

From Physician to Critically-Ill Patient and the Lessons Learned

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

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In May 2008, Dr. Rana Awdish was caring for patients and teaching medical students as she neared the end of her Fellowship as a Critical Care Physician at Henry Ford Health System in Detroit.

Pregnant with her first child, Dr. Awdish's world was turned upside down when she suddenly found herself on the other side of the intensive care unit bed, because she was laying in it fighting for her life.

She had suffered a hemorrhage so severe she lost nearly all of her blood volume. Her baby did not survive and Dr. Awdish endured multiple surgeries and organ failures. But it was how the doctors treating her – her own colleagues – that proved most challenging at times. Their emotional detachment and inability to listen to her as a patient and to see her suffering took its toll, because she saw herself in them.

The journey to regain her health and career would last years and change her approach to caring for others.

Her book about the experience, *In Shock - My Journey from Death to Recovery and the Redemptive Power of Hope*, was published last fall. She wrote it to give a voice to patients who may have had a similar experience but didn't understand what care should look like and how it *should* function.

Dr. Awdish now shares her story with physicians, nurses, and others around the county in hopes of encouraging them to truly "see" those they are caring for. She spent time at OSF HealthCare on May 30.

SOT Dr. Rana Awdish, Author of In Shock

(What's been really interesting is that everyone who recognizes themselves in it has become a part of the work and has really become an agent for change. I think that's the power of disclosing our failures. :11)

She is now the Medical Director of Care Experience at Henry Ford. She says her book should not be seen as finger-pointing, but rather a description of the culture in which many physicians are trained and work in. Only by shining a light can you expect change.

SOT Dr. Rana Awdish, Author of In Shock

(I am so heartened by how much people truly go into healthcare to truly provide compassionate care. We all want to do the best work and everywhere I go I see that and we don't always have all the tools we need to do it but I think together we will build a community where we have that. :18)

In her book, Dr. Awdish also offers ways for patients and family members to advocate for themselves or those who might not be able to. Learn more [here](#).