

Lay Summary

What do senior managers of Emergency Departments say about their experience of funding and staffing a GP service within or alongside their department.

More and more people are going to Emergency Departments (EDs). Health policy in England promotes the use of GPs in and alongside EDs to relieve the growing pressure that this increased attendance is causing.

In this study we interviewed 31 senior managers of EDs who had experience of managing a GP service within the ED. We asked them about:

- their views on the funding arrangements for putting this policy into practice
- their experiences of success and challenges in introducing GPs alongside EDs

The managers felt success depended on:

- funding being well-organised and from one source
- the right staff and working arrangements being in place
- proper account being taken of the demands and needs of the local population.

The systems for applying for and receiving funding were seen as complicated especially where the GP worked separately in the emergency department rather than as part of the ED team. It worked best when health and community care services worked together to fund services. It was important to use local and experienced GPs. There were problems when private locums were used.

The study provides information to help make the best decisions on how to use GP in EDs in future.