**Primary care networks**

Since the NHS was created in 1948, the population has grown and people are living longer. Many people are living with long term conditions such as diabetes and heart disease, or suffer with mental health issues and may need to access their local health services more often.

To meet these needs, practices have begun working together and with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local areas in primary care networks.

Primary care networks build on the core of current primary care services and enable greater provision of proactive, personalised, coordinated and more integrated health and social care. Clinicians describe this as a change from reactively providing appointments to proactively care for the people and communities they serve. Where emerging primary care networks are in place in parts of the country, there are clear benefits for patients and clinicians.

[Refreshing NHS Plans for 2018-19](https://www.england.nhs.uk/deliver-forward-view/) set out the ambition for CCGs to actively encourage every practice to be part of a local primary care network so that these cover the whole country as far as possible by the end of 2018/19. Primary care networks will be based on GP registered lists, typically serving natural communities of around 30,000 to 50,000. They should be small enough to provide the personal care valued by both patients and GPs, but large enough to have impact and economies of scale through better collaboration between practices and others in the local health and social care system.

*(Excerpt taken from www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/primary-care-networks/)*