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Title: Is a consultant supported community respiratory service an alternative to hospital based specialist care? – Experience of a local service improvement project

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Body: 1. Better integration of primary and secondary care services and shifting the balance of care remain a major challenge with only few practical examples in respiratory care. 2. The aim of a local service improvement project is to gain insight into an example of specialist supported, integrated respiratory care closer to the patient's home. The objectives are to provide more flexible access, more patient centred care and develop general practitioners as partners in care. 3. Regular consultant respiratory clinics supported by a general practitioner with a specialist interest were set up in a local surgery. An interactive triage system, E communication, meetings with primary care colleagues and consultant access to primary care patient data and radiology were implemented. Service user satisfaction, general practitioner satisfaction and number of patients seen by the general practitioner with a specialist interest were recorded for a period of 18 months. 4. 77 out of 116 service users completed the questionnaire and were all satisfied with the new service and felt well supported to manage their condition. 76 out of 77 found it easy to get a suitable appointment. All 7 general practitioners were highly satisfied. 73 of the 116 respiratory patients were seen by the general practitioner with a specialist interest. 5. Our consultant supported community respiratory service project demonstrates a model of integrated and flexible care in partnership closer to the service user's home which could serve as a possible alternative to hospital centred specialist care.