

AskDoc Ltd

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.

Ratings

Overall rating for this location

Good 

Are services safe?

Good 

Overall summary

This service is rated as Good overall. (Previous inspection 11 March 2020 – Good Requires improvement for safe).

The key questions are rated as:

Are services safe? – Good

We previously carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at AskDoc Ltd on 11 March 2020. The overall rating for the service was good, the service was rated requires improvement for providing safe services. The full comprehensive report on the 11 March 2020 inspection can be found by selecting the 'all reports' link for AskDoc Ltd on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

This inspection was a desk-based review carried out on 17 July 2020 to confirm that the practice had carried out their plan to meet the legal requirements in relation to the breaches in regulations that we identified in our previous inspection on 11 March 2020. This report covers our findings in relation to those requirements and additional improvements made since our last inspection.

AskDoc Ltd is an independent GP service working with adults who require private consultations, physical examination and prescription of medicines. The service primarily provides a mobile service, which patients can access via the telephone or the services app Gogodoc. The service also offers a consultation space in Holborn.

The registered manager is Dr Vijay Sivapalan. 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.

We are mindful of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on our regulatory function. We will continue to discharge our regulatory enforcement functions required to keep people safe and to hold providers to account where it is necessary for us to do so.

Our key findings were :

- Systems and processes were in place to keep people safe. The provider had introduced a Documentation Policy and protocol which gave clear guidance on what should be recorded in patient notes after a consultation.
- The provider had developed a triaging policy.
- The provider had revised their medicines management policy with clear prescribing and monitoring guidance.
- The provider had introduced a protocol where all prescriptions issued were automatically uploaded to the patients notes.
- Governance arrangements were in place. There were clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

Dr Rosie Benneyworth BM BS BMedSci MRCGP

Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care

Our inspection team

Our inspection was carried out by a CQC lead inspector.

Background to AskDoc Ltd

AskDoc Ltd is an independent GP service working with adults over 18 who require private consultations, physical examination and prescription of medication. The service provides a mobile service with an administration office at 3 Waterhouse Square, 138 Holborn, London, EC1N 2SW. Patients are able to book appointments online, over the phone or via the services digital app called Gogodoc.

The service is available from 8am to 11pm seven days per week.

Website: www.gogodoc.com

AskDoc Ltd is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide:

- Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely

- Treatment of disease, disorder or injury.
- Diagnostic and screening procedures

Our inspection team was led by a CQC lead inspector.

The desktop inspection was carried out on 17 July 2020. We did not physically visit the location, but reviewed a range of evidence submitted by the provider at our request:

We reviewed a sample of patient care and treatment records, policies and procedures.

We focused on the key question of safe and this formed the framework for the areas we looked at during the inspection.

Are services safe?

When we inspected the practice in March 2020, we found that this service was not providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations. Specifically, we found:

- There were no systems or processes that enabled the registered person to ensure that accurate, complete and contemporaneous records were being maintained securely in respect of each service user.
- Patients notes did not always contain sufficient relevant details, such as; observations, medicines prescribed or confirmation of patients identity.

At this inspection in July 2020, we found improvements had been made.

Information to deliver safe care and treatment

Staff had the information they needed to deliver safe care and treatment to patients.

- At the March 2020 inspection we found that Individual care records were not always written and managed in a way that kept patients safe. The care records we saw showed that information needed to deliver safe care and treatment was not always available to relevant staff in an accessible way. At this inspection the service provided evidence that they had developed a template which had the details they expect to be documented with headings and guidance on how doctors should use it. They had also developed a triaging template to ensure that this was being done effectively and could be audited.
- The service had systems for sharing information with staff and other agencies to enable them to deliver safe care and treatment.
- The service had a system in place to retain medical records in line with Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) guidance in the event that they cease trading.
- Clinicians made appropriate and timely referrals in line with protocols and up to date evidence-based guidance.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

The service had reliable systems for appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

- The systems and arrangements for managing medicines, including vaccines, controlled drugs, emergency medicines and equipment minimised risks. The service kept prescription stationery securely and monitored its use. At the March 2020 inspection we noted that although individual prescriptions were numbered, the number was not added to the consultation notes. At this inspection we were sent evidence that the service had made their medicines management policy more robust and one of the key changes was the uploading of prescriptions into the patients notes.
- The service carried out regular medicines audit to ensure prescribing was in line with best practice guidelines for safe prescribing.
- The service did prescribe scheduled 2 and 3 controlled drugs but limited the supply of these medicines to cover patient needs for a maximum of 24-72 hours (medicines that have the highest level of control due to their risk of misuse and dependence). They did prescribe schedule 4 and 5 controlled drugs, for longer term use when clinically indicated.
- Staff prescribed, administered or supplied medicines to patients and gave advice on medicines in line with legal requirements and current national guidance. At the March 2020 inspection we found that clinicians did not always document their observations or record what was prescribed. At this inspection we were sent examples of notes using the services new template and adhering to their medicines management policy. These notes included observations, what ID was presented, and any medicines prescribed.
- Processes were in place for checking medicines and staff kept accurate records of medicines. Where there was a different approach taken from national guidance there was a clear rationale for this that protected patient safety.