

Barriers and facilitators to the implementation of an expanded NHS primary care workforce (Stage 1): stakeholder inquiry, conceptual framework development and design of a participatory mixed methods evidence synthesis protocol

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Lay summary

Most patients have their first contact with the NHS via their general practitioner (GP). Therefore, the services that are offered in general practice surgeries, are incredibly important to the NHS. However, general practice staff are under considerable pressures. One of the reasons for this is that the demand to see a GP has increased. At the same time, there are fewer GPs per head of population in the NHS than there used to be.

Unless some of these challenges are dealt with soon, patients will suffer. Fewer GPs, mean longer waiting times, fewer patients being seen and - for those that do get an appointment - severe constraints on the time that the GP can devote to each appointment. Not only that, but tired and overstretched GPs are less likely to provide high quality and safe care to their patients.

Therefore, there is a need to find ways to ensure that patients can still get the appropriate advice and support from their GP surgery when they need to. One way of achieving this could be to extend the roles of other health care staff that work in a GP surgery, for example, an advanced nurse practitioner, paramedic, or a physiotherapist. However, it is still too early to know how these extended roles can be best implemented in everyday practice. Therefore, before the NHS makes changes across the country, we first need to review existing research findings and summarise them into a more usable form.

In this proposal, we will develop a formal protocol to do this. We will also engage with key stakeholders (e.g. patients, GPs, HCPs) to help us shape our proposed work so that we maximise its usefulness. Our next step would be to seek further funding to conduct the full literature review.

End.

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