

As a physician assistant in the emergency department, our ER has become overrun by drug related medical and psychiatric issues. And, even after we treat these patients, they are often discharged right back from where they came and right back to what they were doing (that put them in the emergency department in the first place).

The financial and psychological burden on our society is incalculable. The death of Portland, Oregon as a vibrant city is without question or debate. The disservice to these human beings is without question, significant. I believe that activists who “advocate “for our houseless and drug addicted population do not understand what is really happening. Our current situation is inhumane and, quite frankly, brutal, and injurious to the very people that advocates claim to be advocating for. It is also injurious for those of us who treat the homeless and drug addicted in the streets and emergency departments.

The moral injury that we in the medical field are experiencing due to BM 110 and rudderless homelessness policies are causing many of us to leave the field; Discharging a 20-year-old kid back onto the streets to continue using meth and fentanyl and living in a tent with their amputated feet, infections, and clear psychiatric instability, has become too much for me and many of my colleagues.

It is time to rethink how we are approaching the situation. The current status quo is obviously broken, serves no purpose other than to keep the status quo, is keeping people, sick, homeless and addicted, is leading to fatal outcomes, and has ended my nearly 30 year career in emergency medicine. That is not hyperbole, that is reality.

It is time to call out and radically change these bad and, honestly, stupid policies. We need new and more innovative ideas.

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Portland, Oregon it's a position  
Sent from my iPhone