

Dear Editor

The doctor is out, but still answering

Your article *The doctor is out* (18.9.16) attempts a balance between a human interest piece and a brief equitable analysis of very complex problems. Mostly it manages these very well, but there are a number of inadvertent misunderstandings. As I am the subject of the piece I would like to correct them. In the interest of space let me here itemise just two:

1. I certainly *do* keep computer records. I retain manual records simultaneously: these serve as a failsafe (computers sometimes crash) and a more personal aide memoire. In this respect I do more, not less, than required. I am, here, *both* modern and old fashioned.

My manual records often go back far further than 1987 (as described) – sometimes even to the 1940s. Long views are often much deeper.

2. The Magistrates ruled that my conscious and deliberate non-compliance was de facto a breach of my contract of employment and also (evidently) failed the CQC's *procedural* vouch-safety. The Magistrates acknowledged my excellent indices of quality and safety from all other sources. This anomaly and distinction was recognised by the Magistrates. They are subtle, but very important to understand my predicament and the stand I have taken.

I hope *The doctor is out* will manage to engage more than a sad-sweet affecting description of an older man struggling, and failing, to keep up with rapidly changing times. I would like the tale to catalyse much wider thought and debate. We can start with these two questions: *What is happening to personal doctoring?* and *Are there important areas in our lives where we are developing a now harmful excess of 'helpful' regulation, monitoring and control?*

Dr David Zigmond

25 Ella Road
London N8 9EL
020 8340 8952