

## **Why our GPs are voting with their feet**

The gross deterioration of our NHS General Practice is now evident to most of us struggling to get an appointment, even more to those wanting some personal continuity of care. The exodus of GPs both attests to, and contributes to, the size of the problem.

The usual explanation is of insufficient funding for increasing demands of our nationalised healthcare. This is true and important but does not adequately account for the dispirited stress of current GPs.

General Practice always had the stresses of frontline medical work, but the last three decades have added those from serial reforms. The sources of these are various: the neoliberal doctrine of marketisation, the technology of automation and computerisation, and the forensic mistrust of the profession following the Shipman murders have all contributed to a new managed culture – we can call this ‘the policed industrialisation and marketisation of healthcare’.

As corporation has replaced vocation GPs are voting with their feet. Three years ago I warned of this in a monograph titled: *General Practice is the Art of the Possible, but we are turning it into a Tyranny of the Unworkable*. I sent it to NHS England: they never replied.

Dr David Zigmond