

# **Qualifications may be less than useful**

*Letter to the Independent*

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## **Qualifications may be less than useful**

D Stewart's letter ('Qualifications aren't everything', *Independent*, 2 November 2013) conveys much robust sense and sensibility. Our world of Welfare services is increasingly strangled and obstructed by excessive and rigid technical requirements. As a veteran GP in the NHS I have seen how damaging this has been. NHS healthcarers are now more highly trained and qualified than ever, but this is often at the expense of humane and vocational spirit. Our technical treatments are undoubtedly better, but our personal and pastoral care is often worse. The now-frequent headlines of healthcare-horrors are tips of icebergs: under the surface we will find much more.

Yes, technical procedures need specific training and qualifications. But the complex needs we have in our care and guidance of one another requires much more, and that more is often very different. Compassionate interest and imagination are subtle and natural fruits. They may be induced, encouraged and modelled, but then cannot be directly or didactically instructed or assessed.

More worrying, an attempt to technicalise personal care and understanding will often destroy them. More of something 'good' is sometimes worse.

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