Catarina Matias, Secretary General of UEMO AEMH General Assembly, 12th and 13th May 2023



EUROPEAN UNION
OF GENERAL PRACTIONERS / FAMILY PHYSICIANS
UNION EUROPÉENNE
DES MÉDECINS OMNIPRATICIENS / MÉDECINS DE FAMILLE

Shortage of Hospital Doctors in Europe and Task Shifting





A growing concern in many countries around the world, due to a **growing demand** for physicians that **outmatches the supply**.

COVID-19 stretched healthcare workers to the limit, exacerbating existing challenges around burnout, mental health and workplace violence.

Estimates: global shortage of **4.3 million** physicians, nurses, and other health professionals (10 million in 2030, primarily in low- and middle-income countries)

Additionally, rural and remote areas also commonly struggle with a physician shortage the world over.

Urgent and extreme action is needed now to improve recruitment and retention of the global healthcare workforce

Shortage of Hospital (?) Doctors in Europe

The Impact on Patients

The physician shortage has had a devastating impact on patients seeking primary and specialty care.

The lack of a primary care physician means they do not have a 'home base' to turn to when they need healthcare. Ideally, a patient's first point of contact for non-urgent health concerns should be their primary care physician. The 'family doctor' will also act as the gateway for the referral to medical specialists whenever necessary.

Without a physician who can clearly and quickly understand the patient's medical history and plan for future needs, patients end up bouncing from specialist to specialist, clogging emergency rooms, or ignoring health issues because they do not have a primary care physician. As a result, poor health outcomes arise.

Lower-quality patient care is a further consequence of physician shortages.

Physician Shortage - EFFECTS

- Lower quality care
- > Time constraints on doctor-patient interactions
- Increased workload for healthcare practitioners
- Overworked and stressed practitioners
- Unnecessarily prolonged wait time before consultations
- Higher prices for consultations

Shortage of Hospital (?) Doctors in Europe

The Impact on Physicians

The shortage also impacts physicians. Those who are in the health care system have to work even harder to make up for the disparity between supply and demand.

Doctors are seeing more patients, leading to increased workloads and stress levels. Physician burnout is increasingly becoming an issue, as doctors struggle to balance work with their personal lives, often causing them to leave their profession. Physician salaries have also been negatively impacted due to decreased reimbursement rates and changes in health care policies.

Overworked and overstressed doctors ultimately reduce hours, close practices, or leave the profession, adding to physician shortages.

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POLICY BRIEF

SOCIAL EUROPE & WELL-BEING PROGRAMME

23 JANUARY 2023

Addressing the challenges of the healthcare workforce: Ensuring the future of health in Europe

Danielle Brady

Policy Analyst European Policy Centre

Elizabeth Kuiper
Associate Director and Head of the

Associate Director and Head of the Social Europe & Well-being programme European Policy Centre

- In 2018, the average **life expectancy** for men and women at birth was 78 and 84 years. It is predicted that this will rise by seven years for men and five years for women by 2060
- Chronic diseases are more common in older populations in the EU, with 75to 84-year-olds
- High levels of mobility can often be further explained by budgetary constraints resulting in a lack of investment in health services and their workforce
- Poor working conditions, a lack of flexibility in working hours, limited career opportunities and growing work pressures.
- Skills gaps are an additional problem derived from a mismatch between basic education and lifelong learning programs





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- Gender and the health workforce (+++ women, underrepresented in decision-making positions within European health systems
- Worker dissatisfaction (considering leaving the profession)
- The green and digital transition (telemedicine and systems that reduce bureaucratic buden)
- A holistic approach is required, including health, social, labour, education, migration, and finance policymakers
- Addressing the skills gap (required for the evolution of health digitalization) increases resilience and better care for citizens, but they also offers an opportunity to reduce the workload of the healthcare workforce



Potential Solutions

- Increased funding
- Technology
- Expanding the care team
- Reducing the paperwork burden
- Boosting diversity and equity in medicine
- > Enhancing the quality of healthcare facilities and the essential infrastructure
- Collaborating with local authorities to motivate healthcare professionals to work in local medical facilities (monetary and non-monetary benefits: commuter transportation costs, providing housing options, or assisting with relocating the families of healthcare professionals

The supply of **primary care physicians** is linked to the achievement of **better health outcomes**

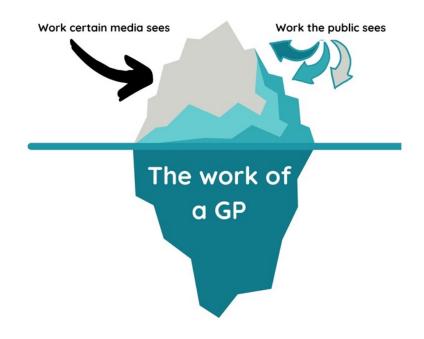
- overall health
- life expectancy
- better perception of self-rated health
- mortality from all causes, cardiovascular disease, stroke and in infancy

Research suggests that increasing the number of primary care physicians by one per 10,000 people is associated with a 5.3% reduction in average mortality.

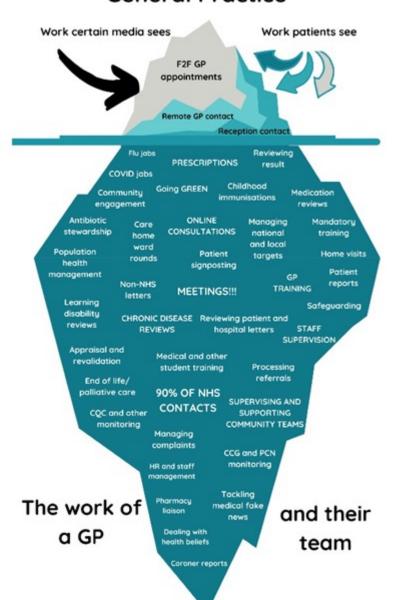
The need for primary care physicians is usually estimated **based on the tasks** they are expected to carry out, and the **time** required to maintain health programs.



General Practice



General Practice





Amanda Pritchard, the NHS England boss, said the scheme was a 'once-in-a-generation opportunity to but the NHS on a sustainable footing. CREDIT: Oli Scart PA

School leavers with be able to start working as doctors WITHOUT going to university under drastic NHS plans to fix staffing crisis

- Up to one in Cooctors and a third of nurses could qualify via an apprenticeship
- The heal receive currently has 124,000 vacancies across its workforce
- NHS chief executive Amanda Pritchard called the plan 'a radical new approach'

'Third world medicine, here we come'

Telegraph readers react to the news that school leavers will soon be able to start working as doctors without going to university

By Tara Thorpe; Candela Orobitg-Baena *and* Telegraph Readers
11 May 2023 • 1:46pm





Task Shifting 12.05.2023



|In.pt | Distric Ano 135 N 9 346 Progo 2,006 | Sexta-feitra 12.5.2023 | Diretor-Genel Editorial Domingos do Andredo / Diretors Insto Cardoso / Diretors-adjuntes Manuel Molinos, Pedro Ivo Carvallo e Rabel Burbosa / Diretor de Arte Pedro Pinn



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Penafiel suspeito de pacientes no hospital

> 12 de maio de 2023 Jornal de Noticia: OBSTETRÍCIA.

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What on Earth is This?...



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SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Task shifting in primary care to tackle healthcare worker shortages: An umbrella review

Siew Lian Leong^a, Siew Li Teoh^b, Weng Hong Fun^{b,c} and Shaun Wen Huey Lee^{b,d,e}

KEY MESSAGES

- Task shift from physicians to allied healthcare professionals in primary care appears to increase service provision and cost-effectiveness.
- Services shifted include the provision of care and coordination of patients with chronic diseases as well as independent prescribing.
- This requires optimisation of organisation systems, engaging with all stakeholders to ensure health systems strengthening.



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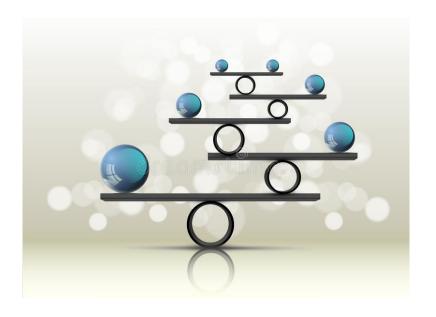


Figure 2. Elements for successful task shift.



Task Shifting









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