

Would you like to see your GP, or know that the governm...

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One of the greatest source of disquiets about the NHS is not that there are long hospital waiting lists - although no-one is overly chuffed by that - but that people cannot get to see their GP.

The idea being put around by politicians is that there is a shortage of GPs in the UK.

The claim is being made that this requires that we train [assistant practitioners](#) - who are not, by a very long way, comprehensively medically trained - to take the place of the GPs we cannot get.

But this is not true. As the [GP Online](#) news service from the British Medical Association reported last month:

*The BMA has warned that **thousands of GPs are currently 'underemployed' because practices can't afford to hire them** - and GPonline has reported in recent weeks on locum GPs turning to foodbanks and one GP working as an Uber driver because they were unable to find a job in general practice.*

This report is not made in isolation. This letter in the GP newspaper - [Pulse](#) - **provides personal evidence of the fact that this significant level of unemployment amongst GPs is now happening.**

So what is going on? Three things are, I think.

First of all, the government is deliberately making the NHS crisis worse. The goal, presumably, is to encourage private medicine as an alternative.

Secondly, it is also doing that to promote the 'cheap' option of assistant practitioners - even though horror stories resulting from their lack of broadly based knowledge because they are only trained in specific fields (at best) when medicine is necessarily a holistic subject, are now becoming commonplace. The aim is to break the role of the doctor.

Third, the Treasury has said we can no longer afford to provide people with the medical care that we need, even though we know that the trained people who could provide it are available and the multiplier effect of that spending is considerable, all because they want to do nothing more than balance their spreadsheets, whatever the cost to real people might be.

And what is Labour saying about this? Nothing at all, as far as I can see.

So why isn't Labour saying they will find a job for all trained GPs who want to work? That's all down to Rachel Reeves' iron-clad fiscal rules, I am sure. She would much rather people die than spend what is needed to help them.

And that might be one of the tests for a new Labour government. Will they end GP unemployment, or would they rather people suffer?