

Patients' needs first

SIR – As a GP of an older generation, I have tremendous sympathy for Lars Newbould (Letters, September 17), who, despite being in great pain, has been instructed to reduce his daily dose of morphine by 80 per cent.

A number of my patients, who similarly have been put on high doses of opiates by pain specialists, have suffered the same fate, which Mr Newbould correctly identifies as ideological. Evidence-based medicine is manipulated by budget-holders and policy-setters to suit their temporary ulterior motives, usually financial.

I also have sympathy for Mr Newbould's GP, entrapped by a torrent of edicts issued by non-clinical prescribing advisers. Ultimately, however, the GP's first concern should be for the patient's well-being.

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