

Facts about General Practice

Year	% total investment	% investment excluding dispensed drugs
2004/5	10.00%	N/A
2005/6	10.41%	N/A
2006/7	9.83%	N/A
2007/8	9.17%	N/A
2008/9	8.74%	8.04%
2009/10	8.45%	7.81%
2010/11	8.31%	7.68%
2011/12	8.16%	7.56%
2012/13	8.04%	7.47%

A few facts about general practice

There are almost 43,000 GPs in the UK – 35,415 in England, 4,287 in Scotland, 2,022 in Wales, and 1,163 in Northern Ireland.¹

They work mainly from over 10,000 GP practices – 8,316 in England, 1,002 in Scotland, 483 in Wales and 353 in Northern Ireland.²

In England, over 300 million consultations take place in general practice every year – almost ten every second – and over 80 million more each year than took place in 1995.³

The average time a GP spends with each patient is almost 12 minutes – up from just over eight minutes twenty years ago.⁴

Each GP practice takes between 30 and 50 calls from patients every day.⁵

The average member of the public sees a GP almost six times every year. – twice as much as a decade ago. On average an older person sees their GP over once every month.⁶

Almost 87% of patients rate their experience of GP services as good or very good.⁷

In England in 2012-13, expenditure on GP services accounted for £7.8 billion. Expenditure on secondary care – largely hospitals – was over £70 billion.⁸

Spending on GP services increased by 10.2% between 2006-07 and 2010-11 – compared to a 41.9% increase in spending on hospital services.⁹

19 out of every 20 consultations taking place in general practice are dealt within

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primary care alone – rather than in hospital or elsewhere in the NHS.¹⁰

Studies from the US suggest that an increase of just one GP per 10,000 population is associated with a reduction in deaths rates of over 5 per cent.¹¹

- . 1 Health and Social Care Information Centre, General practice trends in the UK, 23 January 2013
- . 2 Health and Social Care Information Centre, General practice trends in the UK, 23 January 2013
- . 3 Health and Social Care Information Centre, Trends in consultation rates in general practice, 2 September 2009
- . 4 Health and Social Care Information Centre, Trends in consultation rates in general practice, 2 September 2009
- . 5 Royal College of General Practitioners, The 2022 GP, Compendium of evidence, 17 September 2012
- . 6 Royal College of General Practitioners, The 2022 GP, Compendium of evidence, 17 September 2012
- . 7 Department of Health, Annual report and accounts 2012-13, 15 August 2013
- . 8 Department of Health, Annual report and accounts 2012-13, 15 August 2013
- . 9 Deloitte, Primary care: today and tomorrow – improving general practice by working differently, 2012
- . 10 The King's Fund, Improving the quality of care in general practice: report of an independent inquiry commissioned by The King's Fund, 2011.
- . 11 Macinko J, Starfield B, Shi L. Is primary care effective? Quantifying the health benefits of primary care physician supply in the United States. International Journal of Health Services 2007