

HMP Altcourse

Inspection report

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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.

Overall summary

We carried out an announced focused inspection of healthcare services provided by G4S Health Services (UK) Limited at HMP Altcourse on 13 December 2018.

Following our last joint inspection with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) in November 2017, we found that the quality of healthcare provided by G4S Health Services (UK) Limited, did not meet CQC regulations. We issued a Requirement Notice in relation to Regulation 12, Safe care and treatment, of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

The purpose of this focused inspection was to determine if the provider was now meeting the legal requirements and regulations under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and that prisoners were receiving safe care and treatment.

We do not currently rate services provided in prisons.

At this inspection we found:

- Medicines were managed safely. Prisoners received prescribed medication in a timely manner when they moved location within the prison.
- Repeat prescriptions were processed promptly.

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by a CQC health and justice inspector, accompanied by a second CQC health and justice inspector.

Before the inspection we reviewed a range of information that we held about the service, for example, an action plan we had received from the provider. Following the announcement of the inspection we requested a range of information from the provider, which we reviewed, for

example, minutes of medicines management meetings, minutes of the healthcare forum attended by prisoners and minutes of local integrated clinical governance meetings.

During the inspection we asked the provider to share with us further information. We also spoke with healthcare staff, other healthcare partners, prison staff, commissioners and prisoners.

Background to HMP Altcourse

HM Prison Altcourse is a Category B male private prison located in the Fazakerley area of Liverpool in Merseyside. The prison is operated by G4S Custodial and Detention Services. There were 1160 men accommodated in the prison at the time of our inspection.

The location, HMP Altcourse is registered to provide the regulated activities, diagnostic and screening procedures and treatment of disease, disorder or injury.

Our last joint inspection with HMIP was in November 2017. The joint inspection report can be found at: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/contacts/prison-finder/altcourse>

Are services safe?

At our last inspection, we found that medicines were not always managed safely. In particular some prisoners experienced delays in accessing prescribed medication following admission and when moving accommodation within the prison. Repeat prescriptions were not always processed promptly, with many patients experiencing delays of up to several days before receiving their medicines.

Appropriate and safe use of medicines

- During this focused inspection, we found that the provider had reviewed systems and processes in respect of medicines management, in particular with regard to repeat prescriptions and the transfer of medicines across the prison. A full time pharmacy transformation specialist had been employed by the provider to work across a number of prison locations improve the service, implement good standards, audit trails and provide further support to the staff.
- Medication errors were now monitored and reported on through G4S HS Medicines Management Committee, with a focus on training for nurses to identify and check verifiable medication brought in by prisoners on admission. They recorded the details on to the SystmOne patient record system so they could be administered safely and accurate records kept.
- A new process was in place that ensured prescribed medicines were transferred to the prisoner's new location when they moved. A daily report was produced, which identified prisoners that had moved location within the prison. The report was shared with nursing staff and prisoners who were prescribed medicines were identified and arrangements made for medicines to be relocated on the wing where the prisoner now resided. The provider audited the process and copies of daily reports were kept for review purposes.
- A standard operating procedure, 'Patient's Own Medication Assessment Record', had been developed in response to concerns about the disposal of medicines brought into the prison. Consequently, on admission to prison, detainees who arrived with medicines, referred to as, 'patient's own drugs' (PODs) were risk assessed to ensure they were suitable for use and if they could be held in-possession. If a prisoner was receiving essential medicines they were seen by a GP within 24 hours of reception into the prison and required medicines prescribed.
- Medicines retained due to potential risks to patient safety were managed through standard operating procedures, referred to as the, 'Medications returned to medication/drug disposal unit' policy document. All medicines placed into the medication disposal unit were recorded in a log book detailing the exact medication and the quantity. These arrangements provided an audit of all medicines brought into and disposed of in the prison.
- Previously we found that repeat prescriptions were not always processed promptly, with reported delays of up to several days. At this inspection we found that repeat prescription processes were set up during GP consultations and from April 2018 requests for repeat prescriptions were responded to by the pharmacy team. Posters had been produced informing prisoners of the new system and feedback from prisoners on the process was sought and discussed at prisoner forums. Prisoners could now submit requests for repeat prescriptions electronically or by paper application. There had been a reduction in the number of complaints concerning access to repeat medicines.
- A new medicine reconciliation process that was pharmacy led had been in place since October 2018. Prisoners summary care records were accessed from community GP practices and when possible used as part of medicines reconciliation. Staff we spoke with including GP and pharmacist staff confirmed that the new system was making a difference, and tasks were now dealt with promptly. To assist GPs with responding to tasks and completing administrative business a 'remote' GP service providing an additional seven hours per week had been commissioned. Additionally GPs were given protected time twice a day to update and complete any outstanding tasks. At the time of the inspection there were no outstanding tasks.