

HMP Frankland

Inspection report

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Date of inspection visit: 30 November 2023
Date of publication: 19/12/2023

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 location

Inspected but not rated



Are services responsive to people's needs?

Inspected but not rated



Are services well-led?

Inspected but not rated



Overall summary

We carried out an announced focused inspection of healthcare services provided by Spectrum Community Interest Company (CIC) at HMP Frankland on 30 November 2023.

Following our last desktop inspection in November 2022, we found that the quality of healthcare provided by Spectrum at this location required improvement. We re-issued a Requirement Notice in relation to Regulation 16, Receiving and Acting on Complaints, of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

The purpose of this focused inspection was to determine if the healthcare services provided were meeting the legal requirements of the Requirement Notice that we issued in December 2022.

At this inspection we found that the required improvements had been made and the provider was meeting the requirement for Regulation 16, Receiving and Acting on Complaints.

We do not currently rate services provided in prisons.

At this inspection we found:

- Systems and processes were effective in monitoring and managing responses to complaints.
- Staff thoroughly investigated and provided quality responses to complaints.
- Staff had received training in responding to complaints.
- Complaints were responded to in line with the provider's complaints policy.
- Managers shared learning with staff and used data effectively to improve the service.

Our inspection team

Two CQC health and justice inspectors completed this inspection.

Before this inspection we reviewed a range of information provided by the service including the service action plan, policies and procedures and other management information.

During the inspection we asked the provider to share further information with us. We spoke with several healthcare staff, including managers and staff from the administration team. We also sampled a range of complaint records and responses.

Background to HMP Frankland

HMP Frankland, near Durham, is a Category A high security prison, accommodating approximately 840 adult men. The prison is operated by HM Prison and Probation Service.

Spectrum is the health provider at HMP Frankland. The provider is registered with the CQC to provide the following regulated activities at the location: Treatment of disease, disorder or injury and Diagnostic and screening procedures.

Our last inspection was in November 2022. The inspection report can be found at: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-8566841374>

Are services responsive to people's needs?

Listening to and learning from concerns and complaints

Patients had access to a dedicated healthcare complaints system. The service operated an effective system for receiving, recording and responding to complaints. Staff thoroughly investigated and provided quality responses to complaints.

At the previous inspection we found that complaints about the service were high, and patients did not receive an initial response to their complaint, resulting in repeated complaints. Staff did not keep data held about complaints up to date.

At this inspection we found significant improvements had been made in the management of complaints, including the implementation of a new provider wide policy from September 2023.

Staff used the electronic incident reporting system to log all complaints, recording the issue of concern, the completed investigation and outcome. This meant managers had an accurate and up to date picture of all complaints made about the service.

The number of complaints has remained high since our last inspection. Between 30 October 2022 and 28 November 2023; Spectrum received 635 complaints, an average of 49 complaints per month. However, since 01 May 2023 there has been a steady reduction to an average of 41 complaints each month (291 in total). Of these, only 15 were formal complaints. Most complaints (70%) received by Spectrum related to access to medicines or treatment.

Managers shared learning from complaints in daily handovers with staff.

Managers told us the introduction of the patient consultation committee in May 2023 had increased the opportunities to engage with patients on a range of issues, including complaints. Monthly meetings were attended by patient representatives from each wing and healthcare staff, including a GP, pharmacy staff, clinical leads and administration staff. Meeting minutes demonstrated discussions in relation to complaints and associated learning. For example, 2 wings in the prison had a higher proportion of complaints regarding in-possession medicines. They received their in-possession medicines on a Friday and any inaccuracies with these medicines could not be addressed until after the weekend and this resulted in increasing numbers of complaints. Following investigation by the provider and engagement with patients; changes were made to the day in-possession medicines were issued.

In addition, analysis of data identified a number of complaints relating to patients from the Westgate unit requiring appointments, resulting in an increased number of patients not attending their appointments with the GP. Further investigation identified issues in relation to wait times and patient experience whilst waiting to see the GP, which put patients off attending. This led to the introduction of a dedicated GP session on the Westgate unit.

In contrast to the findings at our last inspection; where a significant number of complaints were not responded to within the expected timeframes; all complaints had received a response within the required timeframe. At the time of this inspection only 5 complaints remained under investigation.

At the previous inspection we found some complaints were not investigated adequately or responded to appropriately. Staff had not received relevant training to support them in their role to manage and respond to complaints.

During this inspection we reviewed a sample of 7 complaints, including formal and informal complaints. Ten staff had received training and managers had further training planned for early 2024. Spectrum's priority was to provide early

Are services responsive to people's needs?

resolution to concerns and complaints through face to face and telephone contact. Where this was not possible, staff investigated further, and we saw evidence of the use of advocates to support patients with complex complaints. Records showed that staff investigated complaints thoroughly and responses demonstrated a real sense of empathy towards patients; including an apology and clear information on how to escalate their concerns.

In addition, the provider remained committed to further training which is to be delivered as part of the national pilot programme by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).

The service had received 27 compliments within the last 12 months, of these, 15 have been received since May 2023.

Are services well-led?

Good Governance

Governance processes operated effectively at team level and managers used data effectively to inform service improvements.

Spectrum had an established framework of regular governance meetings; these include site specific meetings at HMP Frankland, regional and organisation wide meetings. Key meetings such as the local delivery board and patient safety meetings included discussion of complaints data. Managers also met regularly with Spectrum's complaints lead and head of risk, and progress in relation to complaints management was tracked through a detailed service action plan.

In addition, managers attended weekly performance meetings with regional leaders to ensure wider oversight was maintained. Complaints remain an item on the regional risk register, although the risk rating continues to reduce.

Since the last inspection managers had improved the quality assurance of the complaints process, this included dip sampling complaint responses and introducing individual sign off of all complaints by managers.

Managers regularly scrutinised complaints data to inform learning and service development, including the identification of themes and trends and patient safety concerns.

Managers also used Spectrum's dashboard to maintain oversight of performance in relation to complaints and this provided the opportunity to compare similar services within the prison cluster.