

Episode: *Author Interview: “How Should Students and Trainees Be Taught to Support Patients With Undiagnosed Conditions?”*

Guest: Mylynda B. Massart, MD, PhD

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript: Cheryl Green

[Access the podcast.](#)

[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 Mylynda B. Massart, a family medicine physician in the Primary Care Precision Medicine Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and UPMC in Pennsylvania. She's here to discuss her article, coauthored with Dr Erika N. Dreikorn, “*How Should Students and Trainees Be Taught to Support Patients With Undiagnosed Conditions?*,” in the October 2025 issue of the Journal, [Diagnostic Research](#). Dr Massart, thank you so much for being here.

DR MYLYNDA MASSART: Thank you for having me. [music fades]

[00:00:53] HOFF: So, what is the main ethics point that you're making in this article?

MASSART: The main ethics point that we address in this article is, how do we teach students to support their patients during diagnostic odysseys? And how specifically to avoid accidentally gaslighting the patient, which can make their medical journey incredibly challenging and painful.

[00:01:21] HOFF: And what should health professions students and trainees in particular be taking from this piece?

MASSART: I think one of the most important things they need to take from this piece is that in medicine and science, we still have barely scratched the surface of knowledge and understanding. And that we need to have a skillset of how to care for patients. Even if we don't know the answer to their questions, and we cannot yet give them a precise diagnosis, there is still always something that we as physicians can do for patients.

[00:01:56] HOFF: And finally, if you could add a point to your article that you didn't have the time or space to fully explore, what would that be?

MASSART: If I was going to add anything to the article, it would be, when you get to that point sitting in front of a patient and you just don't have any answers and you're not sure where to go yet, think for a second: This patient is someone's mother, brother, son, sister, father, cousin. How would I want my family member cared for in this situation? What would I like the physician to offer my family member in a scenario like this? [theme

music returns] And when in doubt, ask the patient what would be helpful to them in the absence of a diagnosis.

[00:02:42] HOFF: Dr Massart, thank you so much for your time on the podcast today, and thanks to you and your coauthor for your contribution to the Journal this month.

MASSART: Thank you so much.

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*.