

New research demonstrates an increase in NHS productivity

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A new study by researchers at the Centre for Health Economics, University of York, reveals the productivity of the NHS in England increased by 3.2 per cent in the first year of the Coalition administration.

Researchers at CHE used the most detailed and comprehensive information available to measure growth in the amount of health care provided to NHS patients and in the total amount of resources (staff, equipment, etc) used to produce this care.

The research shows that NHS productivity has increased by 8 per cent since 2004/5. There have been year-on-year increases in the number of people receiving treatment and continued improvements in 30-day [survival rates](#). Staff numbers have increased by almost 11 per cent since 2004/5 but increases have flattened out recently. There has been pronounced growth in the use of other inputs over time.

Productivity growth of 3.2 per cent between 2009/10 and 2010/11 was driven mainly by a slowdown in staffing, with levels of activity being maintained.

Health Minister Lord Howe said: "NHS staff have risen to the challenge and worked hard to deliver this impressive improvement in productivity.

"It is testament to their commitment to patient care and a demonstration of the savings that can be achieved. However we must not be complacent and the NHS will need to ensure it is getting value for money from every

pound it spends.

"With decision-making power now in the hands of doctors and nurses, we are confident that the NHS will change and evolve to meet the challenge of an [ageing population](#) and rising demand."

Professor Andrew Street, from the University's Centre for Health Economics, said: "2010/11 was the first year in which the scale of the 'Nicholson challenge' for 2011/12 to 2014/15 was made known to the NHS, with productivity improvements seen as key in delivering savings. The evidence suggests strong [productivity growth](#) between 2009/10 and 2010/11, driven mainly by increased labour productivity."

Provided by University of York

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