



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

Research impact: making a difference

Helping NHS patients make the optimal hospital choice

An LSE-led research team helped the Government improve its online data to facilitate patient choice amongst competing hospitals

Now that people in Britain are free to choos

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prompted participants to think about what they wanted in a hospital, and the last nudge preselected the best hospital by default (but participants were also provided the opportunity to “opt out”). Six weeks later, participants completed a second part of the online experiment to gauge what they had learned about hospital choices.

The research found that people typically spent just a few minutes choosing hospitals online and could easily be overwhelmed by too much information. This indicates the need for websites to organise information in such a way that people are informed only about those aspects of care that matter the most to them.

Aggregate quality measures found favour with older people and those with lower levels of education, but these groups also found them confusing. The research confirmed that only highly numerate people could properly process numerical information about the quality of health care, especially complex statistical information such as hospital standardised mortality rates.

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