IT innovation in primary care organisations: improving access to care services

Kushal Barai
Academic Placement, Nuffield Trust
kushal.barai@nuffieldtrust.org.uk

Stephanie Kumpunen
Fellow in Health Policy, Nuffield Trust

Rebecca Rosen
GP and Senior Fellow, Nuffield Trust

Phil Yates
GP and Chairman, GP Care

Arvind Madan
GP and Chief Executive Officer, The Hurley Group

Naresh Rati
GP and Executive Director, Vitality Partnership

Natasha Curry
Senior Fellow in Health Policy, Nuffield Trust
As part of our programme of research into new models of primary care and general practice, the Nuffield Trust has launched a learning network for established, innovative organisations who consider themselves to be at the leading edge of larger-scale general practice and primary care provision.
Member organisations of the learning network

- AT Medics, London
- Brighton and Hove Integrated Care Service, Brighton and Hove
- First4Health Federation, London
- GP Care, Bristol
- Harness GP Cooperative, London
- Hurley Group, London
- Invicta Health CIC, Canterbury
- One Medical Group, Leeds
- Shropshire Doctors Cooperative Ltd, Shropshire
- The Practice, Buckinghamshire
- Tower Hamlets GP Provider Group, London
- Vitality Partnership, Birmingham
- Whitstable Medical Practice, Whitstable
Purpose of the network

1. Offering organisations developmental support

2. Opportunity to share past and current experience of developing different care

3. Give local primary care leaders a chance to engage in and help shape the wider debate
Evaluating scaled organisations

The GP Learning Network forms part of the Nuffield Trust’s programme of research into the future of general practice and primary care.

This programme of research is tracking the development, activities and impact (on patients and professionals) of large-scale general practice organisations.

Coincides with NHS England’s vision of new care models in their 5 year strategy document: Five Year Forward View.
Several of our member organisations have harnessed their growing resource pool to develop bespoke systems, to help meet growing demands for access, reduce avoidable hospital admissions, and assist administrative workflow. We highlight three innovative platforms.
WebGP: The Hurley Group
http://webgp.com/
What is WebGP?

WebGP is a software suite which integrates with a GP surgery’s website to offer patients online access to a range of digital options.

1. **Symptom checkers** help patients confirm their GP is the right service for their situation
2. **Self-help guides** and videos about the most common general practice conditions
3. **Sign-posting** to alternate offers (e.g. pharmacy and online counselling)
4. **24/7 phone advice** within 1 hour by requesting a call back using a web form on the practice website (arranged through the local 111 provider)
5. **E-consults** in which patients use their practice website to submit condition-based questionnaires to their own GP for a response within 1 working day, potentially avoiding the need to attend the practice
WebGP example screenshot
Why was WebGP created?

The Hurley Group has sought to tackle the demand pressures/workload burden mismatch by designing an IT system to exploit today’s ubiquitous use of the internet, and to safely divert clinical queries before they reach the GP.
1. 60 per cent of 1,600 e-consults were completed without face-to-face consultations, saving an estimated **400 GP hours**

2. A feedback survey found 79% of patients would have requested a GP appointment without WebGP whilst 3% would have done nothing, countering the suggestion that this system induces demand
Vitality Partnership
https://www.vitalitypartnership.nhs.uk/access
Improving access through teleconsultations and smartphone app

1. Same day call back service from nurse or GP/booking routine appointments online or via the Vitality smartphone app

2. Skype teleconsultations offered
You are here: Home > Access

ACCESS

SAME-DAY CALLBACK

SPEAK TO A DOCTOR OR PRESCRIBING NURSE TODAY

Patients at Handsworth Wood Medical Centre, Laurie Pike Health Centre, Enki Medical Practice and Smethwick Medical Centre can speak to a doctor or prescribing nurse today by filling in the form below.

This service is only available until 5pm on weekdays. If you are making your request after 5pm or at the weekend and you are feeling unwell, please ring your GP practice.

Patients from other Vitality practices with urgent needs should contact their surgery as usual.

First Name *


Last Name *


Date of Birth *

Day ▼ Month ▼ Year ▼

Gender *

• Male

ALREADY A VITALITY PATIENT?

If so, you can create an online account to make it easier to:

• see practice information
• book same-day call backs
• use the Vitality app
GP Consultant Link
http://www.gpcare.org.uk/site/consultant_link/
Reducing barriers to specialist advice

- GP Care’s Consultant Link® is an advice and guidance service that provides GPs with immediate and direct telephone access to local consultants.
- Supporting GPs in looking after their patients in primary care wherever possible but allowing for a 'warm' onward referral for specialist care where appropriate.
- The service is designed to provide advice & guidance to GPs on all specialty areas according to requirement and to link each GP practice with their preferred local team for each specialty.
- The consultation between the GP and the consultant is telephony based and paperless. A digital recording of the telephone conversation is then provided to the GP practice.
Reducing unplanned A&E attendances

Average time to connect a GP to a consultant has been less than 1 minute and the average duration of a phone call has been around 3 minutes.

Call outcomes measured to date:

- 63% Referrals avoided
- 2% Admissions avoided
- 9% GP requested diagnostics
- 24% Referrals recommended
- 2% Admissions recommended

63% of calls avoid referrals
2% of calls avoid admissions
Advantages of scaled primary care organisations

Operating at scale can offer benefits in terms of technology implementation. For example, scale offers opportunities to pool resources, to employ professionals with appropriate skillsets, and to free up time for exploring technological solutions to issues.
Interested in finding out more about our network?

We are committed to engaging with, and involving, as large a group of primary care organisations as possible in our work.

For any further information about the contents of this presentation, or, discussions about our work in primary care policy and evaluation, please contact:

Kushal Barai, Academic placement  
kushal.barai@nuffieldtrust.org.uk

Stephanie Kumpunen, Fellow in Health Policy  
stephanie.kumpunen@nuffieldtrust.org.uk

Natasha Curry, Senior Fellow in Health Policy  
natasha.curry@nuffieldtrust.org.uk