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Physicians and nurses grieve too; loss, grief and mourning

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There is lack of direction when it comes to physicians and nurses coping with their own grief connected with the loss of a patient. It is unprofessional to cry or show too much emotion. The textbook of medicine teaches their students to distance themselves and create protective boundaries. Being emotional is a sign of weakness. This approach is impractical and damaging. Physicians and nurses are human and experience feelings of helplessness, guilt, uncertainty, isolation, disappointment, and depression after the death

of a patient. These feelings can lead to medical errors and burnout if not addressed. Working in the health profession can be very challenging. There is a need to have a better understanding of empathy development in the health profession and more education on how to improve the situation. Caring for dying patients can put a lot of stress on nurses and physicians and this can cause them to burn out or quit.

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