

n – it's for the birds

independence, as do some patients who know for certain which bird they will encounter, a small inconvenience that the consulting environment may be somewhat sparse or windswept.

If this doctor were to glance wistfully across at the GP colonies feeding in the larger habitats, sounds of squabbles across the water make the solo GP glad for his own rock. But he or she is likely to be an old bird. Hatchlings seeking the provider number blessing look across with dismay at this seemingly harsh and lonely lifestyle and flock to the security of bigger clinics and corporate enclosures. The gods consider solo practice to be an old fashioned and wasteful cottage industry and amalgamation with the big colonies is strongly encouraged.

Among the more important deities in the bureaucratic pantheon is a seemingly kind god, a pal to GPs, a provider of nutrients to those who worship at the shrine of practice accreditation.

Every three years, some assessing eagles are sent down to check the quality of practice environments and assess cleanliness, to examine many protocols for cleaning crap off rocks and to make sure worshippers remember appropriate incantations, such as the sacred word 'sonident' in order that PIP (protocol into payment) manna may continue to fall benevolently onto compliant practising colonies, large and small.

This tri-ennial coming causes much, much preening and ruffling in all colonies but the sole GP species is particularly vulnerable to divine wrath, having less resources than the

bigger flocks for such compliance creation as is required on the day.

The accreditation process would seem to be a sensible thing but the sharp-eyed eagle assessors can manifest as raptors if displeased. Supplicants can become prey. Following such a mauling, one such GP despatched pigeons to petition, but all were lost at sea and no replies received from the now aloof god, who

The solo GP is like a shag on a rock, an endangered species in the rising waters of bureaucratic change

had decreed to the rather experienced but now subsequently aggrieved GP, 'primum non nocere', following misunderstandings with their perusal of the random patient record audit.

The inscrutable eagles had been very civil during their visit but flew off to a secret eyrie to make their damning report. In this curious event, these assessment deities must have thought that an older doctor would feel more at home being squawked at in Latin.

Some would say that this entity encroaches on the territory of another deity, the CPD god, created to assure that each individual bird keeps his and her beak sharpened and quills trimmed for quality performance,

through a process of point scoring.

Ensuring that all beaks are kept clean is the province of the wise owls of the State medical boards, who may be feeling somewhat insecure right now as their trees are about to be chopped down and replaced by a Commonwealth sentinel, who will fly higher above the flock to watch for those butcher birds, such as the one found flying around Bega, who break eggs and soil the greater nest. Hopefully this is a wise move, which will trim the wings of the Dr Death vultures, ones who have been able to slip in disguise from one protected sanctuary to another.

A much feared hazard in today's medical environment is a sticky creeping plant called 'wait-a while', otherwise known as 'the lawyer vine'.

Doctor birds no longer have protection within the big cage of the past as colleagues now sometimes are prepared to peck others whilst under the influence of this creeper. Doctors today have to be particularly careful when browsing in certain fields, such as obstetrics and cosmetic surgery, where this plant has flourishing habitat and waits in the path to attach to the legs of victims, never letting go, worse with struggle.

Doctor birds have become much more cagey, but one can only wonder if all the mutations and non-medical regulators in the medical colonies over recent decades have been beneficial for that other species, the patient.

Or are they different? Perhaps one day we will discover, that doctors and patients are actually all the same human species.





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