

Primary Care Networks: an emerging opportunity for research in general practice?

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Posted 29th January 2020.

This month, Research Delivery Officer Damian reflects on work recently done to engage with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and the opportunities they present for research in general practice. If you need any advice about the delivery of research across general practice in West Yorkshire then please get in touch with a member of [our team](#).

NHS Plans for 2018-19 set out the ambition for CCGs to actively encourage every practice to be part of a local primary care network. PCNs are based on GP registered lists, typically serving natural communities of around 30,000 to 50,000. They are intended to be small enough to provide the personal care valued by both patients and GPs, but large enough to have impact and economies of scale through better collaboration between practices and others in the local health and social care system.

PCNs build on the core of current primary care services and enable greater provision of proactive, personalised, coordinated and more integrated health and social care. Clinicians describe this as a change from reactively providing appointments to proactively caring for the people and communities they serve. For more information about PCNs, please see <https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/primary-care-networks/>.

The West Yorkshire R&D team has seen the formation of PCNs as an opportunity to engage with a number of GP practices together. Members of the team have attended a number of PCN meetings across West Yorkshire to present information about our team and ways in which we can support GP practices to get research ready and make research opportunities available to their patients. These presentations have been well received and most have agreed that despite the challenges in primary care, research is valuable. While some smaller GP practices may have limited capacity to engage in research studies, it is hoped that there may be one or more practices within each PCN with enough capacity to be involved and perhaps take the lead within the PCN, thus benefitting patients within the PCN area.

If your PCN would like us to deliver a brief presentation, please feel free to contact the team: research@bradford.nhs.uk