

RCGP Briefing: NHS capital spending

Westminster Hall Debate, Wednesday 5th of March

The issue

- RCGP's 2025 poll of members revealed that a third of GPs say that their practice building is not fit for purpose.
- 56% of GPs said their practice requires additional works to improve or upgrade their premises in order to meet the needs of their patients.
- Our polling also revealed that GPs felt there is a lack of available funding for these required structural improvements: of those who tried to apply for funding to improve their premises in the last year less than a third (32%) were successful.

Why capital investment is needed for general practice infrastructure and estate

- **Polling shows** that access to general practice is the public's top NHS priority. However, underinvestment in GP premises limits the ability of practices to expand access through growing practice teams and hiring more GPs to facilitate more appointments. Capacity cannot be built without prior investment.
- **The Darzi review** revealed that 20% of the primary care estate predates the founding of the NHS in 1948. Many surgeries operate from aging, constrained buildings.
- **Without capital funding, practices cannot:**
 - Enable practices to take on more staff to keep up with patient demand
 - Deliver on the Government's plans to shift more services from hospital into the community
 - Modernise digital systems to utilise advances in technology and AI to improve patient care

Next steps

The Government's ambitions to move more care into the community rely on a properly resourced general practice with adequate infrastructure.

- **Our ask:** The proportion of capital spending available to general practice must reflect the fact that premises are not in a fit state to meet demand, and that investment in infrastructure is necessary to achieve this vision. This will also be essential in taking forward the Government's proposal to trial the introduction of neighbourhood health centres.

The NHSE Long Term Workforce Plan (LTWP) also recognised the need for investment in GP infrastructure, stating that growth of the GP workforce can only be achieved by significantly investing in general practice buildings. However, capital is currently outside the scope of the plan, and no other plans have been published showing how these infrastructure needs are going to be met.

- **Our ask:** Alongside the new 10 Year Workforce Plan we need a clear road map for the delivery of the additional capital that will be needed to ensure all GP practices have adequate space to both treat their patients and train the next generation of GPs we so desperately need.