

Heathcote Medical Centre

Quality Report

Heathcote
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This report describes our judgement of the quality of care at this service. It is based on a combination of what we found when we inspected, information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and information given to us from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Good	
Are services safe?	Good	
Are services effective?	Good	
Are services caring?	Good	
Are services responsive to people's needs?	Good	
Are services well-led?	Good	

Summary of findings

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Overall summary

Letter from the Chief Inspector of General Practice

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at Heathcote Medical Centre on 8 December 2015. Overall the practice is rated as good.

Our key findings across all the areas we inspected were as follows:

- There was an open and transparent approach to safety and an effective system in place for reporting and recording significant events.
- Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.
- Staff assessed patients' needs and delivered care in line with current evidence based guidance. Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.
- Patients said they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect and they were involved in their care and decisions about their treatment.
- Information about services and how to complain was available and easy to understand.
- Patients we spoke with and most comment card responses said they found it easy to make an

appointment with GP. Two of fifteen comment cards indicated there were difficulties with getting appointments. All feedback was positive in respect of continuity of care, with urgent appointments available the same day.

- The practice had good facilities and was well equipped to treat patients and meet their needs.
- There was a clear leadership structure and staff felt supported by management. The practice proactively sought feedback from staff and patients, which it acted on.
- The provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

There were areas that the provider should make improvements :

The provider should:

- Ensure chairs identified as not suitable for clinical areas are removed and replaced.
- Ensure plans to undertake an updated infection control audit are completed.

Summary of findings

- Ensure the changes to improve the patient experience of reception and appointment booking are kept under review.
- Ensure a record of nurse team meetings and discussions is maintained to assist with training and development.

Professor Steve Field (CBE FRCP FFPH FRCGP)

Chief Inspector of General Practice

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

The practice is rated as good for providing safe services.

- There was an effective system in place for reporting and recording significant events
- Lessons were shared to make sure action was taken to improve safety in the practice.
- When there were unintended or unexpected safety incidents, people receive reasonable support, truthful information, a verbal and written apology and were told about any actions to improve processes to prevent the same thing happening again.
- The practice had clearly defined and embedded systems, processes and practices in place to keep people safe and safeguarded from abuse.
- Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.

Good



Are services effective?

The practice is rated as good for providing effective services.

- Staff assessed needs and delivered care in line with current evidence based guidance.
- Clinical audits demonstrated quality improvement.
- Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.
- There was evidence of appraisals and personal development plans for all staff.
- Staff worked with multidisciplinary teams to understand and meet the range and complexity of people's needs.

Good



Are services caring?

The practice is rated as good for providing caring services.

- Data showed that patients rated the practice as similar to other services in many aspects of care.
- Patients said they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect and they were involved in decisions about their care and treatment.
- Information for patients about the services available was easy to understand and accessible.
- We also saw that staff treated patients with kindness and respect, and maintained confidentiality.

Good



Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is rated as good for providing responsive services.

Good



Summary of findings

- It reviewed the needs of its local population and engaged with the NHS England area team and Clinical Commissioning Group to secure improvements to services where these were identified. This included working with a local trust to provide additional support to patients to avoid admissions to hospital and joint working with other local practices to improve patient access to services.
- Patients said they found it easy to make an appointment with a named GP and that there was continuity of care, with urgent appointments available the same day. There was evidence to demonstrate the practice had acted on the feedback of patients and took steps to address issues raised.
- The practice had good facilities and was well equipped to treat patients and meet their needs.
- Information about how to complain was available and easy to understand and evidence showed that the practice responded quickly to issues raised. Learning from complaints was shared with staff and other stakeholders.

Are services well-led?

The practice is rated as good for being well-led.

- It had a clear vision and strategy to deliver high quality care and promote good outcomes for patients. Staff were clear about the vision and their responsibilities in relation to this.
- There was a clear leadership structure and staff felt supported by management. The practice had a number of policies and procedures to govern activity and held regular governance meetings.
- There was an overarching governance framework which supported the delivery of the strategy and good quality care. This included arrangements to monitor and improve quality and identify risk.
- The provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the Duty of Candour. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty. The practice had systems in place for knowing about notifiable safety incidents
- The practice proactively sought feedback from staff and patients, which it acted on. The patient participation group was active.
- There was a strong focus on continuous learning and improvement at all levels.

Good



Summary of findings

The six population groups and what we found

We always inspect the quality of care for these six population groups.

Older people

The practice is rated as good for the care of older people.

- The practice offered proactive, personalised care to meet the needs of the older people in its population.
- Patients discharged from hospital were alerted to the GP on the same day and actions taken to follow up their care.
- It was responsive to the needs of older people, and offered home visits and urgent appointments for those with enhanced needs.

Good



People with long term conditions

The practice is rated as good for the care of people with long-term conditions.

- Nursing staff had lead roles in chronic disease management and patients at risk of hospital admission were identified as a priority.
- Performance for diabetes related indicators was comparable to the CCG and national average. For example: the percentage of patients on the diabetes register, with a record of a foot examination and risk classification within the preceding 12 months was 85% compared to the national average of 88%.
- Longer appointments and home visits were available when needed.
- All these patients had a named GP and a structured annual review to check that their health and medicines needs were being met. For those people with the most complex needs, the named GP worked with relevant health and care professionals to deliver a multidisciplinary package of care.

Good



Families, children and young people

The practice is rated as good for the care of families, children and young people.

- There were systems in place to identify and follow up children living in disadvantaged circumstances and who were at risk, for example, children and young people who had a high number of A&E attendances. Immunisation rates were relatively high for all standard childhood immunisations.

Good



Summary of findings

- Patients told us that children and young people were treated in an age-appropriate way and were recognised as individuals, and we saw evidence to confirm this.
- Appointments were available outside of school hours and the premises were suitable for children and babies.
- We saw good examples of joint working with midwives, health visitors and school nurses.

Working age people (including those recently retired and students)

The practice is rated as good for the care of working-age people (including those recently retired and students).

- The needs of the working age population, those recently retired and students had been identified and the practice had adjusted the services it offered to ensure these were accessible, flexible and offered continuity of care.
- The practice was proactive in offering online services as well as a full range of health promotion and screening that reflects the needs for this age group.
- Evening and telephone consultations were available. Extended hours are provided on Saturday mornings, Tuesday evenings and Thursday evenings for patients who find appointments during working hours difficult to attend.

Good



People whose circumstances may make them vulnerable

The practice is rated as good for the care of people whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

- The practice held a register of patients living in vulnerable circumstances including those with a learning disability.
- It offered longer appointments for people with a learning disability.
- The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of vulnerable people.
- It had told vulnerable patients about how to access various support groups and voluntary organisations.
- Staff knew how to recognise signs of abuse in vulnerable adults and children. Staff were aware of their responsibilities regarding information sharing, documentation of safeguarding concerns and how to contact relevant agencies in normal working hours and Out of Hours.

Good



Summary of findings

People experiencing poor mental health (including people with dementia)

The practice is rated as good for the care of people experiencing poor mental health (including people with dementia).

- It carried out advance care planning for patients with dementia. 91.3% of people diagnosed with dementia had had their care reviewed in a face to face meeting in the last 12 months compared to the national average of 84.1%.
- 90.48% of people schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses who have a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the record, in the preceding 12 months compared with the national average of 88.47%.
- The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of people experiencing poor mental health, including those with dementia.
- The practice had told patients experiencing poor mental health about how to access various support groups and voluntary organisations.
- It had a system in place to follow up patients who had attended accident and emergency where they may have been experiencing poor mental health.
- Staff had a good understanding of how to support people with mental health needs and dementia.

Good



Summary of findings

What people who use the service say

The national GP patient survey results published on 2 July 2015. The results showed the practice was performing generally in line with local and national averages. 272 survey forms were distributed and 116 were returned. This represented 0.95% of the practice's patient list.

- 32.8% patients said they could get through easily to the surgery by phone (CCG average 67.5%, national average 73.3%).
- 71.4% said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful (CCG average 83.6%, national average 86.8%)
- 80.4% were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried (CCG average 85.6%, national average 85.2%).
- 89.1% said the last appointment they got was convenient (CCG average 89.8%, national average 91.8%).
- 41.9% described their experience of making an appointment as good (CCG average 67.9%, national average 73.3%).
- 61.2% usually waited 15 minutes or less after their appointment time to be seen (CCG average 67.4%, national average 64.8%).

As part of our inspection we also asked for CQC comment cards to be completed by patients prior to our inspection. We received 15 comment cards 14 were very positive about the standard of care received one card only made reference to not being able to get an appointment. Patients used the words caring, understanding, professional, user friendly and prompt to describe their experiences of the practice. Patients felt listened to and their privacy and dignity was respected.

We spoke with five patients during the inspection. All patients said that they were happy with the care they received and thought that staff were approachable, caring and professional. They spoke of having individualised care and support.

Two of the cards we received indicated that it was sometimes difficult to get through on the phone to make an appointment and there could be delays in getting a routine appointment. The majority of cards where a comment was made about getting an appointment were positive and indicated that getting appointments had been straightforward.

Areas for improvement

Action the service SHOULD take to improve

- Ensure chairs identified as not suitable for clinical areas are removed and replaced.
- Ensure plans to undertake an updated infection control audit are completed.
- Ensure the changes to improve the patient experience of reception and appointment booking are kept under review.
- Ensure a record of nurse team meetings and discussions is maintained to assist with training and development.

Heathcote Medical Centre

Detailed findings

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by:

Our inspection team was led by a CQC Lead Inspector. The team included a GP specialist advisor and two CQC inspectors.

Background to Heathcote Medical Centre

Heathcote Medical Centre offers primary medical services via a general medical services (GMS) contract to approximately 12,200 registered patients. The practice provides services to a higher number of patients who are aged 65 years and over, when compared with the local clinical commissioning group (CCG) and England average.

Care and treatment is delivered by three GP partners, two male and one female and five associate (salaried) GPs. There is a good mix of male and female GPs.

The practice also has a nurse practitioner, two practice nurses, two healthcare assistants and a team of receptionists and administration staff. Operational management is provided by the practice manager.

The practice runs a number of services for its patients including a minor illness clinic, asthma clinics, child immunisation clinics, diabetes clinics, new patient checks, and weight management support.

The practice is open between 8.00am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 11.00am on a Saturday.

There are arrangements for patients to access care from an Out of Hours provider via the 111 service. The out of hours provider is Care UK.

Services are provided from the following addresses:

Heathcote Medical Centre

Heathcote

Tadworth

Surrey

KT20 5TH

At the last inspection of this location we found that the provider's risk management, recruitment practices and staff training programme did not meet regulations. The provider submitted a plan of action to address this area. At this inspection we found that the provider had taken the appropriate steps as set out in their plan.

Why we carried out this inspection

We inspected this service as part of our new comprehensive inspection programme.

We carried out a comprehensive inspection of this service under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. The inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Detailed findings

How we carried out this inspection

Before visiting, we reviewed a range of information that we hold about the practice and asked other organisations to share what they knew. We carried out an announced visit on 8 December 2015.

During our visit we:

- Spoke with a range of staff including GPs, nurses, healthcare assistants, administration staff and the practice manager. We also spoke with patients who used the service.
- Observed how people were being cared for.
- Reviewed the personal care or treatment records of patients.
- Reviewed comment cards where patients and members of the public shared their views and experiences of the service.

To get to the heart of patients' experiences of care and treatment, we always ask the following five questions:

- Is it safe?
- Is it effective?
- Is it caring?
- Is it responsive to people's needs?
- Is it well-led?

We also looked at how well services are provided for specific groups of people and what good care looks like for them. The population groups are:

- Older people
- People with long-term conditions
- Families, children and young people
- Working age people (including those recently retired and students)
- People whose circumstances may make them vulnerable
- People experiencing poor mental health (including people with dementia)

Please note that when referring to information throughout this report, for example any reference to the Quality and Outcomes Framework data, this relates to the most recent information available to the CQC at that time.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Safe track record and learning

There was an effective system in place for reporting and recording significant events.

- Staff told us they would inform the practice manager of any incidents and there was also a recording form available on the practice's computer system.
- The practice carried out a thorough analysis of significant events.

We reviewed safety records, incident reports, national patient safety alerts and minutes of meetings where these were discussed. Lessons were shared to make sure action was taken to improve safety in the practice. For example, we saw that incidents and significant events were a regular part of meeting discussions and one of the GP partners had responsibility for ensuring minutes of meetings were circulated to all of the team. The records we saw were detailed and used to inform service development. For example the practice to action to review and redistribute their chest pain protocol to all staff following an incident in the practice. This was followed up with staff training and support.

When there are unintended or unexpected safety incidents, people receive reasonable support, truthful information, a verbal and written apology and are told about any actions to improve processes to prevent the same thing happening again.

Overview of safety systems and processes

The practice had clearly defined and embedded systems, processes and practices in place to keep people safe and safeguarded from abuse, which included:

- Arrangements were in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from abuse that reflected relevant legislation and local requirements and policies were accessible to all staff. The policies clearly outlined who to contact for further guidance if staff had concerns about a patient's welfare. There was a lead member of staff for safeguarding. The GPs attended safeguarding meetings when possible and always provided reports where necessary for other agencies. Staff demonstrated they understood their responsibilities and all had

received training relevant to their role. GPs and nursing staff were trained to safeguarding level three. The practice provided evidence of the training and guidance that had been delivered to all staff.

- Notices in consultation rooms advised patients that nurses would act as chaperones, if required. All staff who acted as chaperones were trained for the role and had received a disclosure and barring check (DBS check). (DBS checks identify whether a person has a criminal record or is on an official list of people barred from working in roles where they may have contact with children or adults who may be vulnerable).
- The practice maintained appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene. We observed the premises to be clean and tidy. A practice nurse was the infection control clinical lead who liaised with the local infection prevention teams to keep up to date with best practice. There was an infection control protocol in place and staff had received up to date training. Infection control audits were undertaken and we saw evidence that action was taken to address any improvements identified as a result. We noted that the last infection control audit was carried out more than a year ago in April 2014 by an external company. The practice manager stated that they were aware of the length of time since the last audit and were arranging for an audit to take place. We saw that some of the chairs were not readily cleanable specifically chair used in the minor procedures room. This was noted on the last audit and the practice manager told us they were in the process of ordering replacement chairs.
- The arrangements for managing medicines, including emergency drugs and vaccinations, in the practice kept patients safe (including obtaining, prescribing, recording, handling, storing and security). The practice carried out regular medicines audits to ensure prescribing was in line with best practice guidelines for safe prescribing. Prescription pads were securely stored and there were systems in place to monitor their use. Patient Group Directions had been adopted by the practice to allow nurses to administer medicines in line with legislation. The practice had a system for production of Patient Specific Directions to enable Health Care Assistants to administer vaccinations.
- We reviewed personnel files and found that appropriate recruitment checks had been undertaken prior to

Are services safe?

employment. For example, proof of identification, references, qualifications, registration with the appropriate professional body and the appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Monitoring risks to patients

Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.

- There were procedures in place for monitoring and managing risks to patient and staff safety. The practice had up to date fire risk assessments and carried out regular fire drills. All electrical equipment was checked to ensure the equipment was safe to use and clinical equipment was checked to ensure it was working properly. The practice also had a variety of other risk assessments in place to monitor safety of the premises such as control of substances hazardous to health and infection control and legionella.
- Arrangements were in place for planning and monitoring the number of staff and mix of staff needed to meet patients' needs. There was a rota system in place for all the different staffing groups to ensure that enough staff were on duty.

Arrangements to deal with emergencies and major incidents

The practice had adequate arrangements in place to respond to emergencies and major incidents.

- There was an instant messaging system on the computers in all the consultation and treatment rooms which alerted staff to any emergency.
- All staff received annual basic life support training and there were emergency medicines available in the treatment room.
- The practice had a defibrillator available on the premises and oxygen with adult and children's masks. There was also a first aid kit and accident book available.
- Emergency medicines were easily accessible to staff in a secure area of the practice and all staff knew of their location. All the medicines we checked were in date and fit for use.
- The practice had a comprehensive business continuity plan in place for major incidents such as power failure or building damage.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Effective needs assessment

The practice assessed needs and delivered care in line with relevant and current evidence based guidance and standards, including National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) best practice guidelines.

- The practice had systems in place to keep all clinical staff up to date. Staff had access to guidelines from NICE and used this information to deliver care and treatment that met peoples' needs.
- The practice monitored that these guidelines were followed through risk assessments, audits and random sample checks of patient records.

Management, monitoring and improving outcomes for people

The practice used the information collected for the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) and performance against national screening programmes to monitor outcomes for patients. (QOF is a system intended to improve the quality of general practice and reward good practice). This practice was not an outlier for any QOF (or other national) clinical targets. Data from 2014/2015 showed;

- Performance for diabetes related indicators was similar to the CCG and national average. For example: The percentage of patients on the diabetes register, with a record of a foot examination and risk classification within the preceding 12 months was 85% compared to the national average of 88%.
- The percentage of patients with hypertension having regular blood pressure tests was 80% which is below the national average of 83%.
- Performance for mental health related indicators was better or similar to the CCG and national average. For example: the percentage of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses who have a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the record, in the preceding 12 months was 90% compared to the national average of 88%.
- The dementia diagnosis rate was comparable to the CCG and national average.

Clinical audits demonstrated quality improvement.

- We looked at three clinical audits completed in the last year; all of these audits demonstrated how the practice had made improvements, adjusted procedures and monitored outcomes.
- The practice participated in applicable local audits, national benchmarking, accreditation, peer review and research.
- The practice took recent action following an audit of the management of patients diagnosed with Atrial Fibrillation (AF). This resulted in the review and change in GP management of this condition for some patients.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.

- The practice had an induction programme for newly appointed non-clinical members of staff that covered such topics as safeguarding, infection prevention and control, fire safety, health and safety and confidentiality.
- The practice could demonstrate how they ensured role-specific training and updating for relevant staff e.g. for those reviewing patients with long-term conditions, administering vaccines and taking samples for the cervical screening programme.
- The learning needs of staff were identified through a system of appraisals, meetings and reviews of practice development needs. Staff had access to appropriate training to meet these learning needs and to cover the scope of their work. This included ongoing support during sessions, one-to-one meetings, appraisals, coaching and mentoring, clinical supervision and facilitation and support for the revalidation of doctors. All staff clinical staff had had an appraisal within the last 12 months.
- The nursing team members we spoke with told us that they met on a regular basis to discuss clinical and practice issue. These meetings were not minuted and therefore not available to review.
- Staff received training that included: safeguarding, fire procedures, basic life support and information governance awareness. Staff had access to and made use of e-learning training modules and in-house training.

Coordinating patient care and information sharing

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

The information needed to plan and deliver care and treatment was available to relevant staff in a timely and accessible way through the practice's patient record system and their intranet system.

- This included care and risk assessments, care plans, medical records and investigation and test results. Information such as NHS patient information leaflets was also available.
- The practice shared relevant information with other services in a timely way, for example when referring people to other services.

Staff worked together and with other health and social care services to understand and meet the range and complexity of people's needs and to assess and plan ongoing care and treatment. This included when people moved between services, including when they were referred, or after they are discharged from hospital. We saw evidence that multi-disciplinary team meetings took place on a regular basis and that care plans were routinely reviewed and updated.

Consent to care and treatment

Staff sought patients' consent to care and treatment in line with legislation and guidance.

- Staff understood the relevant consent and decision-making requirements of legislation and guidance, including the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- When providing care and treatment for children and young people, staff carried out assessments of capacity to consent in line with relevant guidance.
- Where a patient's mental capacity to consent to care or treatment was unclear the GP or practice nurse assessed the patient's capacity and, where appropriate, recorded the outcome of the assessment.

- The process for seeking consent was monitored through records audits to ensure it met the practices responsibilities within legislation and followed relevant national guidance.

Health promotion and prevention

The practice identified patients who may be in need of extra support.

- These included patients in the last 12 months of their lives, carers, those at risk of developing a long-term condition and those requiring advice on their diet, smoking and alcohol cessation.
- Patients were then signposted to the relevant services to meet their needs. Information was available such as smoking cessation advice and carer support from a local support group.

The practice had a failsafe system for ensuring results were received for every sample sent as part of the cervical screening programme. The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 89%, which was better than the national average of 82%. There was a policy to offer telephone reminders for patients who did not attend for their cervical screening test. The practice also encouraged its patients to attend national screening programmes for bowel and breast cancer screening.

Patients had access to appropriate health assessments and checks. These included health checks for new patients and NHS health checks for people aged 40–74. Appropriate follow-ups on the outcomes of health assessments and checks were made, where abnormalities or risk factors were identified.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion and empathy

We observed that members of staff were courteous and very helpful to patients and treated people dignity and respect.

- Curtains were provided in consulting rooms to maintain patients' privacy and dignity during examinations, investigations and treatments.
- We noted that consultation and treatment room doors were closed during consultations and that conversations taking place in these rooms could not be overheard.
- Reception staff knew when patients wanted to discuss sensitive issues or appeared distressed they could offer them a private room to discuss their needs.

All of the 15 patient CQC comment cards we received were positive about the service experienced. Patients said they felt the practice offered a good service and staff were helpful, caring and treated them with dignity and respect.

We also spoke with representatives of the patient participation group. They told us they were satisfied with the care provided by the practice and said their dignity and privacy was respected. Comment cards highlighted that staff responded compassionately when they needed help and provided support when required.

Results from the national GP patient survey showed patients felt they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect. The practice was average for most of its satisfaction scores on consultations with doctors and nurses. For example:

- 88% said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the CCG average of 91% and national average of 87%.
- 90% said the GP gave them enough time (CCG average 88%, national average 87%).
- 92% said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw (CCG average 97.5%, national average 95%)
- 86% said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern (CCG average 88%, national average 85%).
- 97% said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern (CCG average 91%, national average 90%).

- 71.4% said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful (CCG average 83.6%, national average 86.8%)

We noted that the practice had taken on board the low percentage figure returned from the survey and comments from patients related to their experiences of reception. They had taken steps to monitor and train the team and appoint team leaders to support reception staff.

Care planning and involvement in decisions about care and treatment

We spoke with five patients who told us that they felt involved in decision making about the care and treatment they received. They also told us they felt listened to and supported by staff and had sufficient time during consultations to make an informed decision about the choice of treatment available to them. Patient feedback on the comment cards we received was also positive and aligned with these views.

Results from the national GP patient survey showed patients responded reasonably positively to questions about their involvement in planning and making decisions about their care and treatment. Results were in line with local and national averages. For example:

- 81% said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 87% and national average of 86%.
- 74% said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care (CCG average 83%, national average 81%)

Staff told us that translation services were available for patients who did not have English as a first language. We saw notices in the reception areas informing patients this service was available.

Patient and carer support to cope emotionally with care and treatment

Notices in the patient waiting room told patients how to access a number of support groups and organisations.

The practice's computer system alerted GPs if a patient was also a carer. Written information was available to direct carers to the various avenues of support available to them.

Are services caring?

Staff told us that if families had suffered bereavement, their usual GP contacted them or sent them a sympathy card. This was either followed by a patient consultation at a flexible time and location to meet the family's needs and/or by giving them advice on how to find a support service.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The practice reviewed the needs of its local population and engaged with the NHS England area team and clinical commissioning group (CCG) to secure improvements to services where these were identified.

- The practice offered extended hours on a Saturday morning and evening appointments can be booked from 6.30pm to 8.30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This is for working patients who could not attend during normal opening hours.
- There were longer appointments available for people with a learning disability.
- Home visits were available for older patients / patients who would benefit from these.
- Same day appointments were available for children and those with serious medical conditions. A minor illness clinic is available each weekday.
- Telephone consultations can be requested in the morning and afternoon.
- There were disabled facilities, hearing loop and translation services available.

Access to the service

The practice was open between 8.00am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. The practice offered pre-bookable Saturday morning appointments between 9.00am and 11.00am.

In addition to pre-bookable appointments that could be booked up to six weeks in advance, urgent appointments were also available for people that needed them. Evening appointments from 6.30pm were also available on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Results from the national GP patient survey showed that patient's satisfaction with how they could access care and treatment was below local and national averages in some areas.

- 66.2% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the CCG average of 69.6% and national average of 74.9%.
- 32.8% patients said they could get through easily to the surgery by phone (CCG average 67.5%, national average 73.3%).

- 41.9% patients described their experience of making an appointment as good (CCG average 67.9%, national average 73.3%).
- 6.2% patients said they usually waited 15 minutes or less after their appointment time (CCG average 67.4%, national average 64.8%).

People told us on the day that they were able to get appointments when they needed them. They told us that they did not have issues with getting through on the phone and booking an appointment. Patients we spoke with told us that they were satisfied with the opening times of the practice. Some patients (two of fifteen cards) responded in our comment cards to tell us that the telephone access and availability of appointments was a problem.

The practice had taken steps to improve access to appointments as a result of feedback from patients. The practice had introduced a new appointment system and improved the training and support of the reception team. We saw systems had been put in place to monitor telephones call handling and appointment provision to assist with responding to concerns from patients. These changes were being kept under review.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

The practice had an effective system in place for handling complaints and concerns.

- Its complaints policy and procedures were in line with recognised guidance and contractual obligations for GPs in England.
- There was a designated responsible person who handled all complaints in the practice.
- We saw that information was available to help patients understand the complaints system for example a leaflet was available in reception for patients who wished to give feedback or make a complaint.

We looked at complaints received in the last 12 months and found these were satisfactorily handled, and dealt with in a timely way. We saw evidence of openness and transparency with dealing with the complaint. Lessons were learnt from concerns and complaints and action was taken as a result to improve the quality of care. For example, we saw that when complaints had been made these were discussed at practice meetings and the outcomes and learning points shared.

Are services well-led?

Good 

(for example, are they well-managed and do senior leaders listen, learn and take appropriate action)

Our findings

Vision and strategy

The practice had a clear vision to deliver high quality care and promote good outcomes for patients.

- The practice had a mission statement which was displayed in the reception area and staff knew and understood the values. This information was also provided to patients in an information leaflet.
- The practice had a robust strategy and supporting business plans which reflected the vision and values and were regularly monitored.

Governance arrangements

The practice had an overarching governance framework which supported the delivery of the strategy and good quality care. This outlined the structures and procedures in place and ensured that:

- There was a clear staffing structure and that staff were aware of their own roles and responsibilities.
- Practice specific policies were implemented and were available to all staff.
- A comprehensive understanding of the performance of the practice.
- A programme of continuous clinical and internal audit which is used to monitor quality and to make improvements.
- There were robust arrangements for identifying, recording and managing risks, issues and implementing mitigating actions.

Leadership, openness and transparency

The partners in the practice had the experience, capacity and capability to run the practice and ensure high quality care. They prioritised safe, high quality and compassionate care. The partners were visible in the practice and staff told us that they were approachable and always took the time to listen to all members of staff.

The provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the Duty of Candour. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty. The practice had systems in place for informing themselves about notifiable safety incidents.

When there were unexpected or unintended safety incidents:

- the practice gave affected people reasonable support, truthful information and a verbal and written apology.
- They kept written records of verbal interactions as well as written correspondence.

There was a clear leadership structure in place and staff felt supported by management.

- Staff told us that the practice held regular team meetings.
- Staff told us that there was an open culture within the practice and they had the opportunity to raise any issues at team meetings and confident in doing so and felt supported if they did.
- Staff said they felt respected, valued and supported, particularly by the partners in the practice. All staff were involved in discussions about how to run and develop the practice, and the partners encouraged all members of staff to identify opportunities to improve the service delivered by the practice.

Seeking and acting on feedback from patients, the public and staff

The practice encouraged and valued feedback from patients, the public and staff. It proactively sought patients' feedback and engaged patients in the delivery of the service.

- It had gathered feedback from patients through the patient participation group (PPG) and through surveys and complaints received. There was an active PPG which met on a regular basis, carried out patient surveys and submitted proposals for improvements to the practice management team. For example, we were told by a member of the PPG that their views were always welcomed.
- The practice had also gathered feedback from staff through staff meetings, appraisals and discussion. Staff told us they would not hesitate to give feedback and discuss any concerns or issues with colleagues and the management team. Staff told us they felt involved and engaged to improve how the practice was run. They were encouraged to contribute to the development of the practice.

Continuous improvement

There was a focus on continuous learning and improvement at all levels within the practice. The practice

Are services well-led?

Good 

(for example, are they well-managed and do senior leaders listen, learn and take appropriate action)

team was forward thinking and part of local schemes to improve outcomes for patients in the area. We saw

evidence that the practice had away days to review feedback from all groups and developed an action plan as a result. The practices had short and long term plans to develop and improve the service.