

## **The King's Fund report: [Innovative models of general practice](#) (June 2018)**

The report looks at models of general practice from the UK and other countries and identifies key design features they believe will be important in designing effective GP services in the future. Below is a brief summary of the report and recommendations.

- Five attributes that underpin general practice: **person-centred, holistic care; access; co-ordination; continuity and community focus.**
- Argues that models which focus on access at the expense of other attributes may not provide the most effective and comprehensive care for patients.
- **Design principles for the future:**
  - Building and maintaining relationships – between patients and professionals, between professionals within general practice and beyond, and between general practice and wider communities.
  - Shift from reactive to proactive care
  - Develop skill-mix, embracing new roles and challenging the boundaries of traditional medical and non-medical roles.
  - Use technology to underpin ways of working, not replace them. Digital access, information sharing and data to support quality improvement.
  - Report did not focus on general practice within the wider health system, but highlights the King's Fund's previous position on general practice being at the heart of place-based models of care, moving towards new forms of organisations that enable practices to work together and with other providers to develop integrated services.
- **Highlights that access to adequate resources to meet rising demand underpins all recommendations about the future of general practice.**
- **Recommendations for general practice:**
  - Produce new models of care in partnership with patients and their wider community.
  - Learn from evidence about models based on co-located micro-teams, making the most of the wide range of skills within practices that will best meet the needs of the local community.
  - Collaborate to develop services that can provide effective access to a wider set of skills and resources – including pharmacy, mental health expertise, maternity and specialist advice.
  - Access support for service development, including organisational development.
  - Make greater efforts to support practice managers, particularly in accessing quality and service improvement skills.
  - Work with technology partners who can support new ways of working, prioritising partners and technologies that are most useful to their patient population.
  - As practices merge and grow in size, consider what impact any structural changes may have on key attributes of care. New processes and models of care may need to be introduced to improve or maintain, for example, relational continuity of care for patients with complex problems.
- **Recommendations for system leaders and commissioners:**

- Understand the centrality of effective and high-quality general practice in delivering system-wide change - actively engage general practice at all levels of planning and delivery.
  - Facilitate the building of strong links between local voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and general practice.
  - Consider opportunities to develop and support professional roles that span care settings, providing varied, flexible roles that also support an integrated approach to patient care.
  - Foster and support digital innovation in local practices, particularly technologies that go beyond just improving access – looking for those that promote self-care, shared decision-making, the co-ordination of care, the sharing of clinical information and the promotion of communication between practices and across the wider system.
  - Work with general practice leaders to identify priorities for their local area and support them to develop and test appropriate new models. This support should include funding to support the training of practice staff in change management processes.
  - Capital funding should be easily available to support the required transformation. This may include investment in estate to enable the co-location of professionals and in technology to support information-sharing and improve access.
- **Recommendations for national policy makers:**
    - Support the transformation of general practice, offering easy access to funding for general practices to invest in the activities required to undertake that transformation, including leadership and organisational development support, project management expertise and capital funding. This should be reflected in ongoing contract negotiations.
    - Policy initiatives focused on improving access should be mindful of the unintended effects of this on the ability of general practice to deliver continuity of care and community-focused and co-ordinated care.
    - There should be investment in ongoing research and evaluation of new models and initiatives, to share learning and support change leaders.
    - Workforce development strategies should reflect the need for a multidisciplinary team approach in general practice, creating a workforce that is flexible enough to respond to local needs and offer local solutions and providing multidisciplinary approaches to training.
    - Workforce strategies will also need to take account of the need to support sustainable and attractive careers in general practice, reflecting changing work preferences among health care professionals, for example a desire for flexible working and for portfolio careers.
    - Funding for technology should go beyond monies and procurement frameworks for specified technologies; it should also support practices in using digital technology to interact with their patients. National policy-makers should provide clarity about what they expect from general practice with respect to the many existing digital initiatives, which include the outdated Patient Online