

Community Care: Understanding the system in the United Kingdom

This country profile assesses community care in the United Kingdom including key initiatives, best practices and challenges. This profile understands community care as all care outside of hospitals including in-centres, primary and residential care.

MedTech Europe's Community Care group calls for better patient outcomes and more attention to the community setting. For more information visit www.medtecheurope.org

Health spending

9.8%
Of country's
GDP



2nd
Lowest among
G7 countries



Health system

80%
Government-financed
healthcare



15%
Out-of-pocket
payments



NHS long-term plan

Annual £4.5 bn
NHS commitment to
funding primary and
community care services
by 2023/2024



The way forward

The National Health Service (NHS) new long-term plan sets out ambitions to boost 'out-of-hospital' care and dissolve the historic divide between primary care and community care services:

Two New Care Models

Are set to integrate care within the community.

Primary and acute care systems (PACS) and multispecialty community providers (MCPs) are both integrated care partnerships (ICPs), alliances of NHS providers that work together to deliver community care rather than compete.

£1 bn annual savings

For the NHS by establishing online GP consultations for all patients.

The NHS 111 will start direct booking into GP practices to promote self-care and out-of-hospital urgent care.



Under this long term plan, a digital-first option will be available for every patient to access convenient community care:

Digital GP

Consultations are available for every patient across primary and community care to provide advice, check symptoms and connect people with healthcare professionals.



Electronic Prescriptions

Are used in 93% of England's 7,300 GP practices, supporting primary and integrated care services. This has improved patient experience and saved the NHS £136 million from 2013 to 2016. The long-term plan aims to continue to invest in this.



REFERENCES

1. Care Quality Commission (2019) <http://nihealthcare.com/stoma-care-changes-challenges-treatment/>
2. Anna Charles, Chris Ham, Beccy Baird, Hugh Alderwick, Laura Bennett (2018), <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/community-services-assets>
3. European Commission (2017), https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/state/docs/chp_uk_english.pdf



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Regional and country-wide initiative

Virtual clinics for kidney patients

Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group in London launched a Virtual Community Kidney Service for patients in need of dialysis treatments. The consultant-led weekly e-clinic replaces outpatient visits by providing online advice from hospital specialists to doctors. This avoids up to a third of face-to-face outpatient appointments. The virtual e-clinic also offers education training with practice teams to embed the service into routine practice and helps patients to prevent or delay progression into End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD).

If a doctor suspects a patient may have issues with their kidney function, they have instant access to specialists in the online virtual clinic who can provide immediate feedback on how to manage the patient, either in the community or with more specialist care when needed.

5
Days waiting time for advice
instead of 64 days



50%
Referrals managed without
the need for a hospital
appointment



20%
Of patients need to be seen
in outpatient setting



Remaining gaps

Key challenges in improving healthcare systems and community care services

47%

Of community care spending, excluding social care, is covered by non-NHS providers. Since the 2012 reforms, the role of private providers in community care has risen.



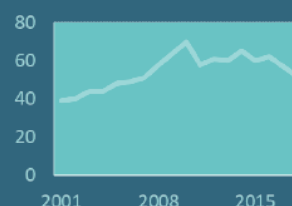
NHS staff shortages put long-term vision for primary and community care at risk. The number of doctors has decreased by 1.6% over the year in 2018.

Similarly, the numbers of nurses have also continued this long-term decline, falling by 1.2% in July 2018 compared to a year before.

53% of consultants
Said gaps in hospital medical
cover raised significant
patient safety issues.

Even as health outcomes and quality of care continue to improve, public satisfaction with the NHS continues to decline.

Public satisfaction in %
2001-2017



REFERENCES

1. Health UK (2019), <http://reader.health.org.uk/a-critical-moment/executive-summary-trends-in-the-nhs-workforce>
2. National Health Service (2019), <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/online-version/chapter-5-digitally-enabled-care-will-go-mainstream-across-the-nhs/>
3. Lucina Rolewicz, Billy Palmer (2018), <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/resource/the-nhs-workforce-in-numbers>

For more discussion, see the [NHS Long Term Plan](#).

