



# GP-SUS

December 2023

Newsletter

**WELCOME!**  
Welcome to our December newsletter updating you on the progress made with the study this year.



## COPENHAGEN HIGHLIGHTS

Our comparison study site is a Copenhagen practice with 7000 patients. Since 2013 they have used a 'Time same day' (TSD) appointment system. TSD appointments are scheduled by phone in the morning for an appointment same day 8-10am. We have finished data collection in this practice, and so far we have learnt that:

- GPs and staff are happy with TSD and describe improved job satisfaction. But, on some days GPs need to stay longer to see everyone booked, and when there are fewer appointments the triage is more strict or restrictive.
- Staff like TSD and do not wish to change back to previous systems.
- Most patients like TSD but some would like to book ahead and/or wait to see a preferred GP.
- GPs try to offer continuity of care (seeing the same doctor) for some patients (e.g. with long term conditions) but patients' views and experience of this vary.
- We are keen to examine the work that patients do e.g. how they manage to book appointments and remember when 'their' GP is at work.
- Because TSD has been working for 10 years we have not been able to explore differences between TSD and other systems used before.

## PROGRESS WITH ENGLISH CASE STUDIES

Observing and interviewing staff and patients is nearly completed in all 8 practices. We have some last interviews to do by the end of December 2023. The data collection has gone really well - we have lots and lots of information about the practices.

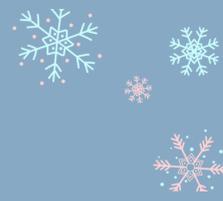
In November the research team met for a first analysis meeting to begin to discuss the data and to outline a 'coding framework' (a list of the codes or 'tags' used to manage and analyse the data).

We have discussed and developed the coding frame and are beginning to code the data using computer software called NVIVO. We can already see interesting similarities and differences between practices that we want to look at in more detail next year.

## FIRST PAPER ACCEPTED !

We are delighted that our first paper from the study has been accepted for publication by the British Journal of General Practice. This reports on our review of previous research about appointment systems and sets out our 'map' of different ways patients get to see their GP. This work was also presented at conferences during 2023. It is also currently being extended in a small project conducted by our UNIQ+ University of Oxford intern Wahab Alazawi who has been digging into archive interview data to see what patients in previous research studies said about their routes to seeing the GP.





## PATIENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Next year will be busy for you, our PPI team. As we develop the analysis we want you to help us make sense of the data, check out our ideas and interpretations, and think about how we communicate our findings. We will be able to share de-identified excerpts (quotes without names or places in) and look forward to talking with you all.

Your input so far has helped us think about

- Our logo
- How to share findings
- Real-life views of modern general practice
- Concerns about lack of privacy at GP reception desk
- Being careful not to demonise reception staff (many good experiences shared)
- Patients as a very diverse group

As Toto is a co-applicant, we have been able to give her access to the anonymised practice summaries, which she is busy reviewing and will share her thoughts with the research and PPI teams in the New Year.

## NEWS FROM THE TEAM

Over the last few months our team has changed and expanded. Two experienced qualitative researchers have joined the team at Oxford, Bella Wheeler and Anna Dowrick, supported by junior research assistant Chloe Phillips. This team will be helping us with analysis next year.

Annelieke (who had her baby Elin earlier this year) is leaving Oxford for a job in the Netherlands nearer her family - we are sad to see her go but she has promised to keep in touch.

Helen Atherton will be moving to an exciting new opportunity at University of Southampton in the New Year.

## MEET THE TEAM

Helen Atherton  
Role: Co-Principal Investigator

I am Professor of Primary Care Research at Warwick Medical School. From January I will be Professor of Primary Care Research in the Primary Care Research Centre at the University of Southampton. I have done lots of research on the use of digital routes of access to general practice for patients, and alternatives to the face-to-face consultation, such as online and video consultations. I have advised the NHS, the Government and the Royal College of General Practitioners on the research evidence for these newer forms of consultation.

I am a health service researcher and my research career has been in primary care research departments since my first postgraduate job as a research assistant in London in 2005. I completed a PhD in Primary Care Health Services Research at Imperial College London in 2011. I have a Master of Public Health and MSc in Biological Anthropology and my first degree was a BSc in Ecology, which I chose because of my love of nature and wildlife, though it didn't end up being a career.

I co-lead GPSUS with Catherine Pope, and we share the responsibilities associated with running a study, this includes overseeing our fieldwork, the team, and providing updates to funders. We make decisions about what needs to be done next, and whether we have the time we need to complete the study. Ultimately, we are responsible for delivering the research we said we would do, and ensuring the findings are published. It is a privilege to lead studies like this, and I hope our findings are going to make a big difference to patients and general practices.

