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Well, July was a corker of a month for students of the forces which upend our fragile faith in corporate governance. The former owner of the BHS retail chain has been criticised by two select committees. Although Sir Philip Green was knighted for his business acumen, Frank Field, the Chair of the Work and Pensions Committee asked, “What kind of man is it who can count his fortune in billions but does not know what decent behaviour is?” We learned that he “systematically extracted hundreds of millions of pounds from BHS, paying very little tax and fantastically enriching himself and his family, leaving the company and the pension fund weakened to the point of the inevitable collapse of both”. His self-serving ownership was mirrored by his successor Dominic Chappell[1].

July was a grim month for adult social care as the annual survey of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services confirmed that service cuts will continue[2]. Crucially there is less investment in preventive services which enable people to remain at home for longer. There is no longer a dedicated social care function at the Department of Health but, as the Chief Executive of NHS England has observed, because underfunding social care adversely impacts on health care, social care requires investment.

Given the pressures in the NHS, it is unlikely that safeguarding is in the foreground of General Practices. As David Pearson noted in the *British Journal of General Practice* (No. 66, 650, p. 471). “How do we think it is acceptable in 2016, almost 70 years after the NHS was founded, to try to look after lists still approaching 2000 patients when the complexity of medicine has changed beyond recognition? Why do we attempt to offer a high quality comprehensive service, free at the point of access, to those numbers of patients in a society dominated by a consumerist and litigious culture, and not expect to feel overwhelmed by the demands placed on us? And how do politicians think that stoking patient expectations to promise a similar service across 24 hours and 7 days, with no more resource or staffing, will do anything other than drive future doctors from these shores? As GPs we need a new contract with the public, with patients, with professional colleagues: a contract recognising our unique and vital role as generalists”. In this edition, Jeremy Gibson and colleagues bravely consider the role of the General Practice surgery in safeguarding adults and the assurance which Derbyshire’s Clinical Commissioning Groups are seeking from GPs.

In total, 84 people were killed and over 200 wounded by a 19-tonne truck which accelerated through crowds enjoying a Bastille Day festival in Nice during July. After Charlie Hebdo and the Bataclan tragedies, France’s involvement in airstrikes plus its secular liberalism appear to be the incentive. It is noteworthy that those involved in such extreme violence share similar profiles, that is, they have a track record of petty crime, they are culturally isolated in impoverished neighbourhoods and typically have insecure and poorly paid jobs. Whether it is Shia crowds celebrating the end of Ramadan in Baghdad or Christians celebrating Easter in Lahore, terrorism is a deadly provocation.

There is no shortage of stories about cruelties and the misuse of restraint. However, shocking footage of the children and youths in detention at the Don Dale facility outside Darwin in the Northern Territory in Australia has prompted a public inquiry. It showed young people hooded, bound, stripped, gassed, verbally abused and tied in a restraint chair[3]. As Gillian Triggs, the president of the Australian Human Rights Commission observed, “when you chip away at the rule of law and basic rights, ultimately you falter profoundly [...] with [the emergence of] a culture that has allowed this to occur in the Northern Territory”[4].

In this edition, Jill Manthorpe and colleagues consider the impact of a Panorama TV broadcast, “Behind closed doors: Elderly Care Exposed” on care staff. A troubling finding is that the care home staff interviewed felt that they would be unable to remain in homes where they raised concerns.

Japan is still reeling from the killing of 19 people at a care home by a former employee. Satoshi Uematsu was quoted as telling the police, “It is better that disabled people disappear”. There was a warning sign: he was a drug user and he had written to a speaker of the lower house

of Japan's parliament proposing euthanasia and volunteering to undertake the killing himself[5]. A further 25 residents were seriously injured during his deadly attack.

July heralded the Goddard Inquiry's comprehensive engagement strategy across England and Wales. The "Truth Project" concerns the testimony of adults who were sexually abused as children. Their accounts will not be tested, challenged or contradicted. There are two additional "core projects" – the research project and the public hearings project. The former will consider institutional failures in child protection and the latter "will resemble a conventional public inquiry". The Inquiry has divided the institutional sectors under investigation into five work-streams:

1. allegations of abuse by people of prominence in public life;
2. education and religion;
3. criminal justice and law enforcement;
4. local authorities and voluntary organisations; and
5. national and private service organisations[6].

In early August, Justice Goddard resigned from the Inquiry and Professor Alexis Jay took over. She is the fourth Chair of the Inquiry which began its work during 2015[7].

Also during August, Janet Hills, the president of the National Black Police Association expressed concern about the disproportionate use of Tasers against black and ethnic minority people, that is, they are three times more likely to be Tasered than white people. Questions about the safety of these devices have been raised because of the deaths of some individuals who have been Tasered. It involves shooting two barbs which are designed to pierce the skin. The barbs are at the end of electrical wires carrying 50,000 volts which are briefly applied and result in a loss of muscle control. Elderly people and those with pre-existing heart problems are at an increased risk of developing cardiac complications. The devices have been discharged on older people, people with mental health problems, physical disabilities, learning disabilities and substance misuse problems. They have become the "less lethal" weapon of choice for police in England, Wales and Scotland. Ten years ago Amnesty International issued a report noting the rising number of deaths after Taser use and yet the upward trend continues. The most recent example of a death linked to the use of a Taser in Britain is that of Dalian Atkinson. He was a black, former Aston Villa footballer who had been suffering from depression.

Will a British Bill of Rights proceed as promised and do we need one? The Justice secretary seems to think so, asserting that it was a conservative manifesto commitment. We recall a manifesto promise of the same party some years ago that there would be no more top-down reorganisations of the NHS – which heralded the biggest ever shake-up. More recently, we have been promised a seven-day a week health service. We have one already of course but some manifesto commitments must be honoured – even if leaked Department of Health documents set out the reasons why it may be derailed by insufficient resources and investment[8].

A Citizens Advice Survey[9] of 500 people who have accessed their pensions under pension freedoms suggests that people are not considering their future potential care costs and they are losing money to middle men and women. If only local authorities had the resources to encourage all citizens to think about and credibly plan for their retirement.

Misogyny, "honour" killings and forced marriage are rarely far from the headlines and in this edition Rachael Clawson considers the circumstances of adults with learning disabilities who are victims of forced marriage. In the fog of "cultural differences" and assumptions about the control of women in patriarchal communities, here is a group about which too little is known.

Also in this edition, Caroline Norrie and colleagues have scrutinised responses to the Department of Health's consultation concerning a power of entry for social workers in England – most particularly when access appears to be hindered by a third party.

It is worth reading Alexis Jay and Kathy Somers' independent review of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland[10]. The Board was established during 2012 and the reviewers conclude that it "spent too much time on the wrong issues and failed to deliver on its main statutory responsibilities concerning improved protection of children". There were also tensions between

various elements of the Board's activities, such as the Board, the Safeguarding Panels, the committees, the staff team and the CMR [Case Management Review] Panel which were not addressed. Relations between the sponsoring Department, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, and the Board were reported by both Chairs to have been 'tense'. It is a hard-hitting, wide ranging and illuminating review.

Finally, the Law Commission has opened its consultation for its 13th programme of Law Reform and is seeking views on the areas of the law which would benefit from reform. Please go to www.lawcom.gov.uk to advise the Law Commission about problems which are causing unfairness and are discriminatory, for example. The closing date, for examples and suggestions, is 31 October 2016.

Notes

1. www.theguardian.com/business/2016/jul/25/bhs-demise-sir-philip-green-reputation-torn-apart-in-damning-report
2. www.adass.org.uk/adass-budget-survey-2016-key-messages
3. www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3706051/Don-Dale-Youth-Detention-Centre-prison-guards-LAUGH-torture-teenage-boys-tear-gas.html
4. www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/jul/28/treatment-of-children-at-don-dale-prison-could-amount-to-torture-says-un
5. www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/26/japan-care-home-attack-satoshi-uematsu-horrifying-vision-disabled-people
6. www.iicsa.org.uk/how-we-work
7. www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3726364/What-shambles-Wall-wall-QCs-earning-fortunes-Warehouses-documents-Hundreds-allegations-going-decades-Thousands-witnesses-No-wonder-Lowell-Goddard-couldn-t-cope.html
8. www.theguardian.com/society/2016/aug/23/seven-day-nhs-labour-demands-inquiry-as-leak-reveals-crisis-warning
9. www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/09/pension-freedoms-users-lose-up-to-10-per-cent-of-retirement-pot/
10. www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/independent-review-sbni-feb16.pdf