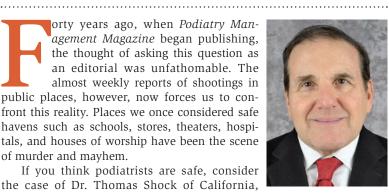
Are You Safe in **Your Office?**

BY BARRY H. BLOCK, DPM, ID

orty years ago, when Podiatry Management Magazine began publishing, the thought of asking this question as an editorial was unfathomable. The almost weekly reports of shootings in public places, however, now forces us to confront this reality. Places we once considered safe havens such as schools, stores, theaters, hospitals, and houses of worship have been the scene of murder and mayhem.



If you think podiatrists are safe, consider the case of Dr. Thomas Shock of California,

who was murdered in 2018 by a gang hired by the husband of one of the podiatrist's patients. The reason? The husband was unhappy with the doctor's treatment of his wife's foot, which he believed eventually contributed to her death.

So, how can you protect your staff, patients, and yourself? While there is no foolproof solution, there are several common sense steps you can take. The first is to install a magnetic buzzer system and intercom for your front door. Today, systems like Ring or SimpliSafe allow you to see patients before they enter your practice. Additional safeguards include installing in-office video cameras.

Your office should also have a fireproof safe to hold prescription pads, controlled substances, and petty cash. Staff should be instructed to inform you of any potential threats such as suspicious behavior or unhappy patients. While these measures can't guarantee absolute safety, they go a long way to protecting your office in an increasingly unsafe world.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barry H. Block D.P.M.

Barry H. Block, DPM, JD **Editor-in-Chief** bblock@podiatrym.com



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Publisher	Scott C. Borowsky 610-645-6950
Editor-in-Chief	Barry H. Block, DPM, JD 718-897-9700
Managing Editor	Hermine S. Block, MS
Desktop Publishing & Graphic Design	Stephanie Kloos Donoghue stephkloos@optonline.net
Senior Editor	Marc I. Haspel, DPM
Director of Continuing Medical Education	David George, DPM
Consulting Editors	David G. Armstrong, DPM John Bergmann, DPM Nicholas Bevilacqua, DPM Michael Brody, DPM G. Dock Dockery, DPM Robert Frykberg, DPM Lynn Homisak, PRT Jon Hultman, DPM, MBA Warren S. Joseph, DPM Stanley Kalish, DPM Jeffrey D. Lehrman, DPM Hal Ornstein, DPM Kenneth Rehm, DPM Doug Richie, DPM Jeffrey Robbins, DPM Lee Rogers, DPM Robert J. Snyder, DPM
Advertising	David Kagan Associate Publisher 1062 E. Lancaster Ave. Rosemont Plaza, Ste. 15F Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 215-808-0770 (m)
Controller	Joseph W. Mellek 610-645-6944 accounting@kanec.com
Circulation	Susan Mease

..... PODIATRY MANAGEMENT

> 1062 E. Lancaster Ave. Rosemont Plaza, Ste. 15F Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 (610) 645-6940 FAX: (610) 645-6943

E-mail: podiatrym@kanec.com Website: podiatrym.com

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Send Manuscripts and Letters to: bblock@podiatrym.com

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