

Howard

53, Consultant



What happened?

As he gets older, Howard is finding it more difficult to manage being on call. Shift patterns can also be more challenging than when he was younger.

⚠️ Howard struggles to sleep which can make him irritable at work and at home.

⚠️ Recently Howard had been rude to his colleagues during ward round. It was his third night in a row and he was tired. He was disappointed in himself because he knew it wasn't right to take out his tiredness as they had done nothing wrong.

⚠️ Howard knows he should take some time off, but he feels obligated to take on extra shifts, because someone has to do them. His partner, Ryan, is frustrated with him over this because they haven't had a weekend off together in the last 6 months.

And then?

✓ Howard found the BMA guidance on the ageing workforce helpful. They recommend the older you get, the number of night shifts should decrease.

⚠️ He's unsure how this could be implemented in PICU, because consultant cover is always needed.



How to improve

Staff are responsible for developing their own self-awareness of how their behaviour might impact on colleagues.

↑ In this situation it could be useful for Howard to have a reflective conversation to help him identify ways he can communicate his fatigue to others and to avoid being rude in the future.

↑ Staff are responsible Employers need to take seriously the **BMA guidance** and work with them to pilot new ways of managing shifts to take into account the ageing workforce and changes in sleep.

A **retirement pathway** could be introduced which values the expertise of older staff members without compromising their wellbeing.