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Introduction:

Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? Who will watch the watchmen?

The incidence of most psychiatric disorders is higher in doctors than in the general population. Surveys have revealed that up to 25 % of doctors have depressive symptoms. Suicide rates are also high with 400 doctors in the US alone lost every year lost to suicide.

Doctors are notoriously bad at seeking help for their own psychiatric problems often only presenting when a crisis arises. Reasons for this include symptom concealment owing to fears of exposure to stigmatisation.

A stigma was a scar on the skin of ancient Greek criminals. It was a sign to all that these people were unsafe, unclean and unwanted. Stigma still persists today in the attitudes towards those who have mental health challenges. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the medical profession.

Aim:

To take a stand against the stigma associated with mental health challenges in the medical profession and to debunk the many myths that abound.

Methods:

The primary author composed an autobiographical narrative about his personal experiences with oscillations in his mood in attempt to illustrate the factors that influence disease detection, progression, treatment and outcome.

Conclusions:

Mental health challenges do not prevent you from realising your dreams as evidenced in this case report. Dr Hankir received the 2013 Royal College of Psychiatrists Foundation Doctor of the Year Award. It is through making it more acceptable to share our experiences with low mood that the number of suicides among medics will fall.