

FROM THE DEAN



THE DOOR IS LOCKED. ONE OF THE ASSISTANTS LETS US IN.

There's a seating area around the fireplace and a table and chairs in the corner. A bookshelf is filled with books that are not read. The aquarium bubbles, and a cat comes to investigate the visitors. We go around the corner to the television room where usually we find her sleeping in a chair. Often she recognizes me, although confusing me with her brother.

Dementia claimed my mother relatively late in life. Now 96, she kept good health for the most part until a couple years ago. Today, as with many of our older citizens, her care takes a team of primary care physicians, specialists, health care aides, dieticians, pharmacists, social workers, geriatricians — even volunteers. Only by these professionals working together can the complicated care of our oldest patients be delivered effectively and efficiently; indeed, it is the model of care for all patients. Only through sufficient numbers of physicians and caregivers, and a health care system reformed to encourage team-based medicine, can we ensure such comprehensive, coordinated clinical services for our parents, for ourselves, for our children.

Those who look after my mother provide physical comfort, nutrition, and try to allay her fears and patiently address her questions. The person she was is not who they know, yet they provide for her, along with the dozens of others who are in their charge. To them, I am thankful; for my mother, now, this is all I wish.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. O. Woolliscroft". The signature is written in a cursive style.

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Published three times a year by the University of Michigan Medical School and the Office of Medical Development and Alumni Relations

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Office of Medical Development
and Alumni Relations
301 E. Liberty St., Suite 400
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2251
(734) 998-7705

Printed in the U.S. by University
Lithographers Inc. on recycled paper.