

Is more professional regulation always better?

Three decades of serial reforms in our NHS, each increasing monitoring and regulation, now burden us with unviable consequences far from the vaunted plans. This is true throughout Welfare services. It is particularly well exemplified by doctors whose restive unhappiness is evident to almost every measurable index.

Less measurable are people's descriptions of experience – their stories. These provide a different, non-quantified, type of evidence and comprehension.

As our NHS has grown sicker I have tried to 'diagnose' and understand what is happening by pursuing open, unguarded and unstructured conversations with many practitioners and patients. I have attempted a basis of dispassionately objective listening: this is often hard to achieve in an area of impassioned disturbance.

In this vernacular research I recontacted an erstwhile colleague, Dr V: he expressed views I have now heard scores of times. Coincidentally I read a 1950s', now classic, science fiction tale, *The Minority Report*. How these converged is described in the attached article *Prevention must always be better than cure, surely?*

History is a novel which did take place; a novel is history that could take place

– Edmund and Jules Goncourt (1866), *Idées et sensations*

I hope this mixture of narrative and fiction may help us better deal with our current troubled realities.

Attachment: *Prevention must always be better than cure, surely?*

(Article 99)