



Spotlight on Healthcare Systems & Professional Challenges

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Abstract:

How do systems quietly exhaust the people meant to sustain them? In this JOSHA Spotlight, five pieces map the hidden workload behind healthcare, higher education, and research. It traces antifungal drug resistance from environment to clinic, where agricultural azole use can select resistant fungi and further narrow an already limited treatment toolkit, strengthening the case for coordinated One Health surveillance and regulation across borders. It then turns to primary care, where “nonclinical” demands, prior authorizations, mandated forms, and electronic health record inbox labor, consume time meant for patients and accelerate burnout. Beyond medicine, it highlights student precarity in Germany: merit scholarships can total up to €1,155 per month, yet may interact with BAföG rules and eligibility. Finally, it spotlights academic publishing debates: Projekt DEAL expanded open access, but critics argue it doesn’t resolve structural cost and incentive problems. thus renewing interest in Diamond Open Access models.

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Abstract

How do systems quietly exhaust the people meant to sustain them? In this JOSHA Spotlight, five pieces map the hidden workload behind healthcare, higher education, and research. It opens with academic publishing debates: Projekt DEAL expanded open access, but critics argue it does not resolve structural cost and incentive problems, thus renewing interest in Diamond Open Access models—an approach that aligns closely with JOSHA’s own non-profit commitment to barrier-free access and fee-free publication. It then traces antifungal drug resistance from environment to clinic, where agricultural azole use can select resistant fungi and further narrow an already limited treatment toolkit, strengthening the case for coordinated One Health surveillance and regulation across borders. From there, it turns to primary care, where “nonclinical” demands, prior authorizations, mandated forms, and electronic health record inbox labor consume time meant for patients and accelerate burnout. Beyond medicine, it highlights student precarity in Germany: merit scholarships can total up to €1,155 per month, yet may interact with BAföG (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz, i.e, the Federal Training Assistance Act) rules and eligibility. It closes with the quieter toll of evaluation cultures in higher education, showing how educators learn to filter contradictory feedback while staying anchored to professional purpose.

Keywords: Antifungal Resistance; One Health; Administrative Burnout; BAföG; Open Access Publishing; Teaching Evaluation.



1. Der „Deal“ ist nicht die Lösung - The “DEAL” is not the solution

By Michael Czolkoß-Hettwer and Dirk Jörke

The article argues that Germany’s DEAL agreements with major academic publishers (Elsevier, Wiley, and Springer Nature) have increased open-access availability but fail to solve the deeper structural problems of academic publishing. Although the contracts have achieved relative cost neutrality and significantly expanded access to publications, overall costs remain excessively high and disproportionate to the services provided. As an alternative, the article advocates for Diamond Open Access, a non-commercial model in which journals are free to read and free to publish in, with costs covered institutionally. While technically and organizationally feasible, Diamond Open Access struggles due to collective-action problems and distorted incentive systems driven by bibliometric metrics like the Journal Impact Factor. The authors conclude that simply injecting more money into publication fees will worsen the problem. Instead, they call for redirecting existing funds away from DEAL-style publication charges toward sustainable, fair open-access funds, increased support from public research funders, and a cultural shift in research evaluation practices, including selective boycotts of dominant publishers.

This article was previously published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on June 25, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)

2. Addressing antifungal drug resistance — a “One Health–One World” challenge

By George R. Thompson III and Angel N. Desai

Antifungal resistance is framed as a One Health problem in which environmental exposure to antifungal pesticides can select resistant fungi that later cause difficult-to-treat human infections, particularly when agricultural fungicides and clinical agents share modes of action (e.g., triazole/azole-associated resistance in *Aspergillus fumigatus*). The authors warn that this selection pressure could extend beyond established therapies to emerging antifungal classes if analogous



compounds are deployed in the environment, further narrowing an already limited clinical antifungal toolkit. A coordinated regulatory and surveillance strategy is proposed that links stewardship, susceptibility testing, and infection control in healthcare with cross-sector review of pesticides for resistance risk; the U.S. Interagency Drug and Pesticide Resistance and Efficacy Workgroup is presented as an actionable model, with the argument that global implementation is necessary because resistant pathogens spread across borders.

This article was previously published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* on June 7, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)

3. Bis zu 1155 Euro im Monat - Up to 1155 Euros per Month

By Valentin Graepler

The article summarizes the different types of scholarships available to students in Germany. These systems are essential because students are often in an economically insecure position, and even though studying is important for future career prospects, financing one's education can be difficult. In Germany, there are several funding options. For example, students can apply for scholarships from organizations that promote gifted students. These scholarships are publicly funded but administered by independent foundations that are affiliated with political parties, religious organizations, trade unions, employer associations, or operate autonomously.

It is important to note that these scholarships are not always compatible with other forms of financial aid, such as BAföG (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz; the Federal Training Assistance Act). Through these programs, students can receive financial support of up to €1,155 per month.

This article was previously published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on May 8, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)



4. Death by a thousand cuts — the crushing weight of nonclinical demands in primary care

By Bruce E. Landon *et al*

This perspective argues that primary care’s sustainability is increasingly threatened by a cumulative “nonclinical” workload that diverts time from patient care and contributes to burnout. It describes recurring payer and regulatory tasks—especially repeated prior authorizations and mandated sign-offs (e.g., Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services requirements for durable medical equipment and care plans)—alongside frequent letters and forms requested by employers, schools, insurers, airlines, housing agencies, and utilities, often requiring uncertain prognostic judgments and completed after hours. It also highlights how task-shifting from specialists and billing-oriented electronic health record (EHR) workflows amplify inbox management and data entry, making clinicians feel more like clerical staff than physicians. Proposed remedies include removing low-value requirements, streamlining and compensating external requests, clarifying specialty–primary care responsibilities, and redesigning EHR processes with team support and ambient AI documentation tools.

This article was previously published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* on May 3, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)

5. Teaching evaluations shook my confidence — until I learned to filter the critiques

By Lan Nguyen Chaplin

The author uses her experience with contradictory and often personal student evaluations to illustrate how educators must develop discernment in interpreting feedback. She argues that negative comments frequently reflect students’ individual preferences, biases, or personal contexts rather than an accurate assessment of teaching quality. Over time, she learned to shift from seeking universal approval to anchoring her practice in professional values and pedagogical purpose. This reframing allowed her to differentiate between feedback that genuinely informs instructional improvement and feedback that is irrelevant to her effectiveness. Her



experience ultimately underscores that an educator's impact is measured not by unanimous praise but by meaningful contributions to students' growth and learning.

This article was previously published in *Science*, Volume 388, Issue 6747, on May 8, 2025.

[Read the full article here](#)



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