

An Editor's Invitation: Waiting

Category: Waiting, More Voices

written by Paul Gross | October 1, 2020

Dear *Pulse* readers,

We are waiting.

Waiting for an election that is very close—already happening in some states—but still feels far off.

Waiting for a pandemic to come under control.

Waiting for systemic racism to be fully acknowledged and met head-on.

Waiting for unprecedented fires on the West Coast to be doused.

Waiting for our nation and for all humanity to address climate change in a massive, coordinated way.

We are waiting.

Health care is often an exercise in waiting—waiting for your name to be called, where else?, in the waiting room. Waiting for the doctor—or nurse practitioner or physician assistant—to walk into the exam room.

Waiting at home for a test result that could bring catastrophe, or relief.

As a physician, I call an insurance company and wait on hold to talk to someone who can reverse the company's decision—the one to deny a CT scan for a patient who has a cancerous-looking mass on ultrasound.

I wait for the day when my electronic medical record will be half as technologically sophisticated as my cell phone. Or when its list of immunization choices will be in alphabetical order.

Caring for a hospitalized patient, I wait each day for a pathology report that will tell me whether they have cancer. And when the result comes back “indeterminate,” I wait outside the patient's room, trying to think of the right words to convey this painful news—that they will need one more biopsy and another round of waiting.

What's your experience of waiting—as a patient? As a healthcare professional? As a caregiver?

Send a story of your lived experience to More Voices. Have a look at the September theme, [Fatigue](#), to see what others have shared.

For more details, visit [More Voices FAQs](#)—or go directly to the [More Voices Submission Form](#). Remember, your healthcare-related story should be 40-400 words. And no poetry, please.

Sincerely,

Paul Gross

Editor