

Pencester Surgery

Quality 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.

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 Pencester Surgery on 22 July 2015. Overall the practice is rated as good.

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

- Staff understood and fulfilled their responsibilities to raise concerns, and to report incidents and near misses. Information about safety was recorded, monitored, appropriately reviewed and addressed.
- Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.
- Patients' needs were assessed and care was planned and delivered following best practice guidance. Staff had received training appropriate to their roles and any further training needs had been identified and planned.

- 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 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.
- 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.

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. Staff understood and fulfilled their responsibilities to raise concerns, and to report incidents and near misses. Lessons were learned and communicated widely to support improvement. Information about safety was recorded, monitored, appropriately reviewed and addressed. Risks to patients were assessed and well managed. There were enough staff to keep patients safe.

Good



Are services effective?

The practice is rated as good for providing effective services. Staff referred to guidance from National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and used it routinely. Patient's needs were assessed and care was planned and delivered in line with current legislation. Staff had received training appropriate to their role.

Good



Are services caring?

The practice is rated as good for providing caring services. Patients said they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect and they were involved in decisions about their care and treatment. There was plenty of supporting information to help patients understand and access the local services available. We also saw that staff treated patients with kindness and respect.

Good



Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is rated as good for providing responsive services. It 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. 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. 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.

Good



Are services well-led?

The practice is rated as good for being well-led. It had a clear vision and strategy. 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

Good



Summary of findings

regular governance meetings. There were systems in place to monitor and improve quality and identify risk. The practice proactively sought feedback from staff and patients, which it acted on. The patient participation group (PPG) was active. Staff had received inductions, regular performance reviews and attended staff meetings.

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. Nationally reported data showed that outcomes for patients were good for conditions commonly found in older people. The practice offered proactive, personalised care to meet the needs of the older people in its population and had a range of enhanced services, for example, in end of life care. It was responsive to the needs of older people, and offered home visits and rapid access 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. The practice employs practice nurses and nurse practitioners who have undergone specialist training for long-term conditions, such as diabetes, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

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 medication 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.

Multidisciplinary teams ensured that the housebound patients or in residential homes also received their regular health reviews. Those at risk of unplanned hospital admissions had been identified with care plans in place to reduce the potential risk of re-admission.

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 in line with the local CCG rates for all standard childhood immunisations. 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

Good



Summary of findings

premises were suitable for children and babies. We saw good examples of joint working with the local district nursing team. There was an allocated GP who reviewed young people for their health checks, and communicated with the health visitor on a regular basis.

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 and dedicates some of their late afternoon appointments to working age patients.

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 homeless people, travellers and those with a learning disability. It had carried out annual health checks for people with a learning disability and 22% (11 out of 49) of these patients had received a follow-up. 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



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). 65% of people experiencing poor mental health had received an annual physical health check. The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of people experiencing poor mental health, including those with dementia. It carried out advance care planning for patients with dementia. The practice held a register of 62 patients with dementia and 85% had received a review.

Good



Summary of findings

The practice had told patients experiencing poor mental health about how to access various support groups and voluntary organisations. For people experiencing poor mental health the practice had the option to refer them to the Mental Health Care Team (MHCT) and local dedicated NHS counselling services. It had a system in place to follow up patients who had attended accident and emergency (A&E) where they may have been experiencing poor mental health. Staff had received training on how to care for people with mental health needs and dementia.

Summary of findings

What people who use the service say

The national GP patient survey results published on January 2015 showed the practice was performing in line with local and national averages. There were 110 responses and a response rate of 36%.

- 60% find it easy to get through to this surgery by phone compared with a CCG average of 77% and a national average of 77%.
- 83% find the receptionists at this surgery helpful compared with a CCG average of 89% and a national average of 87%.
- 57% with a preferred GP usually get to see or speak to that GP compared with a CCG average of 61% and a national average of 60%.
- 85% were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried compared with a CCG average of 87% and a national average of 85%.
- 88% say the last appointment they got was convenient compared with a CCG average of 94% and a national average of 92%.
- 58% describe their experience of making an appointment as good compared with a CCG average of 76% and a national average of 73%.

- 45% usually wait 15 minutes or less after their appointment time to be seen compared with a CCG average of 68% and a national average of 65%.
- 39% feel they don't normally have to wait too long to be seen compared with a CCG average of 64% and a national average of 58%.

As part of our inspection we also asked for CQC comment cards to be completed by patients prior to our inspection. We received no completed comment cards. All of the four patients we spoke with on the day of our inspection were complimentary about the care and treatment they received. Patients told us they were treated with dignity and respect and involved in making decisions about their treatment options. They said the nurses and doctors listened and responded to their needs and they were involved in decisions about their care. Patients told us that the practice was always clean and tidy. Some patients told us they experienced problems getting through to the practice on the telephone to make an appointment. Most patients however, told us the appointment system was easy to use and met their needs.

Pencester Surgery

Detailed findings

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by:

Our inspection team was led by a Care Quality Commission (CQC) lead inspector. The lead inspector was accompanied by a GP specialist advisor and a practice manager specialist advisor.

Background to Pencester Surgery

Pencester Surgery is a purpose built building and located in the town of Dover. Wheelchair access to the building is through the front door and all consultation/treatment rooms are on ground floor level with limited parking facilities available. The practice took over another surgery Dover Medical Practice, now known as Pencester Health Centre and all the staff work across both locations. We also visited Pencester Health Centre on the same day.

A team of six GP partners (four male and two female), four nurse prescribers, two practice nurses, two healthcare assistant (HCA), a phlebotomist, a practice manager, receptionists, practice secretaries and administrative staff provide care and treatment for approximately 13,000 patients (9,000 at Pencester Surgery and 4,000 at Pencester Health Centre). The practice has General Medical Services (GMS) contract.

The practice was not a GP training practice. The practice supported student nurses from a local university in Kent and provided mentorship for local pharmacists completing their medicines management prescribing course. We saw positive feedback from the students and pharmacists through evaluation forms and thank you cards.

The nurse practitioners are qualified nurses who have undertaken advanced education and training in the assessment and treatment of patients suffering from a wide range of common or minor illnesses, including diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), respiratory medicine and cardiology (heart related diseases). They can diagnose and prescribe, will arrange investigations and make referrals to other health professionals. They may also refer patients to the doctor if appropriate.

The practice nurses are qualified and registered nurses. They help with health issues such as family planning, healthy living advice, blood pressure checks and dressings. The practice nurses run clinics for long-term health conditions such as asthma or diabetes, minor ailment clinics and carry out cervical smears. The healthcare assistants support practice nurses with their daily work and carry out tasks such as phlebotomy (taking blood), blood pressure measurement, dressings and NHS Health Checks. They may act as a chaperone when a patient or doctor requests one.

The practice is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am until 6.30pm. Extended hours surgeries are offered at the following times on Monday at 6.30pm to 8.30pm. The practice provides an out-of-hours service and patients are advised to call NHS 111 when the practice is closed.

Why we carried out this inspection

We inspected this service as part of our new comprehensive inspection programme under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check

Detailed findings

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.

This provider had not been inspected before and that was why we included them.

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

How we carried out this inspection

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)

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 22 July 2015. During our visit we spoke with three GPs, the practice manager, two nurse prescribers, one practice nurse, two health care assistants, five receptionists, two practice secretaries, prescription clerk and four patients who used the service. We reviewed the practice's Family and Friends Test and NHS Choices website where patients and members of the public shared their views and experiences of the service.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Safe track record and learning

There was an open and transparent approach and a system in place for reporting and recording significant events. People affected by significant events received a timely and sincere apology and were told about actions taken to improve care. 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. All complaints received by the practice were entered onto the system and automatically treated as a significant event. The practice carried out an analysis of the significant events.

We reviewed safety records, incident reports 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 looked at minutes of the monthly clinical meetings and saw that all learning from serious events had been discussed and improvements made.

Safety was monitored using information from a range of sources, including National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance. This enabled staff to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture of safety. The practice used the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) e-Form to report patient safety incidents.

Overview of safety systems and processes

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

- Arrangements were in place to safeguard adults and children 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.
- A notice was displayed in the waiting room, advising 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). (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).

- There were procedures in place for monitoring and managing risks to patient and staff safety. There was a health and safety policy available with a poster in the reception office. The practice had up to date fire risk assessments and regular fire drills were carried out. 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, infection control and legionella.
- Appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene were followed. We observed the premises to be clean and tidy. The 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. Annual infection control audits were undertaken and we saw evidence that action was taken to address any improvements identified as a result.
- The arrangements for managing medicines, including emergency drugs and vaccinations, in the practice kept patients safe (including obtaining, prescribing, recording, handling, storing and security). Regular medication audits were carried out with the support of the local CCG pharmacy teams to ensure the practice was prescribing in line with best practice guidelines for safe prescribing. Prescription pads were securely stored and there were systems in place to monitor their use.
- Recruitment checks were carried out and the four files we reviewed showed that appropriate recruitment checks had been undertaken prior to employment. For example, proof of identification, references, qualifications, registration with the appropriate professional body and the appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Are services safe?

- 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

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 and equipment 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. The plan included emergency contact numbers for staff.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Effective needs assessment

The practice carried out assessments and treatment in line 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 ensure all clinical staff were kept up to date. The practice had access to guidelines from NICE and used this information to develop how care and treatment was delivered to meet 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 participated in the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF). (This is a system intended to improve the quality of general practice and reward good practice). The practice used the information collected for the QOF and performance against national screening programmes to monitor outcomes for patients. Current results were 407.02 of the total number of points available. 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.
- The percentage of patients with hypertension having regular blood pressure tests was similar to the national average of 72.5% compared to 78.53%.
- Performance for mental health related and hypertension indicators was 83.6% compared to the CCG 93.1% and national average of 91.4%.
- The dementia diagnosis rate was below the CCG and national average.

Clinical audits were carried out to demonstrate quality improvement and all relevant staff were involved to improve care and treatment and people's outcomes. There had been 37 clinical audits completed in the last two years, 10 of these were completed audits where the improvements made were implemented and monitored. The practice participated in applicable local audits, national benchmarking, accreditation, peer review and

research. Findings were used by the practice to improve services. For example, recent action taken as a result of a clinical audit of elderly disabled diabetic patients. This group of patients are now audited on an annual basis.

Information about patients outcomes was used to make improvements such as an audit of rapid access referrals for suspected colorectal and oesophageal cancers. Opportunities for improvements or points to be followed up were that generally the rapid access system was working well but in retrospect a few patients could have been referred via the normal channels for gastroscopy.

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, fire safety, health and safety and confidentiality.
- 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 on going support during sessions, one-to-one meetings, appraisals, coaching and mentoring, clinical supervision and facilitation and support for the revalidation of doctors.
- All staff had had an appraisal within the last 12 months. 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

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 test results. Information such as NHS patient information leaflets were also available. All relevant information was shared with other services in a timely way, for example when people were referred 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 on going care and

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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 between the nurse practitioners, district nurses and health visitors on a regular basis and that care plans were routinely reviewed and updated.

Consent to care and treatment

Patients' consent to care and treatment was always sought 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, assessments of capacity to consent were also carried out in line with relevant guidance. Where a patient's mental capacity to consent to care or treatment was unclear the GP or 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 practice's responsibilities within legislation and followed relevant national guidance.

Health promotion and prevention

Patients who may be in need of extra support were identified by the practice. 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 and.

Patients were then signposted to the relevant service. Referrals to a community dietician were available and smoking cessation advice was available from a local support group. Patients who may be in need of extra support were identified by the practice.

The practice had a comprehensive screening programme. The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 72.64%, which was comparable to the CCG average of 83.84% and the national average of 81.85%. 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.

Childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given were comparable to CCG/national averages. For example, childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given to under two year olds ranged from 90.9% to 100% and five year olds from 88.2% to 96.4%. Flu vaccination rates for the over 65s were 71.39%, and at risk groups 52.79%. These were also comparable to CCG and national averages.

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 throughout the inspection that members of staff were courteous and very helpful to patients both attending at the reception desk and on the telephone and that people were treated with dignity and respect. Curtains were provided in consulting rooms so that patients' privacy and dignity was maintained 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.

Patients said they felt the practice offered an excellent service and staff were helpful, caring and treated them with dignity and respect. We also spoke with four members of the patient participation group (PPG) on the day of our inspection. They also 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 were happy with how they were treated and that this was with compassion, dignity and respect. The practice was well above average for its satisfaction scores on consultations with doctors and nurses. For example:

- 89% said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the CCG average of 87% and national average of 89%.
- 93% said the GP gave them enough time compared to the CCG average of 86% and national average of 87%.
- 98% said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw compared to the CCG average of 96% and national average of 95%
- 85% said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the CCG average of 84% and national average of 85%.
- 91% said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the CCG average of 92% and national average of 90%.

- 83% patients said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful compared to the CCG average of 89% and national average of 87%.

Care planning and involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Patients we spoke with told us that health issues were discussed with them and 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 we reviewed showed patients responded positively to questions about their involvement in planning and making decisions about their care and treatment and results were in line with local and national averages. For example:

- 93% said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 84% and national average of 86%.
- 80% said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the CCG average of 81% and national average of 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/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. There was a practice register of all people who were carers and were being supported, for example, by offering health checks and referral for social services support. Written information was available for carers to ensure they understood the various avenues of support available to them.

Staff told us that if families had suffered bereavement, their usual GP contacted them or sent them a sympathy card. This call 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 worked with the local CCG to plan services and to improve outcomes for patients in the area. For example, the practice was one of eight practices in the South Kent Coast Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to be awarded the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund to enable them to establish a GP service based at the local NHS hospital, allowing all the eight local practices in the Dover area to host primary care services, seven days a week, from 8am to 8pm and an urgent home visit service outside of core practice hours (8am-6.30pm).

Services were planned and delivered to take into account the needs of different patient groups and to help provide ensure flexibility, choice and continuity of care. For example;

- The practice offered a 'Commuter's Clinic' on a Monday evening until 8.30pm 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.
- Urgent access appointments were available for children and those with serious medical conditions.
- There were disabled facilities, hearing loop and translation services available.
- There was a large waiting area with plenty of space for wheelchairs and prams and baby changing facilities were available.

Access to the service

The practice was open between 8am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. Appointments were from 8.30am every morning to 6pm daily. Extended hours surgeries were offered at the following times on Monday at 6.30pm to 8.30pm. 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.

Results from the national GP patient survey showed that patient's satisfaction with how they could access care and treatment was comparable to local and national averages and people we spoke to on the day were able to get appointments when they needed them. For example:

- 70% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the CCG average of 74% and national average of 75%.
- 58% patients said they could get through easily to the surgery by phone compared to the CCG average of 73% and national average of 73%.
- 58% patients described their experience of making an appointment as good compared to the CCG average of 76% and national average of 73%.
- 45% patients said they usually waited 15 minutes or less after their appointment time compared to the CCG average of 68% and national average of 65%.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

The practice had a 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 a summary leaflet and information on the practice's website was available. Patients we spoke with were aware of the process to follow if they wished to make a complaint.

We looked at 24 complaints received in the last 12 months and found these were satisfactorily handled and dealt with in a timely way. Lessons were learnt from concerns and complaints and action was taken to as a result to improve the quality of care. For example, we saw that where a wrong address had been used in correspondence, an apology had been given to the patient. Staff registering patients were reminded on the importance of checking an address.

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 waiting areas and staff knew and understood the values. 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 was 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 have the experience, capacity and capability to run the practice and ensure high quality care. They prioritise safe, high quality and compassionate care. The partners were visible in the practice and staff told us that they were approachable and always take the time to listen to all members of staff. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty.

Staff told us that regular team meetings were held. 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 felt confident in doing so and felt were supported if they did. The practice closed every other Thursday afternoon for staff training and tutorials were given by outside representatives for asthma control. 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, proactively gaining patients' feedback and engaging 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, the automatic front doors had been broken for two years. The PPG members raised their concerns at a meeting in March 2015. We looked at minutes of a PPG meeting in June 2015 and saw that the doors were in the process of being repaired. On the day of our inspection, the doors were fixed.

The PPG members had also raised their concerns that the automated system of calling patients to the consultation rooms was not loud enough in reception. They requested that the GP called the patient personally from the waiting room. On the day of our inspection we saw GPs going into the waiting area and calling patients.

The practice had also gathered feedback from staff generally 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 management. Staff told us they felt involved and engaged to improve how the practice was run.

Innovation

There was a strong focus on continuous learning and improvement at all levels within the practice. The practice team was forward thinking and part of local pilot schemes to improve outcomes for patients in the area. For example, since October 2014, as part of the Prime Ministers Challenge fund and the over 75s plan, the practice had benefited from the services of a visiting paramedic practitioner who undertakes visits on behalf of the practice for any of their patients.

The practice was not a GP training practice. The practice supported student nurses from a local university in Kent

Are services well-led?

Good 

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

and provided mentorship for local pharmacists completing their medicines management prescribing course. We saw positive feedback from the students and pharmacists through evaluation forms and thank you cards.