

Template for a junior doctor

loans would be the most effective way to quickly move a workforce in the direction it needs to go. But requiring anyone in this country to do anything, especially if it is for the common good, has not been a popular position. 'I have mine, you go get yours' seems to have replaced 'E pluribus Unum' on the dollar.

The big question is whether this global amnesia about recent past events will be transitory or permanent. When libraries close, school 'days' are shortened to 3 hours, and streets remain unplowed in winter, while millionaires read their e-books, send their kids to private schools and hire an immigrant to plow their driveways, will folks be jarred to their senses about the logic of 'balancing the budget' on the backs of the non-millionaires in the country? When the 30 million people who will be insured through the Affordable Care Act in the next 4 years face a 2-year waiting list to sign up for a family doctor, will politicians demand that medical education become accountable? Will government and private insurance change reimbursement from production and throughput to population-based care? Will the people of the country, one day, clear their heads, look around and say 'what in the world were we thinking?!'

Contrary to the ubiquitous Churchill quote about Americans finally doing the right thing after trying everything else, Americans finally did the right thing in passing the Affordable Care Act, but the newly-elected congress seems committed to trying to undo it. Churchill appears to finally have gotten it wrong.

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DOI: 10.3399/bjgp11X556416

*If you have dissected a head when all about you
Were losing theirs and blaming it on the fumes,
If you trusted yourself when all examiners doubted you,
And mitigated for their doubting too;
If you can write and not be tired by the curse,
Of being written about, despised,
Or being hated, don't give way to thinking like a nurse
And yet don't look too flash, nor talk too wise:*

*If you can sit exams — and not make exams your master;
If you can think — and not make thinking your aim;
If you can meet with depression and plaster
Of Paris, and treat those two just the same;
If you can bear to hear the diagnosis you've spoken
Use gallows humour and always play the fool,
Or watch people give up their life, broken,
And stoop and sew them up with worn-out tools:*

*If you can make it through by just grinning,
Acting like you just don't give a toss
If you lose your faith in humanity, and start at the beginning
And never breach confidentiality about their loss;
If you can fix their hearts and nerves and sinews
And serve their family after they are gone,
And so keep on working when there is nothing in you
Except the voice which says to you: 'Hold on!'*

If you can talk with patients and keep your virtue,

*And walk with consultants — without losing your common touch,
If neither death nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all patients count to you, but none too much,
If you can fill every last minute
With sixty seconds' work, worthwhile,
Yours is the NHS and everything that's in it,
And — what is more — you'll be a doctor, my child!*

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DOI: 10.3399/bjgp11X556425