

The Linden Medical Group

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 responsive to people's needs?

Good



Summary of findings

Contents

Summary of this inspection

	Page
Overall summary	2
The five questions we ask and what we found	4

Detailed findings from this inspection

Our inspection team	6
Background to The Linden Medical Group	6
Why we carried out this inspection	6
How we carried out this inspection	6

Overall summary

Letter from the Chief Inspector of General Practice

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at The Linden Medical Group on 12 December 2016. The overall rating for the practice was rated as good, with a rating of requires improvement for providing responsive services. The full comprehensive report on 12 December 2016 can be found by selecting 'all reports' link for The Linden Medical Group on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

This inspection was an announced focused inspection carried out on 16 October 2017 to confirm that the practice had carried out improvements in relation to areas that we identified in our previous inspection on 12 December 2016 as requires improvement. This report covers our findings in relation to those requirements and also additional improvements made since our last inspection.

Overall the practice is remains rated as good.

Our key findings were as follows:

- A new telephone system was installed with a queuing system informing callers of their position in the queue before they can speak to someone. The system allowed the practice to monitor their call volumes, and it was used in resource planning to ensure there were more staff answering the telephones during busy times.
- Waiting times on the telephone had reduced significantly due to the new telephone system. This was consistent with feedback from some patients we spoke to who told us they did not wait for long on the telephone even when they were in a queue.
- Extended opening hours were now provided from 7am until 8am on Monday (four hours per week), with GPs and a nurse available, for the convenience of working age people. The practice offered a range of appointments which included telephone appointments, same day urgent and pre-bookable appointments. There were longer appointments available for patients who needed them and they were encouraged to request for longer appointments if required.
- Patients were encouraged to provide feedback about their experience using various methods. For example, the NHS friends and family test was sent to patients by text message and was available in paper format. A suggestion box was available in the practice as well as online.
- The practice offered a range of services within its premises. Patients were encouraged to self-refer to the service as well as to psychotherapy services.

Summary of findings

- Information about how to complain was available and easy to understand and evidence showed the practice responded quickly to issues raised. Learning from complaints was shared with staff and other stakeholders.

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 responsive to people's needs?

- At our previous inspection on 12 December 2016, we rated the practice as requires improvement for providing responsive services in respect of having poor telephone access and changes made to improve patient experience were yet to be embedded. These arrangements had significantly improved when we undertook a follow up focussed inspection on 16 October 2017.
- A new telephone system was installed with a queuing system informing callers of their position in the queue before they can speak to someone. The system allowed the practice to monitor their call volumes, and it was used in resource planning to ensure there were more staff answering the telephones during busy times.
- Waiting times on the telephone had reduced significantly due to the new telephone system. This was consistent with feedback from some patients we spoke to who told us they did not wait for long on the telephone even when they were in a queue.
- Extended opening hours were now provided from 7am until 8am on Monday (four hours per week), with GPs and a nurse available. The practice offered a range of appointments which included telephone appointments, same day urgent and pre-bookable appointments. There were longer appointments available for patients who needed them and they were encouraged to ask for longer appointments if required.
- Patients were encouraged to provide feedback about their experience using various methods. For example, the NHS friends and family test was sent to patients by text message and was available in paper format. A suggestion box was available in the practice as well as online.
- The practice offered a range of services within its premises. Patients were encouraged to self-refer to some of the services including psychotherapy services.
- Information about how to complain was available and easy to understand and evidence showed the practice responded quickly to issues raised. Learning from complaints was shared with staff and other stakeholders.

Good



Summary of findings

The Linden Medical Group

Detailed findings

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by:

Our inspection was carried out by a CQC inspector.

Background to The Linden Medical Group

The Linden Medical Group provides primary medical care services to approximately 8350 patients, under a General Medical Services (GMS) contract agreed with NHS England. It is based in purpose-built premises within the Stapleford Care Centre located in Church Street, Stapleford, Nottingham, NG9 8DA. The premises are owned and managed by NHS Property Services. The practice had a branch surgery which closed in July 2016.

The practice is in the fourth less deprived decile meaning that it has a slightly lower proportion of people living there who are classed as deprived than most areas. Data shows the number of older people aged above 65 years registered at the practice is moderately higher than the local and national average.

There are six GP partners at the practice (four male and two female). One of the partners is the Registered Manager. A registered manager is a person who is registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

In addition, the nursing team comprises of two practice nurses and two healthcare assistants. The clinical team are supported by a practice manager, a practice supervisor and

an administrative team comprising of reception staff, an audit clerk and secretary. A pharmacist employed by another healthcare organisation is attached to the practice as part of a pilot scheme on a full time basis.

The practice is open between 8am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. There are no closures at lunchtime except on Thursday when it is closed from 1pm until 4pm, and re-opens from 4pm until 6.30pm. Appointments start in the morning from 8.30am until 12.30pm, and in the afternoon from 3.20pm until 5.20pm. Extended opening hours are provided on Monday from 7am until 8am with GP and nurse appointments available.

Linden Medical Group has opted out of providing GP services to patients out of hours. During the evenings and at weekends an out-of-hours service is provided by Nottingham Emergency Medical Services (NEMS). Contact is via the NHS 111 telephone number.

Why we carried out this inspection

We undertook a comprehensive inspection of The Linden Medical Group on 27 March 2015 as part of our new inspection programme. The practice was rated as requires improvement for providing safe, responsive and well led services. The concerns which led to these ratings applied across all the population groups we inspected.

We issued requirement notices to the provider in respect of employing fit and proper persons, receiving and acting on complaints and good governance. We informed the provider that they must provide us with an action plan to inform us how they were going to address the issues of concern. An action plan was received from the practice.

We undertook a further comprehensive inspection of The Linden Medical Group on 12 December 2016 to check that

Detailed findings

the actions had been completed to address the requirement notice, and confirm that the provider was compliant with legal requirements. The practice was rated as good, but remained as requires improvement for providing responsive services. The full comprehensive reports on 27 March 2015 and 12 December 2016 can be found by selecting 'all reports' link The Linden Medical Group on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

We undertook a follow up focused inspection of The Linden Medical Group on 16 October. This inspection was carried out to review in detail the actions taken by the practice to improve the quality of care in relation to providing responsive services.

How we carried out this inspection

We carried out a focused inspection visit of The Linden Medical Group on 16 October 2017.

During our visit we:

- Spoke with the practice manager and one of the GP partners.
- Spoke with patients who used the service, including a member of the patient participation group (PPG).
- Observed how patients were being cared for in the reception area and talked with carers and/or family members
- Looked at published information relating to patient experience.

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 responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

At our previous inspection on 12 December 2016, we rated the practice as requires improvement for providing responsive services in respect of having poor telephone access and changes made to improve patient experience were yet to be embedded.

These arrangements had significantly improved when we undertook a follow up focussed inspection on 16 October 2017. The practice is now rated good for providing responsive services.

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. For example, the practice continued to sign up to the CCG's Engaged Practice Scheme aimed at improving access to GP appointments. Additionally, the practice participated in another scheme where they provided 48 extra GP appointments per week in February and March 2017 to ease the winter pressures on the local health services.

The practice worked to ensure its services were accessible to different population groups. For example:

- The practice offered a range of appointments which included telephone appointments, same day urgent and pre-bookable appointments. There were longer appointments available for patients who needed them and they were encouraged to request for longer appointments if required.
- Home visits were available for older patients and patients who had clinical needs which resulted in difficulty attending the practice.
- Telephone text reminders were used to remind patients when they had booked appointments and invite them for medical reviews and flu vaccination.
- The practice offered a cancer screening enhanced service for adults with learning disabilities. This included screening for bowel, breast and cervical cancer, and abdominal aortic aneurysm screening.

- Nurses and healthcare assistants had recently been trained to provide smoking cessation services to patients without referring them to other smoking cessation services. This enabled patients to be seen closer to home and receive holistic care in one place.
- There was a range of online services including access to appointments and ordering repeat prescriptions. Patients were encouraged to use the electronic prescription service which enabled them to have their prescriptions sent to their pharmacy of choice.
- A pain management clinic was hosted by the practice. Additional services were provided in the same building, and were accessible to patients via referral from the practice and self-referral.
- Flu clinics were held on Saturdays to accommodate people who would not be able to attend during the week, including working age patients and students.
- Phlebotomy clinics were provided on Tuesdays and Wednesdays by the practice. Patients who could not attend on those days would be referred to a community phlebotomy service offered in the same building and home visits were arranged for housebound patients.
- Same day appointments were available for children and those with medical problems that required same day consultation with an on call doctor.
- Patients were able to receive travel vaccinations available on the NHS as well as those only available privately/were referred to other clinics for vaccines available privately.
- There were disabled facilities and translation services available when required.

Access to the service

The practice was open between 8am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. There were no closures at lunchtime except on Thursday when it was closed from 1pm until 4pm, and re-opened from 4pm until 6.30pm. Appointments started in the morning from 8.30am until 12.30pm, and in the afternoon from 3.20pm until 5.20pm. Nurse appointments were available from 8am. Since our last inspection, the practice now offered extended opening hours from 7am to 8am on Monday (four hours per week), with GPs and a nurse available.

We reviewed results from the national GP patient survey published in July 2017. There were 224 surveys sent out

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

and 102 responses (1.2% of the practice population). Results showed that patient's satisfaction with how they could access care and treatment was mostly lower than local and national averages.

- 75% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours, compared to the CCG average of 83% and the national average of 76%.
- 57% of patients said they could get through easily to the practice by phone compared to the CCG average of 88% and the national average of 71%.
- 82% of patients said they were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried, compared to the CCG average of 90% and the national average of 84%.
- 40% of patients said they usually get to see or speak to their preferred GP, compared to the CCG average of 65% and the national average of 56%.
- 42% of patients said they usually wait 15 minutes or less after their appointment time to be seen, compared to the CCG average of 67% and the national average of 64%.

The results above showed some areas had improved since the previous national GP patient survey in July 2016, whilst others had declined marginally. In July 2016:

- 67% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours, compared to the CCG average of 82% and the national average of 76%.
- 66% of patients said they could get through easily to the practice by phone compared to the CCG average of 87% and the national average of 73%.
- 83% of patients said they were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried, compared to the CCG average of 89% and the national average of 85%.
- 27% of patients said they usually get to see or speak to their preferred GP, compared to the CCG average of 69% and the national average of 59%.
- 48% of patients said they usually wait 15 minutes or less after their appointment time to be seen, compared to the CCG average of 69% and the national average of 65%.

The practice, in conjunction with the CCG, undertook their own patient surveys in March 2017 and September 2017. They collated 408 responses (4.8% of the practice populated) in September 2017, which showed that:

- 69% of patients were satisfied or very satisfied with their telephone calls being answered speedily, compared to the CCG average of 93%. This was an increase from the previous results in March 2017 of 55%.
- 68% of patients were satisfied or very satisfied with their ability to book an appointment with the clinician of their choice within one month, compared to the CCG average of 77%. This was an increase from the previous results in March 2017 of 55%.
- 22% of the respondents said they waited more than 15 minutes between their appointment times and being seen, compared to the CCG average of 17%.
- 87% of the patients said they found the receptionists helpful, compared to the CCG average of 92%. This was an increase from the previous results in March 2017 of 79%.

During the inspection we spoke with nine patients. All of them told us they were able to get urgent same day appointments if they needed them. However, most patients said they waited more than 15 minutes after their appointment time to be seen, and they were not always informed when clinicians were running late. We observed reception staff informing patients that a GP was running late and how many patients were ahead of them to be seen. Additionally, there were posters advising patients to let the receptionist know if they had been waiting for more than 20 minutes. Comments made on the NHS Choices website by patients were increasingly positive about access since changes were made to the telephone and appointments systems.

The practice had introduced the following improvements since our last inspection:

- Extended opening hours were now provided from 7am until 8am on Monday (four hours per week), with GPs and a nurse available. We observed positive feedback from some patients regarding the early morning appointments. A new telephone system was installed with a queuing system informing callers of their position in the queue before they can speak to someone. The system allowed the practice to monitor their call volumes, and it was used in resource planning to ensure there were more staff answering the telephones during busy times. For

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

example, there were five receptionists on Monday mornings and afternoons because it was the day the practice received the highest number of calls, and four receptionists on other days of the week.

- Waiting times on the telephone had reduced significantly due to the new telephone system. A telephone 'hunt group' had been set up to enable staff at the front and back office to answer calls. We observed telephone calls being answered within 30 seconds, and viewed data supporting this trend. This was consistent with feedback from some patients we spoke to who told us they did not wait for long on the telephone even when they were in a queue.
- There were 20 same day urgent appointments offered daily. Feedback from patients we spoke to showed most patients were able to get an urgent appointment if they needed one.
- The patient PPG informed patients of the changes to the appointments system and new telephones via leaflets. Patients were invited to attend the annual general meeting where they could ask questions about the changes.
- Patients were encouraged to provide feedback about their experience using various methods. For example, the NHS friends and family test was sent to patients by text message and was available in paper format. A suggestion box was available in the practice as well as online.
- During our previous inspection on 12 December 2016, we found that the practice had introduced a new appointments system a month before our inspection to offer pre-bookable appointments and urgent appointments to patients, and the changes had not yet been embedded. At our inspection on 16 October 2017, staff told us the appointments system was working well and patients could access pre-bookable appointments up to four weeks in advance, and they did not need to call at 8am to access these appointments. We observed there were routine appointments available with a GP or nurse the next day after our inspection. Some patients we spoke to on the day told us they preferred to telephone the practice after 8am and they were able to get both urgent and pre-bookable appointments.

- In response to the patient survey results, patients were encouraged to request for double appointments if they needed to discuss more than one problem with the GPs, in order to reduce waiting times. GPs regularly added extra appointment slots at the end of their sessions when their clinics overran.
- The practice continued to promote online booking of appointments to reduce the pressure on telephone lines. Data provided by the practice showed 120 patients booked their appointments online in September 2017, compared to 59 patients who used the service in September 2016.

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 known as the complaints manager, and a GP lead for complaints.
- We saw that information was available to help patients understand the complaints system in the reception area, including a complaints leaflet.

There were three written complaints received between March 2017 and September 2017 by the practice. We reviewed the complaints and found these were satisfactorily handled and dealt with in a timely way. Apologies were given to people making complaints where appropriate. The practice recorded and reviewed patient feedback given informally, including comments and compliments. Lessons were learnt from individual concerns and complaints and also from analysis of trends, and actions were taken as a result to improve the quality of care. Additionally, complaints were discussed at practice team meetings and reviewed at an annual whole practice meeting so that any learning is shared and changes to policies and procedures are implemented as a practice team. For example, an informal complaint resulted in learning for the practice team on how to respond to patients who report they have chest pain.