

Exploring opportunities to improve patient safety when GPs work in or alongside emergency departments: realist synthesis and evaluation



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There is a lack of evidence for potential patient safety risks when GPs work in or alongside emergency departments

NICE National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Chapter 17 GPs within or on the same site as emergency departments

Emergency and acute medical care in over 16s: service delivery and organisation

Cochrane Library
Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews

"Results are inconsistent and safety has not been examined. The evidence is insufficient to draw conclusions for practice or

Primary care professionals providing non-urgent care in hospital emergency departments (Review)

Gonçalves-Bradley D, Khangura JK, Flodgren G, Perera R, Rowe BH, Shepp

BMJ Open The impact of general practitioners working in or alongside emergency departments: a rapid realist review

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FUNDED BY

NIHR National Institute for Health Research

Funding acknowledgement and Disclaimer: This study is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) HS&DR Project 15/145/04. The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.

Method: what works, for whom, how and in what circumstances?

- We used realist methodology to understand how and why patient safety incidents occurred when GPs worked in or alongside emergency departments and how safe care was perceived to be delivered
- Data sources: literature review; national patient safety incident reports and Coroners' reports; local 'datix' reports, observations and staff interviews at a purposive sample of 13 selected hospitals sites

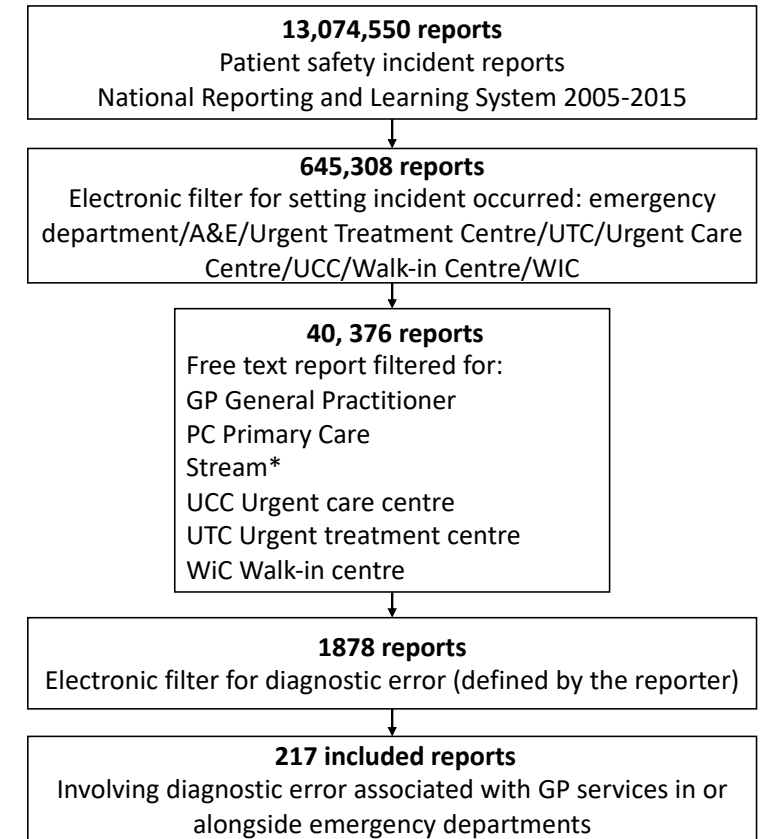
Results

Few national incident reports were identified:
 9 Coroners' reports (9/1347, 2013-2018)
 217 NRLS reports (217/13074550, 2005-2015, see figure)

These were largely due to:

- inadequate streaming processes;
- errors in GP clinical decision-making and inadequate skillset; and
- inadequate referral pathways and communication between services.

Clinical directors from 11 of the 13 hospital sites had no patient safety concerns and 2 integrated sites perceived that experienced GPs within the team improved overall patient safety in the department.



Driver diagram to show priority areas to focus improvement interventions to improve the safety of care delivery when GPs work in or alongside emergency departments

