

Dr John Fitton, a GP since 1975, gives us his view on McKinsey claims that the least productive GPs have 77 appointments a week and the average is 126. They claim; if the 'slowest' improved, it would be possible to have 3,500 less GPs saving £400m a year. He asks; 'how do you quantify GP productivity?'



This observation betrays a profound misunderstanding of how UK GPs operate – somewhat surprising as McKinsey minions have been profitably embedded in PCTs up and down the country for some time now.

GPs are usually **not** salaried employees. Their situation is more analogous to the shareholding profit of similarly owned local service

industries like garages, restaurants, farms etc.

They are not state salary-men, much as some in government would like them to be.

Some GPs have built up large

organizations and some have preferred to stay small but in most UK towns there is plenty of choice and healthy competition between them.

As for being 'productive', GPs are fundamentally an insurance-based industry acting as their own loss adjusters

Those that are salaried are usually employed by the GP owners of the organization and if they only offer 77 appointments per week they would be paid accordingly.

A parity partner in my practice only offering 77 appointments would either be bringing other income into the partnership - backfilled by consenting remaining partners and salaried assistants- or be out on their ear!

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That is sometimes the most challenging aspect of the job

because unlike the simple fee for service directly from the client's wallet, the NHS GP has a responsibility not only to the patient but also to their relatives and neighbours who are all indirectly paying the premiums.

A McKinsey *bean-counter* might well consider a GP who recalls every case of bronchitis for follow-up and sees their anxious patients fortnightly as highly productive but their partners might think otherwise!

Because of their sophisticated service set-up there are fewer UK GPs per head than most European countries. For the most part they are highly efficient and well paid self-regulating service providers dealing with the majority of illness for a tiny fraction of the NHS budget.



They have little to learn from McKinseyites!

John.Fitton@gp-K83039.nhs.uk