

# The organisation and delivery of health improvement in general practice and primary care: a scoping study

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## Plain English summary

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## Plain English summary

Every year over 300 million consultations take place in general practice in England. Professional guidelines and government policy support increasing the role of practitioners to provide advice and information on improving patient's health and also providing medical help and treatment to help prevent worsening health for people already suffering from conditions such as diabetes or heart disease. However, little is known about how such advice and support is given or if different ways of supporting patients are better than others. This study reviewed the literature on the delivery and organisation of such interventions to identify whether or not particular approaches were more effective than others. The research focus was guided by discussions with primary-care professionals to ensure the findings were relevant to current practice. We found that there was insufficient evidence to show that particular approaches to helping improve the health of patients were effective or to show how best to provide such services. There was some evidence to show that interventions for smoking were effective but the quality of the evidence was mixed and there is a lack of studies on many important health problems faced by patients. There is a need for more discussion with practitioners, and support is needed for research to be carried out in general practice settings. Despite a government policy emphasis on developing the health improvement role of general practice, recent reforms to the English NHS have created a more complex situation, and attention needs to be paid to supporting general practice at a local level.

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