

## **Commercial outsourcing of complex welfare work: time for a reversal**

This week (28.3.19) the news channels reported that outsourcing probation services to commercial agencies had shown poor results, and the government now recognises this. The Chief Inspector of Probation had a brief soundbite: 'the complex casework and ethos of probation services cannot be safely or effectively reduced to simple formulae or targets', she said.

There is much more to be said, of course, as this mistaken policy is now a serious blight across our Welfare services. Few veteran NHS doctors, for example, think that the target-driven commercialisation of their profession has brought anything but damage.

Maybe whatever kind of government we have after Brexit will have the courage and resolve to dismantle these follies: the Health and Social Care Act of 2012 is a good place to start.