

Episode: *Author Interview: “What Might the Past Suggest About Rural Emergency Services Amidst Critical Access Hospitals’ Decline?”*

Guest: Siân Lewis-Bevan, MD, MPH, EMT-B

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript: Cheryl Green

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[bright theme music]

[00:00:03] TIM HOFF: Welcome to another episode of the Author Interview series from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I’m your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative way to access the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is Dr Siân Lewis-Bevan, an emergency physician working at Centra Health in Lynchburg, Virginia. She is also an assistant medical director for Forsyth County Emergency Services in North Carolina. Dr Lewis-Bevan is here to discuss her article, coauthored with Dr Stephen Powell, “*What Might the Past Suggest About Rural Emergency Services Amidst Critical Access Hospitals’ Decline?*,” in the July 2025 issue of the Journal, [Rural US Emergency Medical Services](#). Dr Lewis-Bevan, thank you so much for being here. [music fades]

DR SIÂN LEWIS-BEVAN: Thank you for having me.

[00:00:52] HOFF: So, what is the main ethics point that you and Dr Powell are making in your article?

LEWIS-BEVAN: I think the main point is that we have a responsibility as a modern health care system to maintain access to health care for our entire population, regardless of where they live or their circumstances. We know that health care disparities are present, and those disparities will worsen if critical access and rural hospitals continue to close. If those hospitals continue to close, we can see decrease in access for those populations and decrease in access for EMS. And so, if we are losing those resources, then that’s taking away even more access from at-risk populations, especially in those rural settings.

[00:01:42] HOFF: And so, what do you see as the most important thing for health professions students and trainees to be taking from your article?

LEWIS-BEVAN: I think what I’d like them to take is that the health care landscape is changing. From, even from when I started, the way that we practice medicine and the resources available are changing, and the landscape is going to continue to change. And so, students and trainees today should be prepared that what they’re learning now may be different from what they’re practicing in five years or ten years, and so health care is going to be different. We need to be coming up with solutions for moving forward. What can we do to minimize these disparities? What can we do to provide other resources and fill in the gaps that we’re creating currently?

[00:02:35] HOFF: And finally, if you could add something to your article that you didn't have the time or the space to fully explore, what would that be?

LEWIS-BEVAN: I would add innovations in technology to what we can do to fill these gaps. If we're losing physical spaces like hospitals or we're losing transport like EMS, then what can we do to fill the gaps, like drone technology or delivering packages with drones? Why not deliver medications? [theme music returns] So, adding technology as a possible solution to the problem of losing access to health care.

[00:03:16] HOFF: Dr Lewis-Bevan, thank you for your time on the podcast today, and thanks to you and your coauthor for your contribution to the Journal this month.

LEWIS-BEVAN: Thank you.

HOFF: To read the full article, as well as the rest of this month's issue for free, visit our site, [journalofethics.org](http://journalofethics.org). We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*.