

Shaping the Future of Primary Care: Health Professionals' Attitudes and Preferences for Designing New Models of Care

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Although the crucial role of health professionals in transforming primary care is widely acknowledged, existing research to date has provided limited insights into their attitudes towards health promotion, interprofessional collaboration, and innovativeness. Sophie Karoline Brandt's dissertation systematically investigated the attitudes and preferences of health professionals regarding new models of care. It addressed four central knowledge gaps by examining health professionals' willingness to engage in health-promoting practices, their attitudes towards interprofessional collaboration and responsibility-sharing, their individual innovativeness, and their preferences concerning the design of new models of care.

To this end, a large-scale cross-sectional study was conducted in 2022, based on a nationwide web-based survey among pharmacists, physicians, medical practice assistants, nurses, and physiotherapists – the five largest health professional groups in Swiss primary care. In total, 4,063 health professionals participated.

The dissertation identified a clear willingness among health professionals, particularly non-physicians, to embrace enhanced responsibilities, health promotion activities, interprofessional collaboration, and innovation. Professionals across all groups favoured collaborative, interprofessional models featuring shared decision-making processes and organisational structures such as health centres and networks, moving beyond traditional general practitioner-centred care.

These findings highlighted that new primary care models, informed by professionals' preferences, could address systemic challenges such as workforce shortages while enhancing the attractiveness of careers in primary care. By aligning the development of models of care with professionals' preferences, this dissertation provided empirical evidence to inform the sustainable transformation of primary care. These insights offer guidance for policymakers, educators, healthcare providers, and researchers aiming to implement sustainable primary care structures.