Human Errors Happen in Healthcare More Often Than You Think

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Your coworker shows up hung over. No crime… They're not legally drunk. You both laugh about her adventure from the night before and go about your day. She's merely tired you tell yourself.

Your favorite dietitian you adore working with was up all night with her newborn son. She rubs her eyes as she blearily grabs the chart of the first patient lined up in the examination room.

Another one of the therapists you regularly interact with is going through a divorce. You admire her resolve to stay professional and keep it together, although she does seem distracted at various times throughout the day.

Overall, you feel pretty good about the crew you work with, and while you hate to think about the possibilities of what could go wrong, you know you work for a reputable company and they have insurance for a reason. You're covered, you think, even if something goes wrong. *And nothing will,* the mantra plays in your head throughout the day and makes you feel better.

You reason you're not responsible for another person's actions anyway. You're not their manager.

Much in the same way you would stop one of your friends from driving while buzzed, or drunk, you actually are responsible. If you are aware there are issues with a coworker who seems to be struggling, and who might have made minor errors throughout the day, you need to report it. Even if the two of you are friendly, you still must speak up so a more grievous mistake can be avoided. But how many people really ring the alarm? How many people choose instead to ignore risky situations, hoping nothing terrible happens?

Forget about being tired, hung over, stressed, or sick. What about the percentage of human error? It happens. You've made a mistake. We've all made mistakes. We're not robots after all. And it is highly likely in the event of a mishap you were witness to that you would be seen as a party who contributed. You can remove your part of the risk when you have the appropriate coverage. Then all that's left to do is the right thing. You've removed the worry about how a wrong turn in the course of taking care of a patient can affect you.