

The Clock Can Keep Ticking!

Category: Watching the Clock

written by Esther Pottoore | September 11, 2022

I was out of this clinic for almost four months.

When I came back, I realized that everyone was unsettled and upset. Apparently, this clinic was closing, another one was opening in the same space, and many of the staff were leaving. There was one recurring theme amongst the worried staff and providers, as time ticked on, relentlessly, towards D-Day. *What will happen to all these patients who will fall through the cracks?*

The elderly. The disabled. The emotionally disturbed. The refugees. The ones who are medically illiterate. The ones who can't read or write. The generations of families served in this clinic.

I was amazed at the love I saw, genuine love, from the hurting staff and providers. Over time, they have come to know these families and the needs of this underserved community. Our team has put their hearts and souls into the work they do. It's more than work. It's a mission, a calling. But now, as the clock keeps ticking, health care is becoming more of a business. And, with it, quality of care will suffer.

Will I be able to sleep at night knowing my elderly patient has probably moved to a shelter because no one picked up on the fact that she was overdue on rent as her grandson used the money to fund his drug habit? Last time, I was able to intervene and get Adult Protective Service involved. But now, my role will change, and I might not see her. She may be one of those patients who falls through the cracks.

For now, I count my blessings. I got a better-looking office, with a view and sunlight! And I still enjoy my job. It's a job I know well, and the clock ticks real fast on a busy day.

My office is a stopping point for many who drop by to discuss their worries. I do my best to calm them down with my glass-is-half-full attitude. In this transition time with uncertainties, powerlessness and frustrations, one good thing is that, like all tough New Yorkers, we come together and weather all storms as a team.

Esther Pottoore
Yonkers, New York