

Cocky Intern in an Argyle Sweater

During my internship in a community hospital in the Midwest, I was returning from lunch when our desk clerk yelled, "Doctor, get in that room right now!" I responded automatically. There I found a 35-year-old woman in shock with blood pouring from between her legs and her obstetrician/gynecologist and her anesthesiologist trying vainly to start an intravenous (IV) line. Again, I responded automatically. I shoved past them and put in her IV line in one swift, smooth stick. She looked at me, and I saw her smile as the rapid infusion of saline lifted her up out of shock.

Without a word to me, her obstetrician/gynecologist and her anesthesiologist whisked her off to the operat-

ing room. Later I received a letter from her stating, "Special thanks to the cocky intern in the argyle sweater who started my IV when nobody else could do it!"

I view that spiritual moment as part of the natural high that comes with being a physician. Is there any other profession quite like health care? It is tough to make a buck, but it is really tough to make a difference. Dare I ask, "Did I make a difference?" Lastly, dare I wonder, "Am I still that *cocky intern*?"

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