



## Integrating primary and acute care

### The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

#### The challenge

GPs have been experiencing a huge growth in demand for their services but no associated increase in funding. In the past three years, there has been an 11 per cent increase in GP consultations and the proportion of patients waiting over a week to see a GP is at a record high.

The situation in primary care has a knock-on impact on secondary care. Working more effectively together can help better meet the demand for services, and deliver improved outcomes for patients.

#### What was done

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust is piloting a new model for integrating primary and secondary care. This includes the development of a new primary care directorate within the trust, which will be directly responsible for three GP practices. The GPs themselves will become part of the trust's workforce, with salaries paid direct by the trust.

The Care Quality Commission has approved the trust's plans and the pilot will launch in June 2016. The trust is not part of a new care model vanguard and is not receiving any additional resources. The pilot will therefore test whether such an arrangement is sustainable in 'normal business'.

The hope is it will lead to more timely and responsive care for the 23,000 patients cared for by the three GP practices. It is also designed to increase patient outcomes and safety through better sharing of information between primary and secondary care, as well as reduce the amount of time patients spend trying to navigate their way through the system. It is hoped that, through improving the use of joint resources, the move will also help to deliver more efficient and sustainable services.

In addition, the pilot will offer significant opportunities to develop a unified prevention strategy across primary and secondary care locally.

## Overcoming barriers

The trust has had to overcome a number of challenges associated with bringing the three GP practices into its organisation, including a range of legal, governance and HR issues.

The trust is also continuing to focus on building a shared culture across the trust and the new directorate as a key means of supporting successful integration.

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## Acknowledgements

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