



Future GP workforce plans for London

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan commissioned The King's Fund and Nuffield Trust to undertake an independent analysis of sustainability and transformation plans (STP) in London.

The full 98 page document is available online. The most relevant section for London GPs is the section on workforce reproduced below (P73 in the report).

What might this mean for the workforce?

For NHS providers, staff pay costs make up around 65 per cent of operating expenses. It is therefore inevitable that a substantial element of the £3.4 billion savings plans for London will be found through a reduction in expenditure on staff, at least when set against the 'do-nothing' scenario.

STPs are in the early stages of working out the impact their savings plans will have on the shape and size of their future workforce.

Analysts working on STPs in London indicated to us that the figures cited in their planning documents were highly tentative and in places incomplete.

One London STP—North West London—did not provide us with any workforce estimates as the figures it had provided NHS England in October were being corrected as this report was being drafted.

Across the four STPs that were able to include some early estimates, the reported impact of their combined savings plans was to reduce, in absolute terms, whole-term equivalent staffing numbers between 2016/17 and 2020/21 by 1.4 per cent, or slightly more than 2,000 staff.

This included 3,800 fewer registered nurses, midwives and health visitors (a reduction of 7 per cent against the 2016/17 level) and 600 fewer hospital doctors and dentists (a reduction of 3 per cent).

These reductions would be partially off-set by a projected one-third increase in GP and GP support staff (3,670 extra WTEs). Some STPs are likely to seek to manage these reductions in qualified clinical staff by increasing the numbers of trained health care support staff working in the community.

In other workforce news NHS England has announced it intends to recruit 600 overseas GPs by April 2018 in eleven areas including South East and North East London.