In July 2020, Health Education England published their Future Doctor report,\(^1\) highlighting the characteristics that the doctors of tomorrow will need to master. Examples included generalist skills and the wisdom to make complex judgements, adapt, and be a catalyst for change. These all require knowledge work skills.

‘Knowledge work’ is the work that clinicians do to find, create, and use knowledge in everyday clinical practice. Gabbay and May recognised this as the generation of practice-based evidence.\(^2\)

By observing GPs in practice, they revealed how primary care clinicians rarely access or use research evidence directly, but instead rely on the development of ‘mindlines’ — guidelines-in-the-head. These contain evidence from multiple sources, merged with past experiences and amended through continual learning, to become a clinician’s internal guide to practicing everyday medicine.

**APPROACHING COMPLEX, INDISTINCT PRESENTATIONS REQUIRES KNOWLEDGE WORK SKILLS**

Knowledge work skills are highly valued in professions outside of medicine; but have been arguably neglected within the clinical community. Evidence-based medicine (and associated guidelines) have become the internal guide to practicing everyday medicine. Strengthening knowledge work skills could foster improved care by expert generalists for future patients. By using these knowledge work skills, tomorrow’s doctors could help to avoid the harms of overmedicalisation of care, promote wider psychosocial and community approaches to supporting people with illness, and be a catalyst for positive change required to re-energise our profession.

Annabelle Machin, Annabelle is a first 5 GP, and Wise GP and WISDOM project intern.

Email: a.r.machin@keele.ac.uk

Annabelle Machin

Joanna is a first 5 GP, and Wise GP and WISDOM project intern.

Emily Lyness, Emily is a first 5 GP, and Wise GP and WISDOM project intern.

Johanna Reilly, Johanna is a first 5 GP, and Wise GP and WISDOM project intern.

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