



Yonder: a diverse selection of primary care relevant research stories from beyond the mainstream biomedical literature

### REFERENCES

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### Brexit, preventable hospitalisations, prescribing assessments, and doctor retention

*Brexit.* June 2016 was a landmark moment in UK politics and society as 52% of voters decided that we should leave the European Union. In the 4 years between this vote and the eventual 'Brexit' date, the timing and terms of UK's withdrawal were regularly changed, creating much uncertainty for individuals and organisations.

A pan-European research team recently analysed mid-term changes in mental health in the UK after the Brexit referendum, drawing on the Household Longitudinal Study.<sup>1</sup> Their findings indicate an overall deterioration in mental health in the 2 years after the 2016 referendum, which remained significant even after controlling for demographic characteristics and local authority fixed effects. They also found that young adults (aged 31–46), individuals, men, natives, and those highly educated were significantly more affected by the results of the referendum than any other groups.

*Preventable hospitalisations.* An admission to hospital caused by the absence, underutilisation, or inadequacy of primary care services is often classified as a potentially preventable hospitalisation (PPH), the rates of which are often used as a proxy measure of primary care quality and equity.

A recent Australian study sought to identify common risk factors that rural patients described as contributing factors associated with their recent PPH.<sup>2</sup> They found that health literacy, social support networks, the ability to access primary healthcare services, and perceptions of primary care were determinants of PPH risk. While access and utilisation of well-integrated primary healthcare services is a part of the solution, the researchers emphasise that community- and individual-level factors also need to be addressed when considering future interventions.

*Prescribing assessments.* From August 2019, a prescribing assessment was introduced by the RCGP for trainees in the final year of GP specialty training, as a mandatory component of the Workplace-

Based Assessment suite. A recent study evaluated the role of pharmacists in the prescribing assessment and feedback to GP trainees who were based in the West region of the Scotland Deanery.<sup>3</sup> A training event for pharmacists was designed and delivered to describe the prescribing assessment and the value that they could add. Findings from the evaluation of this training showed that the intervention was viewed as a positive educational experience for all participants, and the interprofessional approach broadened the learning experience for GP trainees. The authors suggest that this approach could help to encourage collaborative working in primary care and ultimately enhance prescribing safety.

*Doctor retention.* Retaining doctors and other healthcare workers to primary care is one of the most important and challenging health policy priorities in the UK and around the world. A recent paper explored the issues influencing the retention of doctors to both managerial and service provision level roles in Bangladeshi primary care.<sup>4</sup> Frequently cited issues included poor pay structures, a lack of opportunities for career development, inadequate training to improve clinical skills, ineffective staffing arrangements, security issues during night shifts, and lack of job security. The authors argue that there is no single pathway to achieve an efficient and motivated primary care workforce. Recognising the value of primary care doctors and investing in their professional development, remuneration, and security are, the authors recommend, critical first steps in delivering a more viable primary care service.

*Podcast of the month.* If you're a medical education type and want to keep up with the latest literature in the field, check out the Key Literature in Medical Education (KeyLIME) weekly podcast produced by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada: <https://keylimepodcast.libsyn.com/>.

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