ABS-docs: lessons learnt from setting up a physician health program in the Netherlands

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Who are we?
MOST DANGEROUS JOBS
IN THE UNITED STATES

1. LOGGERS
   - The Job: Cut trees into logs, move them
   - Annual Pay: $34,600
   - The Hazards: Falling trees, cutting equipment, escape
   - Deaths per 100k workers: 127.8%

2. FISHERMEN
   - The Job: Catch marine creatures for sale
   - Annual Pay: $36,900
   - The Hazards: Drowning, heavy equipment
   - Deaths per 100k workers: 117%

3. PILOTS
   - The Job: Fly aircraft for propellors to commercial
   - Annual Pay: $128,000
   - The Hazards: Air crash, altitudes, takeoffs and
   - Deaths per 100k workers: 53.4%

4. STEEL WORKERS
   - The Job: Cut, set, handle metal construction
   - Annual Pay: $50,700
   - The Hazards: Heights, heavy materials, welding
   - Deaths per 100k workers: 40.5%

5. ROOFER
   - The Job: Mount, fix roofs
   - Annual Pay: $38,800
   - The Hazards: Heights, heat
   - Deaths per 100k workers: 37%

Percentage of male employees in each field. Data from 2013 U.S. Census. "Women In The Labor Force: A Databook." These workers figure includes iron workers. Pilot figure includes flight engineers. Fisherman figure includes all fishing, sailing, and factory jobs on smaller. Data for pilots workers is not available.
10-20%
ABS-what?

KEEP CALM AND PRACTICE ABSTINENCE
ABS - what?
Why is it so difficult for a physician to ask for help

Don't ask
But yes, I could use some help
“Whatever you may be sure of be sure of this, that you are dreadfully like other people.”

McLellan 2011
PEOPLE NOWADAYS
Bystander Effect: Likelihood of helping someone in need

- Only person: 100%
- 1 other: 60%
- 4 others: 20%
The bystander-effect among doctors

- No effect (15%)
- Pay back (12%)
- Not my responsibility (10%)
- Somebody else will take care (19%)
- What happens with colleague? (9%)

DesRoches 2010
Drugs of choice:

- Alcohol: 50% - 60%
- Poly drug: 30% - 70%
- Opioids: 30% - 40%
- Stimulantia / bzd / barbiturates / cannabis
- Intravenous: 14%
Signs of Addiction in Physicians

- Personality change
- Loss of efficiency and reliability
- Increased sick time and other time away from work
- Patient and staff complaints about physician’s changing attitude/behaviour
- Indecision
- Increasing personal and professional isolation
- Physical changes
- Unpredictable work habits and patterns
- Moodiness, anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts or gestures
- Memory loss
- Uncharacteristic deterioration of handwriting and charting
- Unexpected presence in hospital when off-duty
- Heavy “wastage” of drugs
- Inappropriate prescription of large narcotic doses
- Insistence on personal administration of parenteral narcotics to patients
- Long sleeves when inappropriate
- Frequent bathroom use
- Alcohol on the breath
- Wide mood swings
PHP program addiction:

Since 2011

+200 docs

Royal Dutch Medical Association Monitoring
PHP program addiction:
initially underground
onboard
prevention
monitoring
pitfalls

- Leverage
- Funding
- Stakeholders
- Partners
- Long-term
How does ABS-docs work?

Veilig aan het werk met het monitoringprogramma van ABS-artsen
Hulp uit alle hoeken

Deelnemend arts

Buddy

Behandelaar verslavingszorg

Bedrijfsarts

Huisarts

ABS-artsen

Lotgenotengroep

Lab
Why PHP?

PHP - VS:
- 71% work during 5 yrs
- 22% 1x positive urine
- 6% relapse
- 18%: retire/ licensing issue/ died
- 5% unknown

PHP – Canada:
- 85% work during 5 yrs
- 71% no relapse
- 14% relapse
IF YOU WANT to go quickly, GO ALONE.
IF YOU WANT TO go FAR, GO TOGETHER

—AFRICAN PROVERB