

# Women's Health Hubs: a rapid mixed-methods evaluation

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## Plain language summary

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## Plain language summary

In the National Health Service, care for women's health issues such as heavy periods, menopause, contraception and abortion is provided by different services, such as GPs and hospital gynaecology and sexual health clinics. Services are not always joined up and often women find it hard to access care. To improve care, United Kingdom National Health Service teams have set up Women's Health Hubs. Women's Health Hubs involve a group of health professionals working together to provide more joined-up community-based services to women throughout their lives.

This evaluation aimed to explore why, where and how Women's Health Hubs have been set up and what they have achieved and to understand staff and patient experiences. The results will be shared with the government and National Health Service as new Women's Health Hubs are set up. The evaluation included a survey of people who have set up hubs across the United Kingdom and interviews with women's health leaders in England. In four hubs in England, we talked to local women and staff, and reviewed documents.

We found 17 hubs, and most areas of the United Kingdom did not have one. Every hub was different, with different views about how hubs should work. Most were set up to improve access and experiences for women, and reduce pressure on other services. Six hubs had involved women in developing their service but most had not. Hubs offered appointments with health professionals, usually in GP or community clinics. The most common services were for coil fitting, menopause and heavy periods.

The set-up of hubs was helped by passionate leaders who involved the right people, and identified funding and time. Challenges included National Health Service pressures and a lack of funding, clinic space and staff.

Women who have used hubs report a good experience, with caring and convenient services. More work is needed to understand how hubs can improve care for all women, including unfair differences in care.

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