

Sir

The more regulations, the less intelligent sense

The BBC News yesterday (26.2.18) reported the story of an acutely asthmatic child dying in hospital several hours after being turned away from her GP surgery because she was late for her *emergency* appointment.

This is a shocking example of what can and does happen in an over-regulated and over-managed NHS. We now have a system where doctors spend increasing time with compliance – bureaucracy, appraisals, inspections etc – thus depleting attention and time with patients.

This is usually unpleasant and antitherapeutic, sometimes hazardous.

I spent forty years working as a GP Principal. Our patients never had problems with access, appointments were not rigidly limited by time or agenda, and we never turned such patients away. Yet we saw as many patients as now.

Our earlier system depended on professional judgement and responsibility, and vocational motivation. Our current system is instead directed by corporate regulations and a compliance culture inimical to intelligent flexibility.

The death of this child is just one egregious example of the price we pay for such reforms.

Dr David Zigmond