

# Why is anyone surprised that doctors are human?

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I should declare an interest. As many people know I am married to a doctor.

Like every other doctor she is human and suffers from fatigue and stress. Like every doctor she stays awake all night worrying about patients. And she takes patients deaths badly, especially when she has got to know them well.

That's because she is also very much a human being.

So why is anyone surprised that doctors working at weekends don't produce results as good as those working in the week?

And why does anyone think doctors can work 13 plus hours a day ( her norm) and then cover the night, and still be safe?

Yes doctors are well paid. But very, very many of them wonder whether it is worth it as they get older. One reason their pension fund is so over-funded is their low life expectancy.

If we want care then we have to accept humans must provide it, at all levels of the caring professions. And treating those who work in them with contempt and derision whenever possible is a recipe for a health disaster that the private sector could never solve - because it hasn't got the compassion to do so.

And that word 'compassion' is the key.