

As my patient and I wrapped up her physical and reflected on our two decades together, she showed me a photo. A few weeks ago, her hairdresser noticed odd marks and a little dried blood behind her right ear.

It was a bat bite.

There had been a bat in their bedroom – a day before her hair appointment. They never caught it. She hadn't thought to mention it.

Time was of the essence. We organized her first rabies shots for that afternoon. She could avoid the Emergency Room for her first injections and all the treatments to follow. She was pretty anxious, but she knew that I would take care of her.

A primary care doctor is her patient's navigator through the healthcare world. That's what we do. To be good at it, we can't stop studying Medicine. Our accountability to our patients never ends. We help new parents with their infants, help children grow into healthy adults, prevent heart attacks and strokes, catch cancer early when cure is possible, prevent falls and broken bones, deliver good news and bad, ease suffering, and bring comfort and peace to patients and loved ones at the end of life. We know which patient has the disease, not just which disease the patient has.

When the highest-resourced inhabitants of our Commonwealth select a concierge provider, whom do they choose? A Primary Care Doctor. They know that our expertise and counsel are critical as they get screened for disease, explore medical advances, face a health challenge or live through a pandemic. They understand that longitudinal care – having your doctor know you and not just your medical stats – is irreplaceable. And now that primary care physicians are hard to come by, they'd better lock in.

If we're so great, why is it hard to find a PCP? Because in America, healthcare is a business. And we are a cost center – a not so lucrative one. In the increasingly commodified world of healthcare that thrives on procedures and innovations, the significant savings and efficiencies we bring aren't easily quantified or highly valued. As a result, our clinical resources, our administrative burdens, our quality of life, have all deteriorated over time. And the pool of PCPs shrinks even as our population grows. We should worry.

I believe that the mission of Government is to support and protect the people of our Commonwealth so they can live their best lives. That's also the mission of Primary Care. We are fully aligned. The Medical Industrial Complex that undervalues and underinvests in Primary Care, is off-mission. We need to act. PC4You steers us in the right direction.

Please help us do our work the best we can, for the humans of this great Commonwealth by passing this important legislation, Primary Care for You.

Thanks for all you do.

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