



Bearer of bad news
Porteur de mauvaises nouvelles

Brian R Smith

Volume 14, numéro 3, 2023

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1102156ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.36834/cmej.76145>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Canadian Medical Education Journal

ISSN

1923-1202 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce document

Smith, B. (2023). Bearer of bad news. *Canadian Medical Education Journal / Revue canadienne de l'éducation médicale*, 14(3), 360–360.
<https://doi.org/10.36834/cmej.76145>

© Brian R Smith, 2023



Cet article est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter en ligne.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>

érudit

Cet article est diffusé et préservé par Érudit.

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche.

<https://www.erudit.org/fr/>

Bearer of bad news Porteur de mauvaises nouvelles

Brian R Smith¹

¹Stanford School of Medicine, California, USA

Correspondence to: Brian Smith, Stanford University School of Medicine, 291 Campus Drive, Stanford CA 94305; phone: (408) 464-3197;

email: BSmith19@stanford.edu; Twitter: @_BSmith_

Published ahead of issue: Dec 5, 2022; published Jun 27, 2023. CMEJ 2023, 14(3) Available at <https://doi.org/10.36834/cmei.76145>

© 2023 Smith; licensee Synergies Partners. This is an Open Journal Systems article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.



Artist Statement

This piece is inspired by a mantle medical students must learn to bear: the weighty burden of delivering life-altering and complex medical diagnoses to patients. Doing so carefully and effectively is an art—it involves meticulous word choice, clear demonstration of empathy, a communication style tailored to the patient’s needs, and willingness to answer questions and give them the time they need. It may feel like one is solely the bearer of bad news or a skeletal “grim reaper” in the room. However, it may be helpful to reframe this thinking. Perhaps this new role can also be considered a burden *and* a privilege. In these moments lives opportunity: the chance to be a guide, a lighthouse, or a comforting hand. In addition to being the bearer of bad news, one can also be the bearer of humanity. Being there for our patients in such moments of vulnerability is an ultimate, sacred privilege.

Media

“Bearer of Bad News” was created in Affinity Designer and the artificial intelligence software Midjourney.