A review of lessons from previous initiatives to improve patient flow and shift care from hospitals to the community – overview report

Jon Glasby, Amy Grove, Ross Millar, Martin Powell, Arabella Scantlebury and Adel Elfeky, University of Birmingham, August 2025

The issue: **Current government policy seeks to shift care from hospitals to communities.**

This has been a longstanding aim – so there is scope to learn from previous attempts to shift care.

Our approach

Policy roundtable to gather practical and experiential learning

Review of previous policies

Rapid evidence review

Findings: 'Shifting care' is a laudable aim, but is unlikely to be realised unless we learn from previous attempts and do things differently this time round. This includes:

1. **Being clear on outcomes** (so everyone agrees what success would look like and is clear about why what's proposed is the best way to achieve these aims)

2. **Moving beyond pilots** and working at sufficient scale – otherwise little will change

3. Having a detailed and realistic **plan for implementation** – this has often been lacking in previous attempts to shift care

4. **Aligning wider policy**, incentives and enablers – shifting care will only be possible if everything is lined up in support of this aim

5. Making sure we have the right **leadership skills** – these are often taken for granted, and we don't always 'do change' well

6. **Getting the right people involved,** including people and communities, the voluntary and community sector, general practice, social care, public health and local government

7. **Intervening early and understanding who needs the most support** – other countries seem to do this better and we could do more to target those people who might benefit the most

8. Including **people with dementia**, and focusing on living well rather than just on people's condition

9. Scope to **learn from others** – across the four nations, from other sectors and from other countries

10. Harnessing **new technology**, but seeing this as a cultural rather than just a technical challenge