDITOR'S BLOG

Gerada wields her influence

Dr Clare Gerada's spirited opposition to the health bill won her plenty of plaudits, but also a fair few critics who wondered what it would do for the college's wider influence and its ability to deliver on its own key priorities.

So she was understandably jubilant after having cleared the major hurdle to approval of four-year GP training. Her final challenge is to persuade the whole of general practice that extended training is a dream worth its price...

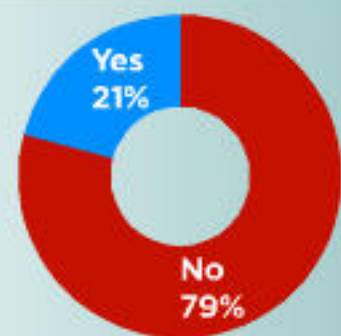
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THIS WEEK'S POLL


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Last week's poll
Should the fourth year of GP training be used to plug service gaps?



Turn inside for this week's shot of the world according to Copperfield
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