

Developing and evaluating a tool to measure general practice productivity: a multimethod study

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Plain English summary

Measuring general practice productivity

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Plain English summary

General practice is central to the NHS. Despite increasing numbers of older people and people with long-term and multiple conditions, funding has not kept pace. Practices are under increasing pressure to work more productively and in different ways.

This study set out to develop a standardised measure of productivity for general practice. The result was the General Practice Effectiveness Tool (GPET). This was developed in 16 workshops with general practitioners, practice staff and members of the public, in addition to wider consultation, although strictly speaking it could not be considered a productivity index.

The GPET comprises four performance areas (i.e. *clinical care*, *practice management*, *patient focus* and *external focus*) that are covered by 11 objectives, measured by 52 indicators, gathered mainly from existing data.

A total of 51 practices across England were trained to use the GPET. Of these, 38 practices used the tool for multiple months (28 practices used it for the full period), and their data were analysed. The effectiveness of these practices improved moderately, particularly in the areas of *practice management* and *patient experience*.

Participants were asked how useful the tool was via 38 telephone interviews, a survey of practice managers and two focus groups with patients. Views were mixed, with just under half of practices finding it useful, whereas some interviewees suggested that they could not spare enough time to use it fully.

All participants agreed that the content was appropriate, and there was a consensus that there may be scope for developing it further. Of the practices involved, 40% would be keen to use it in the future.

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