

4.5 A systematic review of recent innovations to manage GP workload - lay summary

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Primary care services, specifically UK general practice, are facing enormous challenges. Demand to see a GP or nurse has risen considerably. The complexity involved with managing problems in general practice has grown, as patients are living longer, often with more diseases and the need for more medications. At the same time, the number of GPs in the UK is falling. Unless new models of providing safe and effective care are considered, there is a severe risk that patients will find it harder to speak to or be seen by a GP and may suffer.

NHS England has put forward 10 "action points" that they think may help. These include things like helping patients to be signposted to other services/professionals who could help them in the community, better use of digital technologies (e.g. video calls for medical consultations) or supporting people to play a more significant role in their own health and care.

However, for these action points to have their desired effect, we need a better understanding of what evidence exists to support the use of them.

Working with our partners, including our patient and public contributors, we are conducting a "systematic review". This type of research is a thorough and detailed review of existing literature on a particular topic. In this case, the review will consider how strong the evidence is for these 10 action points. We will systematically search, identify, select, appraise, and summarise the research evidence on this topic. In doing this, we will determine, map and describe key concepts within the evidence as well as gaps for further research.

The information we get from our research will help support how these action points can be best used in practice, giving confidence to patients and healthcare professionals that they have sound evidence behind them.