# Having GPs in A&E units ‘doesn’t work’

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**Researchers say that in some cases the practice can result in an increase in demand for urgent care**

Putting GPs in accident and emergency departments does not reduce the pressures on frontline staff or ease patient waiting times, according to research.

The relocation of primary care doctors to emergency units has been held up by campaigners as a way of cutting costs and increasing output, but an analysis of the practice has found little evidence to back this up.

NHS hospitals, overwhelmed by the increasing number of patients seeking emergency care over the past decade, have jumped at the idea of bringing primary care doctors and nurses into the emergency department.

However, researchers at Sheffield teaching hospitals have warned that in some cases this can result in an increase in demand for urgent care, because once resources are made available they will be overused.

“By blurring the line between emergency and primary care by co-locating services, there is a risk of losing the continuity of care that primary care providers [give] and encouraging ad hoc health-seeking behaviour,” Shammi Ramlakhan, the report’s author, wrote in *Emergency Medicine Journal*.