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"If You See Something, Say Something" WACEP President's Message

Jeff Pothof, MD, FACEP

"If you see something, say something" has become common vernacular in post 9/11 America. I suspect most of us think of air travel when we hear that phrase, but the phrase is equally applicable to healthcare and the environments we work in.

One of the most important aspects of safety culture in healthcare is the ability of anyone on our teams to say something when they know or suspect that something is amiss. This includes everyone on our teams. From providers to nurses to techs to volunteers and other supporting staff. The more people who are being sensitive to how things are supposed to work the more likely we are to identify a problem before it ruins our day, or even worse, harms our patient.

Although this idea may seem intuitive and all of us would nod in agree that we as providers expect the rest of the team to speak up if they think a patient may be harmed, I've seen repeatedly in my work within patient safety that someone saw or knew something but didn't say anything. Many will be quick to blame the person who said nothing however the problem is rarely the person. We hear things like "no one acknowledged my concerns before, why would I make the effort to say something this time", or "the provider put me in my place the last time I raised a concern that turned out to be nothing, so now I just stay quiet because they know what they are doing".

One of my mentors once told me that as physicians we don't get a choice as to whether we want to be leaders or not. The only choice we get is whether we are going to be good leaders or not. Many on our teams in the ED look to us for guidance and tone setting whether we want that responsibility or not. When it comes to saying something when you see something, I don't think as providers it's enough to raise our hand or speak up when we see something that isn't right. I think our role is also to communicate directly and with intention to our teams that we expect everyone on our teams to say something when they see something, and then have to foresight to identify when that is occurring and show respect to them while reaffirming that speaking up was the right thing to do--irrespective of whether they were right or wrong. This is how we can change culture, and this is how we can keep patients safer.

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Surprise Billing Action Alert

Matt Mokrohisky, MD, WACEP Treasurer

The Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee has proposed federal legislation that is less favorable for Emergency Physicians than other legislation proposals from both the House and the Senate addressing the issue of Out of Network Billing.

As you may know, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) is on the HELP committee. I urge all ACEP members to join the ACEP 911 Legislative Network if you haven't already. Through the network, you will be able to send Senator Baldwin an email that's already been drafted, advocating against the aspects of this bill that are harmful to Emergency Physicians and our patients.

This issue is time-sensitive and easily the most important policy issue facing our practice that is currently being debated in Washington. [Learn more and make sure you join](#) the 911 Legislative Network today!

Rural Outreach Program: September 6 in Richland Center

Wisconsin ACEP is working on a Rural Outreach initiative this year in an attempt to engage emergency physicians who practice outside of the "Madison-Milwaukee corridor". Whether you practice in southwest Wisconsin or not, we hope you'll save the dates of Friday/Saturday, September 6-7, 2019 and plan to join us in Richland Center.

The program on Friday will begin mid-to-late morning and will have an educational component, including hands-on ultrasound techniques, acute stroke care update and more, followed by a WACEP Board meeting (guests are welcome), and an evening dinner and social event. For those who wish to make it a mini-getaway and stay overnight, we can provide ideas of several activities for your Saturday adventure including river kayaking, dairy farm/ goat farm tours and more. Watch for more details forthcoming!

Doctor Day 2020 - January 29th

It's not too early to start making plans and schedule requests for Doctor Day 2020!

Emergency Medicine continues to have strong representation at this important advocacy event for Wisconsin's physicians. Doctor Day is made possible through a partnership of physician organizations, and WACEP has again made the commitment to be a host/sponsor for 2020.

The day-long event provides a unique opportunity for physicians from across the state to collaborate and share with policymakers facts and data on timely health care issues. Registration is open; sign up today at www.WIDoctorDay.org.

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