

# The Alton Practice

## 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 The Alton Practice on 5 May 2016. Overall the practice is rated as good. Our key findings across all the areas we inspected were as follows:

- There was an open and transparent approach to safety and an effective system in place for reporting and recording significant events.
- Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.
- Staff assessed patients' needs and delivered care in line with current evidence based guidance. Staff had been trained to provide them with the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.
- 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. Improvements were made to the quality of care as a result of complaints and concerns.

- Patients said they found it easy to make an appointment with a named GP and 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.
- The provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the duty of candour.

The areas where the provider should make improvement are:

- Implement, monitor and review actions identified to improve care for patients with diabetes.
- Review how patients with caring responsibilities are identified and recorded on the clinical system to ensure information, advice and support is made available to them.
- Consider and implement ways to improve childhood immunisation performance.

# Summary of findings

**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.

- There was an effective system in place for reporting and recording significant events.
- Lessons were shared to make sure action was taken to improve safety in the practice.
- When things went wrong patients received reasonable support, truthful information, and a written apology. They were told about any actions to improve processes to prevent the same thing happening again.
- The practice had clearly defined and embedded systems, processes and practices in place to keep patients safe and safeguarded from abuse.
- Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.

Good



### Are services effective?

The practice is rated as good for providing effective services.

- Data from the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) showed patient outcomes were in line with local and national averages with the exception of diabetes care.
- Staff assessed needs and delivered care in line with current evidence based guidance.
- Clinical audits demonstrated quality improvement.
- Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.
- There was evidence of appraisals and personal development plans for all staff.
- Staff worked with other health care professionals to understand and meet the range and complexity of patients' needs.

Good



### Are services caring?

The practice is rated as good for providing caring services.

- Data from the national GP patient survey showed patients rated the practice higher than others for several aspects of care.
- Patients said they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect and they were involved in decisions about their care and treatment.
- Information for patients about the services available was easy to understand and accessible.
- We saw staff treated patients with kindness and respect, and maintained patient and information confidentiality.

Good



# Summary of findings

## Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is rated as good for providing responsive services.

- Practice staff reviewed the needs of its local population and engaged with the NHS England Area Team and Clinical Commissioning Group to secure improvements to services where these were identified.
- Patients said they found it easy to make an appointment with a named GP and 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 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.

- The practice had a clear vision and strategy to deliver high quality care and promote good outcomes for patients. Staff were clear about the vision and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- 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 regular governance meetings.
- There was an overarching governance framework which supported the delivery of the strategy and good quality care. This included arrangements to monitor and improve quality and identify risk.
- The provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the duty of candour. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty. The practice had systems in place for notifiable safety incidents and ensured this information was shared with staff to ensure appropriate action was taken.
- The practice proactively sought feedback from staff and patients, which it acted on. The patient participation group was active.
- There was a strong focus on continuous learning and improvement at all levels.

Good



# 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.

Good



- The practice offered proactive, personalised care to meet the needs of the older people in its population.
- The practice was responsive to the needs of older people, and offered home visits and urgent appointments for those with enhanced needs.
- Older people had a named GP who coordinated their care.

### People with long term conditions

The practice is rated as good for the care of people with long-term conditions.

Good



- Nursing staff had lead roles in chronic disease management and patients at risk of hospital admission were identified as a priority.
- Performance for diabetes related indicators was lower than Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and national averages.
- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, in whom the last IFCC-HbA1c (a specific blood sugar level test) is 64 mmol/mol or less in the preceding 12 months was 60% compared to the CCG average of 75% and the national average of 78%.
- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) is 140/80 mmHg or less was 64% (CCG 74%, national 78%).
- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, who have had influenza immunisation in the preceding 1 August to 31 March was 98% (CCG 92%, national 94%).
- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, whose last measured total cholesterol (measured within the preceding 12 months) is 5 mmol/l or less was 64% (CCG 78%, national 81%).
- The percentage of patients on the diabetes register, with a record of a foot examination and risk classification within the preceding 12 months was 96% (CCG 88%, national 88%).
- Longer appointments and home visits were available when needed.
- All these patients had a named GP and were offered a structured annual review to check their health and medicines needs were being met.

# Summary of findings

- For those patients with the most complex needs, the named GP worked with relevant health and care professionals to deliver a multidisciplinary package of care.

## 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 relatively low for 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.
- The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 82%, which was comparable to the CCG average of 81% and the national average of 82%.
- Appointments were available outside of school hours and the premises were suitable for children and babies.
- We saw positive examples of joint working with midwives, health visitors and school nurses.

Good



## 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.

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 and those with a learning disability.

Good



# Summary of findings

- The practice offered longer appointments for patients with a learning disability.
- The practice regularly worked with other health care professionals in the case management of vulnerable patients.
- The practice informed 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.

## 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).

- 83% of patients diagnosed with dementia who had their care reviewed in a face to face meeting in the last 12 months, which is comparable to the national average.
- The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of patients experiencing poor mental health, including those with dementia.
- The practice carried out advance care planning for patients with dementia.
- The practice had told patients experiencing poor mental health about how to access various support groups and voluntary organisations.
- The practice had a system in place to follow up patients who had attended accident and emergency where they may have been experiencing poor mental health.
- Staff had a good understanding of how to support patients with mental health needs and dementia.

Good





# Summary of findings

## What people who use the service say

The national GP patient survey results were published in January 2016. The results showed the practice was performing in-line with local and national averages. Four hundred and three survey forms were distributed and ninety were returned. This represented 2.3% of the practice's patient list.

- 68% of patients found it easy to get through to this practice by phone compared to the local clinical commissioning group (CCG) average of 81% and the national average of 73%.
- 62% of patients were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried compared to the CCG average of 78% and the national average of 76%.
- 75% of patients described the overall experience of this GP practice as good compared to the CCG average of 88% and the national average of 85%.

- 64% of patients said they would recommend this GP practice to someone who has just moved to the local area compared to the CCG average of 85% and the national average of 79%.

As part of our inspection we also asked for CQC comment cards to be completed by patients prior to our inspection. We received 58 comment cards which were all positive about the standard of care received. Recurring comments and themes from comment cards included friendly, caring and helpful staff, that clinical staff were professional and provided a great service, that referrals and repeat prescriptions were dealt with promptly and that the practice was 'a fantastic family practice'. We spoke with three patients during the inspection. All three patients said they were satisfied with the care they received and thought staff were approachable, committed and caring. The practice encouraged patients to participate in the Friends and Family Test (FFT) and the most recently published data showed that 100% of patients would recommend the practice to friends and family.

# The Alton Practice

## Detailed findings

### Our inspection team

#### **Our inspection team was led by:**

Our inspection team was led by a CQC Lead Inspector. The team included a GP specialist adviser and a practice manager specialist adviser.

## Background to The Alton Practice

The Alton Practice provides primary medical services in Wandsworth to approximately 3,800 patients and is one of 44 member practices in the NHS Wandsworth Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The practice operates under a General Medical Services (GMS) contract and provides a number of local and national enhanced services (enhanced services require an increased level of service provision above that which is normally required under the core GP contract).

Wandsworth has 50% more 20 to 40 year olds, but 33 per cent fewer older people than other south west London boroughs, reflected in the patient demographics for the practice with 10% of patients aged 65 or over, 68% of patients aged 18-65 years old and 22% aged 18 or younger.

The practice population is in the fourth more deprived decile, with income deprivation affecting children and adults higher than local and national averages.

The practice operates from a purpose-built two storey detached building with access for disabled patients, ground floor includes waiting room, reception, four consulting rooms and two toilets with a side exit as well as the main entrance and a small garden. The first floor includes staff common / seminar room, two administrative

rooms, one information technology room, a kitchen, a staff toilet and a store room. There is off street parking space for three cars. The surgery is located at the junction of Danebury Avenue with Roehampton Lane and is in close proximity to the Alton Council Estate. It is a short walking distance to Queen Mary's Hospital and is in close proximity to three pharmacies.

The practice clinical team is made up of two male GP partners, one female regular Locum GP and one female nurse. The practice doctors provide 20 sessions per week. The non-clinical team consists of one practice manager, one administrator and four reception staff.

The practice opens between 8.45am and 1.00pm and 3.00pm and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. Morning surgery times are between 8.45am and 1.00pm and afternoon surgery times are between 3.00pm and 6.30pm. The practice also opens on a Tuesday at 2.30pm and a Wednesday at 2.00pm for prebooked clinics. Prebookable appointments during extended hours are available between 6.30pm and 8.30pm on a Monday. Practice telephone lines and reception are operational between the hours of 8.45am and 6.30pm.

The provider has opted out of providing out-of-hours (OOH) services to their own patients between 6.30pm and 8.45am when the practice directs patients to seek assistance from the locally agreed out of hours provider.

The practice is registered with the Care Quality Commission to provide the regulated activities of treatment of disease, disorder or injury, maternity and midwifery services, family planning, surgical procedures and diagnostic and screening procedures.

# Detailed findings

## Why we carried out this inspection

We carried out a comprehensive inspection of this service under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. The inspection was planned to check 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.

## How we carried out this inspection

Before visiting, we reviewed a range of information we hold about the practice and asked other organisations to share what they knew. We carried out an announced visit on 5 May 2016. During our visit we:

- Spoke with a range of staff including GPs, Nurses, the practice manager and receptionists.
- Spoke with patients who used the service.
- Observed how patients were being cared for and talked with carers and family members.
- Reviewed an anonymised sample of the personal care or treatment records of patients.

- Reviewed comment cards where patients and members of the public shared their views and experiences of the service.

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 were provided for specific groups of people and what good care looked 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).

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 safe?

## Our findings

### Safe track record and learning

There was an effective system in place for reporting and recording significant events.

- Staff told us they would inform the practice manager of any incidents and there was a system in place which supported the recording of notifiable incidents under the duty of candour. (The duty of candour is a set of specific legal requirements that providers of services must follow when things go wrong with care and treatment).
- We saw evidence that when things went wrong with care and treatment, patients were informed of the incident, received reasonable support, truthful information, a written apology and were told about any actions to improve processes to prevent the same thing happening again.
- The practice carried out a thorough analysis of significant events.

We reviewed safety records, incident reports, patient safety alerts and minutes of meetings where these were discussed. We saw evidence that lessons were shared and action was taken to improve safety in the practice. For example, a patient was asked to attend the practice to discuss blood test results with the doctor. During the appointment, the patient questioned why it had taken six months for the results to come through. The GP quickly realised the blood test results were for a different patient with a similar name and date of birth. Both patients involved were apologised to and a full explanation given. The practice reinforced with both clinical and non-clinical staff the need for patient details to be checked carefully when matching test results and booking appointments.

### Overview of safety systems and processes

The practice had clearly defined and embedded systems, processes and practices in place to keep patients safe and safeguarded from abuse, which included:

- Arrangements were in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from abuse. These arrangements reflected relevant legislation and local requirements. 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 on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults relevant to their role. GPs and the practice nurse were trained to child protection or child safeguarding level 3 with non-clinical staff trained to level 1.

- A notice in the waiting room advised patients that chaperones were available if required. All staff who acted as chaperones were trained for the role and had received a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. (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).
- The practice maintained appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene. 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 medicines and vaccines, in the practice kept patients safe (including obtaining, prescribing, recording, handling, storing, security and disposal). Processes were in place for handling repeat prescriptions which included the review of high risk medicines. The practice carried out regular medicines audits, with the support of the local CCG pharmacy teams, to ensure prescribing was in line with best practice guidelines for safe prescribing. Blank prescription forms and pads were securely stored and there were systems in place to monitor their use.
- Patient Group Directions had been adopted by the practice to allow nurses to administer medicines in line with legislation (PGDs are written instructions for the supply or administration of medicines to groups of patients who may not be individually identified before presentation for treatment).

## Are services safe?

- We reviewed four personnel files and found 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.

### Monitoring risks to patients

Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.

- 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 which identified local health and safety representatives. The practice had up to date fire risk assessments and carried out regular fire drills. 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 had a variety of other risk assessments in place to monitor safety of the premises such as control of substances hazardous to health and infection control and legionella (Legionella is a term for a particular bacterium which can contaminate water systems in buildings).
- 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 the different staffing groups to ensure enough staff were on duty.

### Arrangements to deal with emergencies and major incidents

The practice had adequate arrangements in place to respond to 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. A first aid kit and accident book were 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 we checked were in date and stored securely.
- 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 assessed needs and delivered care in line with 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 keep all clinical staff up to date. Staff had access to guidelines from NICE and used this information to deliver care and treatment that met patients' 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 used the information collected for the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) and performance against national screening programmes to monitor outcomes for patients. (QOF is a system intended to improve the quality of general practice and reward good practice). The most recent published results were 94% of the total number of points available, with 9% exception reporting. (Exception reporting is the removal of patients from QOF calculations where, for example, the patients are unable to attend a review meeting or certain medicines cannot be prescribed because of side effects). Data from 2014/2015 showed:

- Performance for diabetes related indicators was lower than Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and national averages.
- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, in whom the last IFCC-HbA1c (a specific blood sugar level test) is 64 mmol/mol or less in the preceding 12 months was 60% compared to the CCG average of 75% and the national average of 78%.
- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) is 140/80 mmHg or less was 64% (CCG 74%, national 78%).
- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, who have had influenza immunisation in the preceding 1 August to 31 March was 98% (CCG 92%, national 94%).

- The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, whose last measured total cholesterol (measured within the preceding 12 months) is 5 mmol/l or less was 64% (CCG 78%, national 81%).
- The percentage of patients on the diabetes register, with a record of a foot examination and risk classification within the preceding 12 months was 96% (CCG 88%, national 88%).

The practice recognised lower than average performance in diabetes care indicators and showed us that data submitted by the practice for 2015/2016 was slightly improved but still lower than local and national averages. The practice had a higher than average prevalence of diabetes influenced by a high number of patients whose ethnicity, diet and lifestyle accounts for higher prevalence of diabetes. The practice told us that these patients were also difficult to communicate with due to language barriers. In response to this, the practice had put in place an action plan for 2016/2017 with actions for staff in all areas. Actions included: GPs and practice nurse to attend a course on managing diabetes in primary care, setting up dedicated diabetes clinics, focussing on diabetes education, lifestyle improvement and self-management of long term conditions, diabetes specific audits to include medication reviews of patients with the aim of reducing HbA1c levels in patients (lower levels suggest better long term blood glucose management).

- Performance for mental health related indicators was similar to Clinical commissioning group (CCG) and national averages.
- The percentage of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses who have a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the record, in the preceding 12 months was 92% compared to the CCG average of 91% and the national average of 88%.
- The percentage of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses whose alcohol consumption has been recorded in the preceding 12 months was 93% (CCG 89, national 90%).
- The percentage of patients diagnosed with dementia whose care has been reviewed in a face-to-face review in the preceding 12 months was 83% (CCG 87%, national 84%).



# Are services effective?

## (for example, treatment is effective)

There was evidence of quality improvement including clinical audit.

- There had been three clinical audits carried out in the last two years, all of these were completed audits where the improvements made were implemented and monitored. For example, the practice audited patients being prescribed Tramadol, a medicine prescribed to treat moderately severe pain, to ensure the medicine was being prescribed and used in accordance with current guidelines. The practice identified 16 patients who were prescribed Tramadol and assessed whether or not GP prescribing had been appropriate. In the first audit cycle the practice found that all of the patients were on repeat prescriptions for the medicine. These patients were contacted for a review where risks were discussed with patients and other analgesia (pain relief) options were discussed. The patients reviewed agreed to either stop using tramadol, lower their use, or in the case of three patients, only use tramadol in the short term whilst waiting for orthopaedic surgery. The results of the audit were discussed with clinicians who were all familiarised with the guidelines on the use of Tramadol and its risks to patients, and were reminded to use the 'analgesia ladder' (guidelines for the progressive use of analgesic medicine as pain increases) instead of opting for strong pain medicine with added risk too early. The second audit cycle showed that only six patients were currently prescribed tramadol and that these prescriptions were appropriate and in line with guidelines.
- The practice participated in 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 telephone consultation audit resulted in fewer inappropriate or routine calls being passed to GPs. The practice has a telephone triage system whereby patients can request a telephone consultation with a GP. The GPs audited these calls and categorised them as inappropriate, routine and urgent. There were high numbers of routine calls which couldn't be addressed over the phone but needed a face to face consultation, such as sick note extensions. Reception staff were given training in how to triage phone calls and how to

recognise routine matters that needed a face to face appointment to be booked. The second audit showed that there were fewer routine and inappropriate calls and higher numbers of correctly triaged urgent calls.

### Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.

- The practice had an induction programme for all newly appointed staff. This covered such topics as safeguarding, infection prevention and control, fire safety, health and safety and confidentiality.
- The practice could demonstrate how they ensured role-specific training and updating for relevant staff. For example, for those reviewing patients with long-term conditions, training had been completed in Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Asthma management, including spirometry.
- Staff administering vaccines and taking samples for the cervical screening programme had received specific training which had included an assessment of competence. Staff who administered vaccines could demonstrate how they stayed up to date with changes to the immunisation programmes, for example by access to on line resources and discussion at practice meetings.
- 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 their learning needs and to cover the scope of their work. This included ongoing support, one-to-one meetings, coaching and mentoring, clinical supervision and facilitation and support for revalidating GPs. All staff had received an appraisal within the last 12 months.
- Staff received training that included: safeguarding, fire safety awareness, basic life support and information governance. 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.

# Are services effective?

## (for example, treatment is effective)

- This included care and risk assessments, care plans, medical records and investigation and test results.
- The practice shared relevant information with other services in a timely way, for example when referring patients to other services.

Staff worked together and with other health and social care professionals to understand and meet the range and complexity of patients' needs and to assess and plan ongoing care and treatment. This included when patients moved between services, including when they were referred, or after they were discharged from hospital. Meetings took place with other health care professionals on a monthly basis when care plans were routinely reviewed and updated for patients with complex needs.

### Consent to care and treatment

Staff sought patients' consent to care and treatment 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, staff carried out assessments of capacity to consent in line with relevant guidance.
- Where a patient's mental capacity to consent to care or treatment was unclear the GP or practice nurse assessed the patient's capacity and, recorded the outcome of the assessment.
- The process for seeking consent was monitored through patient records audits.

### Supporting patients to live healthier lives

The practice identified patients who may be in need of extra support. For example:

- Patients receiving end of life care, carers, those at risk of developing a long-term condition and those requiring advice on their diet, smoking and alcohol cessation. Patients were signposted to the relevant service.
- Smoking cessation services were available at the practice, with patients referred to local support services for specific weight management, exercise and diet support.

The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 82%, which was comparable to the CCG average of 81% and the national average of 82%. There was a policy to offer telephone reminders for patients who did not attend for their cervical screening test. The practice demonstrated how they encouraged uptake of the screening programme by using information in different languages and for those with a learning disability and they ensured a female sample taker was available. The practice also encouraged its patients to attend national screening programmes for bowel and breast cancer screening. There were failsafe systems in place to ensure results were received for all samples sent for the cervical screening programme and the practice followed up women who were referred as a result of abnormal results. Childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given were lower than CCG averages. For example, childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given to under two year olds ranged from 59% to 76% and five year olds from 55% to 78%. Patients had access to appropriate health assessments and checks. These included health checks for new patients and NHS health checks for patients aged 40–74. Appropriate follow-ups for the outcomes of health assessments and checks were made, where abnormalities or risk factors were identified.



# Are services caring?

## Our findings

### Kindness, dignity, respect and compassion

We observed members of staff were courteous and very helpful to patients and treated them with dignity and respect.

- Curtains were provided in consulting rooms to maintain patients' privacy and dignity during examinations, investigations and treatments.
- We noted that consultation and treatment room doors were closed during consultations; 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.

All of the 58 patient Care Quality Commission comment cards we received were positive about the service experienced. Patients said they felt the practice offered an excellent service and staff were helpful, caring and treated them with dignity and respect. We spoke with two members of the patient participation group (PPG). 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 felt they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect. The practice was in line with local and national averages for its satisfaction scores on consultations with GPs and nurses. For example:

- 91% of patients said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the clinical commissioning group (CCG) average of 90% and the national average of 89%.
- 85% of patients said the GP gave them enough time compared to the CCG average of 87% and the national average of 87%.
- 98% of patients said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw compared to the CCG average of 96% and the national average of 95%.
- 79% of patients said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the national average of 85%.

- 85% of patients said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the national average of 91%.
- 77% of patients said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful compared to the CCG average of 86% and the national average of 87%.

### Care planning and involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Patients told us 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 from the comment cards we received was also positive and aligned with these views. We also saw that care plans were personalised. Results from the national GP patient survey showed patients responded positively to questions about their involvement in planning and making decisions about their care and treatment. Results were in line with local and national averages. For example:

- 77% of patients said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 86% and the national average of 86%.
- 76% of patients said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the national average of 82%.
- 80% of patients said the last nurse they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the national average of 85%.

The practice provided facilities to help patients be involved in decisions about their care:

- 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.
- Information leaflets were available in easy read format.

### Patient and carer support to cope emotionally with care and treatment

Patient information leaflets and notices were available in the patient waiting area which told patients how to access a number of support groups and organisations.

## Are services caring?

Information about support groups was also available on the practice website. The practice's computer system alerted GPs if a patient was also a carer. The practice had identified 28 patients as carers (0.7% of the practice list). Written information was available to direct carers to the various avenues of support available to them including

annual health checks at the practice. 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 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 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 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 patients with a learning disability.
- Home visits were available for older patients and patients who had clinical needs which resulted in difficulty attending the practice.
- Same day appointments were available for children and those patients with medical problems that require same day consultation.
- Patients were able to receive travel vaccinations available on the NHS and were referred to other clinics for vaccines available privately.
- There were disabled facilities, a hearing loop and translation services available.
- Other reasonable adjustments were made and action was taken to remove barriers when patients find it hard to use or access services, for example by offering clinical call backs to working patients at times to coincide with work breaks.

### Access to the service

The practice was open between 8.45am and 1.00pm and 3.00pm and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. Morning surgery times are between 8.45am and 1.00pm and afternoon surgery times are between 3.00pm and 6.30pm. The practice also opened on a Tuesday at 2.30pm and a Wednesday at 2.00pm for prebooked clinics. Prebookable appointments during extended hours were available between 6.30pm and 8.30pm on a Monday. In addition to pre-bookable appointments that could be booked up to four 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.

- 72% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the national average of 78%.
- 68% of patients said they could get through easily to the practice by phone compared to the national average of 73%.

People told us on the day of the inspection that they were able to get appointments when they needed them. The practice had a system in place to assess:

- whether a home visit was clinically necessary; and
- the urgency of the need for medical attention.

This involved a GP telephoning the patient or carer in advance to gather information to allow for an informed decision to be made on prioritisation according to clinical need. In cases where the urgency of need was so great that it would be inappropriate for the patient to wait for a GP home visit, alternative emergency care arrangements were made. Clinical and non-clinical staff were aware of their responsibilities when managing requests for home visits.

### 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.
- We saw that information was available to help patients understand the complaints system including posters in the reception area, patient leaflets and information on the practice website.

We looked at two complaints received in the last 12 months and found these were satisfactorily handled, dealt with in a timely way and with openness and transparency. Lessons were learnt from individual concerns and complaints and also from analysis of trends and action was taken as a result to improve the quality of care. For example, the practice had noted from a number of sources, including

## Are services responsive to people's needs? (for example, to feedback?)

complaints, comments and suggestions and friends and family test feedback, that the attitude and conduct of some reception staff, particularly earlier in the mornings, was poor. This prompted the practice to investigate and discuss this with staff. Whilst the majority of comments were

positive, the practice decided to address the negative feedback by having all staff complete a customer service training course. The practice noted a reduction in the number of comments about reception staff attitude and maintained high numbers of positive comments.

# 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 and staff knew and understood the values.
- The practice had a 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.
- An understanding of the performance of the practice was maintained.
- A programme of continuous clinical and internal audit was used to monitor quality and to make improvements.
- There were arrangements for identifying, recording and managing risks, issues and implementing mitigating actions.

### Leadership and culture

On the day of inspection the partners in the practice demonstrated they had the experience, capacity and capability to run the practice and ensure high quality care. They told us they prioritised safe, high quality and compassionate care. Staff told us the partners were approachable and always took the time to listen to all members of staff. The provider was aware of and had systems in place to ensure compliance with the requirements of the duty of candour. (The duty of candour is a set of specific legal requirements that providers of services must follow when things go wrong with care and treatment). This included support training for all staff on

communicating with patients about notifiable safety incidents. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty. The practice had systems in place to ensure that when things went wrong with care and treatment:

- The practice gave affected people reasonable support, truthful information and a verbal and written apology.
- The practice kept written records of verbal interactions as well as written correspondence.

There was a clear leadership structure in place and staff felt supported by management.

- Staff told us the practice held regular team meetings.
- Staff told us there was an open culture within the practice and they had the opportunity to raise any issues at team meetings and felt confident and supported in doing so.
- 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, the public and staff. It proactively sought patients' feedback and engaged patients in the delivery of the service.

- The practice had gathered feedback from patients through the patient participation group (PPG) and through surveys and complaints received. The PPG met regularly, carried out patient surveys and submitted proposals for improvements to the practice management team. For example, after the PPG canvassed patients in the practice waiting room, they proposed to the practice that they introduce a water fountain, an area to keep children occupied and a book swapping service. The practice discussed the proposals and introduced a small bookcase and encouraged people to borrow and donate books, provided a children's area in an appropriate section of the waiting area and in lieu of a water fountain provided bottled water and cups which were available from reception.

# Are services well-led?

Good 

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

- Staff told us they would not hesitate to give feedback and discuss any concerns or issues with colleagues and management and staff told us they felt involved and engaged to improve how the practice was run.