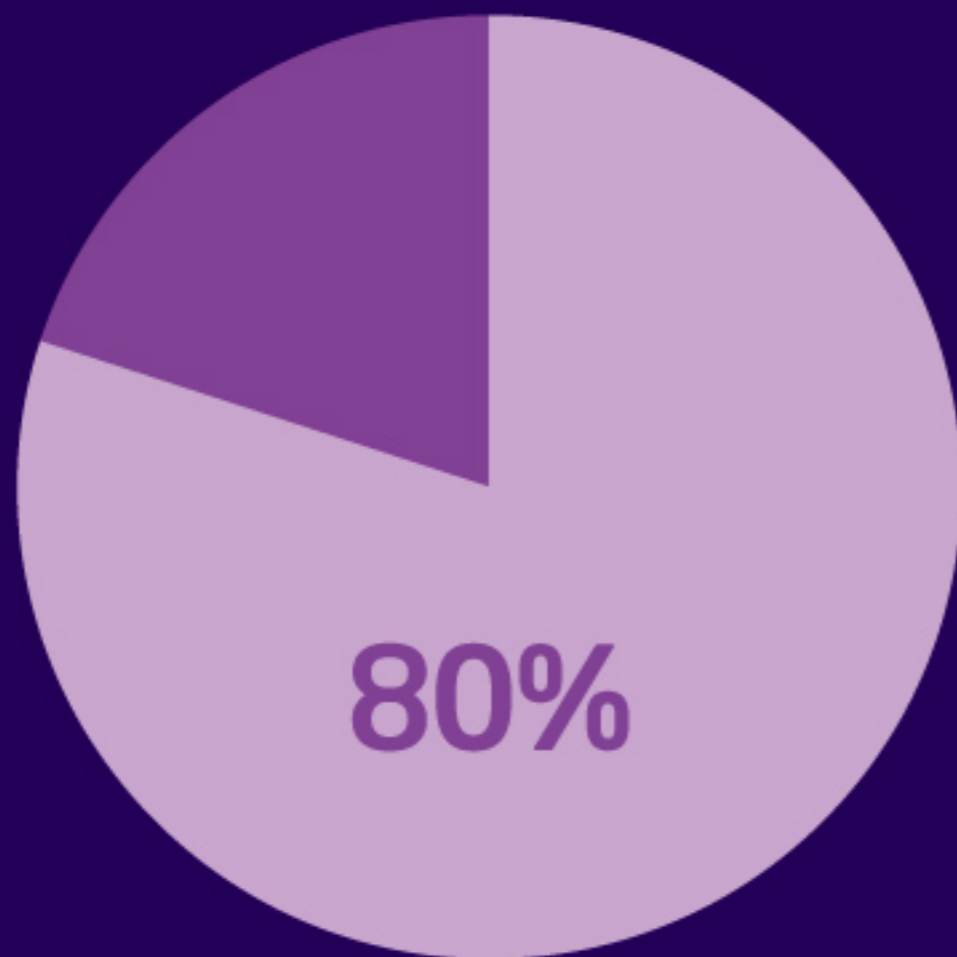
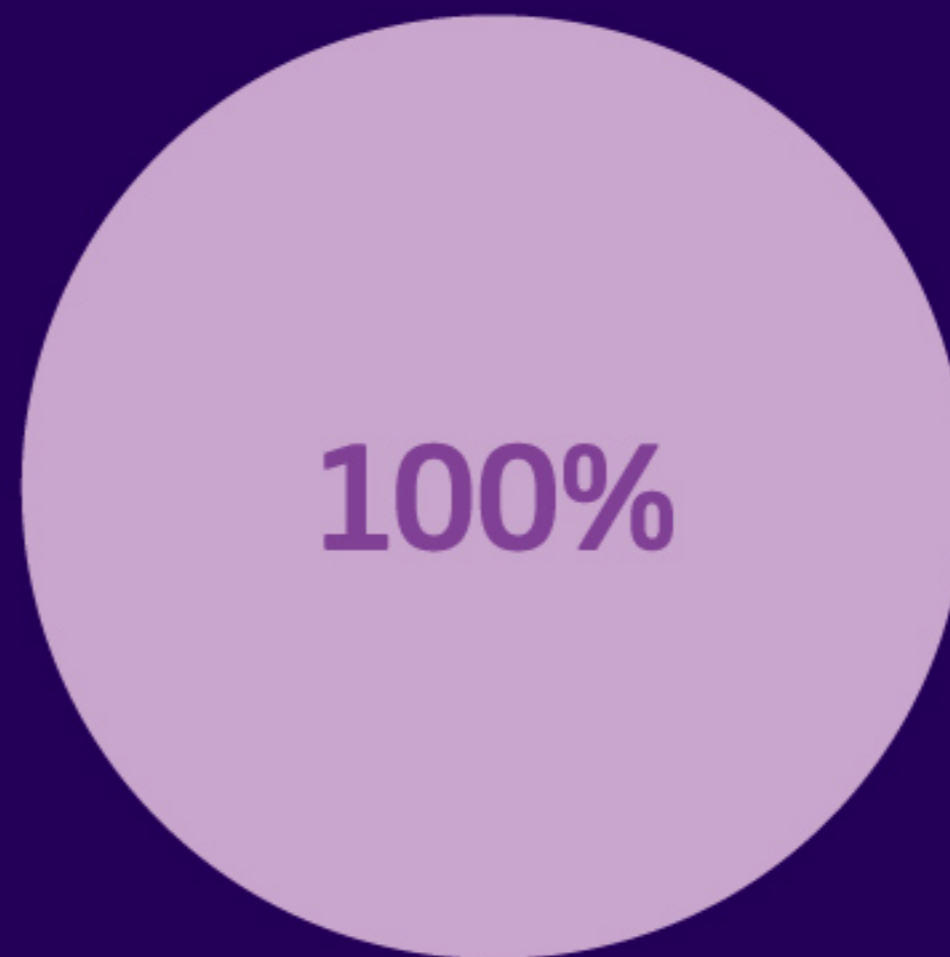


Empowering patients and service users

Digital communication offers new ways to interact with patients. Four out of five people in the UK can currently access the internet at home, and everyone in the UK will have access to the internet by 2025.



2013



2025

Access to the internet

There is a digital divide: in 2011 only 40 per cent of people aged over 65 years and 60 per cent of households with a lower socio-economic status accessed the internet.



40 per cent of people aged over 65

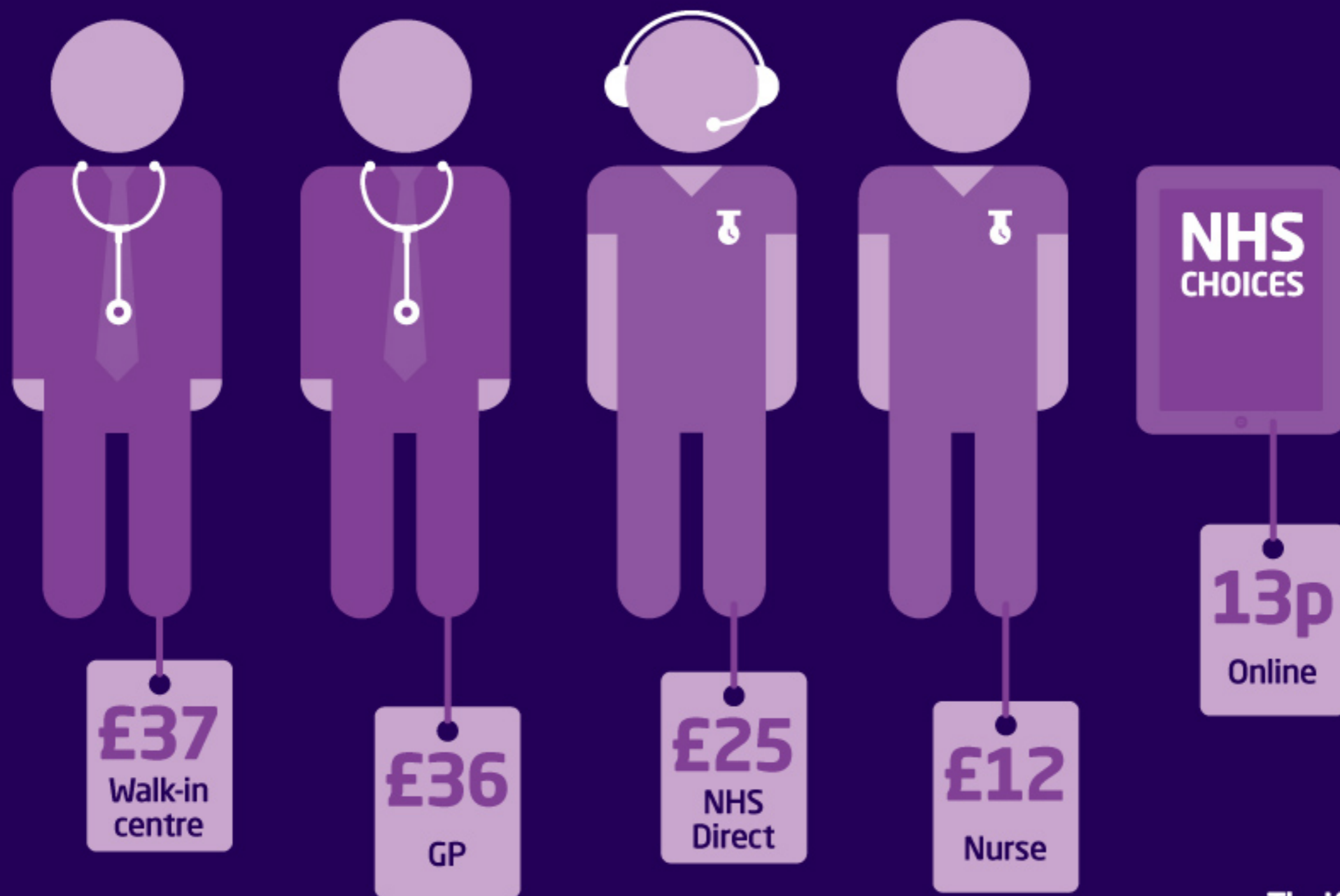


60 per cent of households with a lower socio-economic status

The NHS Choices website has 10 million visits every month. It is estimated that 27 per cent of users make fewer trips to their GP as a result of visiting the site.



A visit to the GP costs the NHS £36, a nurse consultation in a GP practice costs £12, a visit to a walk-in centre costs £37 and a call to NHS Direct costs £25. A visit to the NHS Choices website costs 13p.



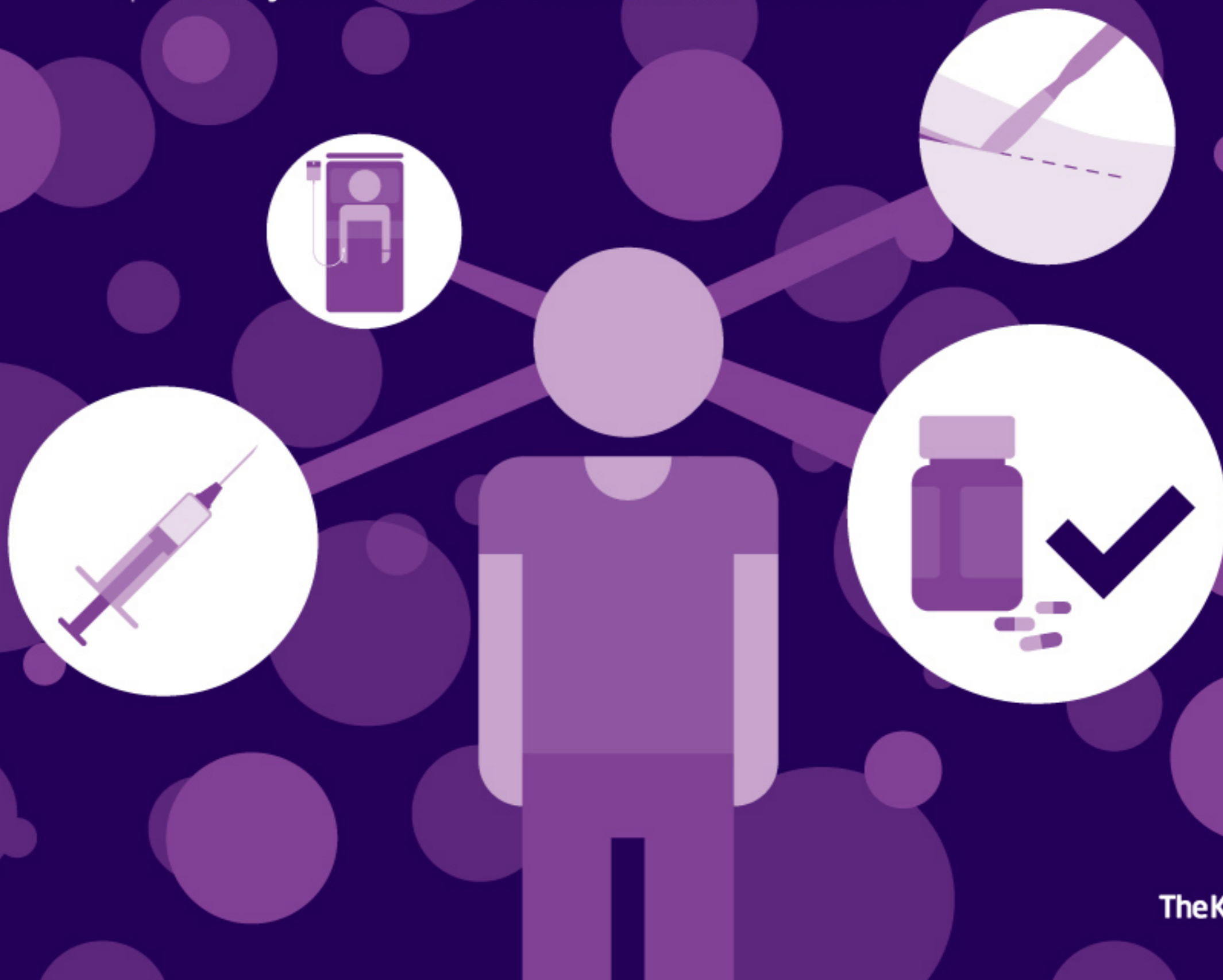
60 per cent of GP surgeries have the technology in place to allow patients online access to their records: at the moment less than 1 per cent offers this.



Couch to 5k is an NHS running programme that has been downloaded more than 2.1 million times and has become one of the most popular running podcasts in the iTunes store.



When patients are fully informed about the risks and benefits of treatment options, they choose different - and often fewer - treatments.



Organisations such as Cancer Research UK and Patients Like Me are using crowdsourcing - asking the public for help in their medical research and to develop information resources for patients.



Crowdsourcing support