

Allport Medical Centre - H Walton

Quality Report

Allport Medical Centre
43 Bridle Road
Bromborough
Wirral
CH62 6EE
Tel: 0151 328 5630
Website: www.allportsurgery.nhs.uk

Date of inspection visit: 19 July 2016
Date of publication: 26/08/2016

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

Contents

Summary of this inspection

	Page
Overall summary	2
The five questions we ask and what we found	4
The six population groups and what we found	7
What people who use the service say	11
Areas for improvement	11

Detailed findings from this inspection

Our inspection team	12
Background to Allport Medical Centre - H Walton	12
Why we carried out this inspection	12
How we carried out this inspection	12
Detailed findings	14

Overall summary

Letter from the Chief Inspector of General Practice

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at Allport Medical Centre - H Walton on 19 July 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. Safety alerts were received and acted upon.
- 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.
- Staff had been trained to deal with medical emergencies and emergency medicines and equipment were available.
- Infection control procedures were in place.
- 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 could make appointments easily and urgent appointments were available the same day for all children and those patients who needed them.
- The practice had good facilities and was well equipped to treat patients and meet their needs.
- There was a clear approach to working with others to improve care outcomes with a clear strategy and objectives including engaging with other key partners in providing health services.
- There was a clear leadership structure and staff were well supported by management. The practice proactively sought feedback from staff and patients, which it acted on with evident improvements for patients and staff.

Summary of findings

- There was a high level of staff satisfaction with staff having worked there for long periods of time and low staff turnover rates. Staff were supervised, felt involved and worked as a team. Staff were proud of the practice and enjoyed working there.
- The provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the duty of candour.
- Review the system for documenting and sharing the assessments of the safety of temperature sensitive medicines in fridges.
- Review the system in place to log and account for prescription pads.

Professor Steve Field (CBE FRCP FFPH FRCGP)
Chief Inspector of General Practice

There were areas of practice where the provider should make improvements:

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.
- The process for assessing the safety of temperature sensitive medicines in fridges lacked full documented evidence and resulting evidence was not shared practice wide. Some prescription pads were not logged into the system for security of prescriptions.
- 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 at or above average compared to the national average.
- 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 around average and higher than others for several aspects of care. For example, 91% of respondents to the survey said the last GP they saw or spoke to was good at treating them

Good



Summary of findings

with care and concern (compared to a national average of 85%) and 96% said the last nurse they saw or spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern (compared to a national average of 90%).

- 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.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is rated as good for providing responsive services.

- The practice 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. For example in care pathways, dementia and elderly care and the care of those at risk of unplanned admissions to hospital.
- Patients said they had no problems making appointments and urgent appointments were available the same day for all children and those patients who needed them.
- The practice had reviewed appointment times to improve waiting times and these were kept to a minimum.
- 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 approach to working with others, such as other GP practices and the CCG, to improve care outcomes with a clear strategy and objectives including engaging with other key partners in providing health services.
- There was a clear leadership structure and staff were well supported by management.

Good



Summary of findings

- There was a high level of staff satisfaction with staff having worked there for long periods of time and low staff turnover rates. Staff were supervised, felt involved and worked as a team. Staff were proud of the practice, the service it provided to patients and they enjoyed working there.
- The practice had a number of policies and procedures to govern activity which were reviewed and revised regularly and when needed. They held a variety of regular meetings which included governance issues as an agenda item.
- There was a robust governance framework which 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.

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.

The practice had an elderly population around the national and local clinical commissioning group (CCG) average number of elderly patients with 32% over the age of 65. 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 avoiding unplanned hospital admissions, dementia, and end of life care.
- The practice was responsive to the needs of older people, and offered home visits, longer appointments and urgent appointments for those with enhanced needs.
- Nationally reported data showed that outcomes for patients for conditions commonly found in older people were good. For example the percentage of patients with hypertension in whom the last blood pressure reading was 150/90mmHg or less was 89% and higher than the CCG and national average. Whilst the percentage of patients with atrial fibrillation treated with anticoagulation or anti platelet therapy was 95% and around the CCG and national average.
- All the older patients had a named GP who coordinated their care and contacted patients over 75 following discharge from an unplanned hospital admission.

The practice had a GP lead for elderly care who liaised with the local elderly care network in caring for patients.

Good



People with long term conditions

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

- Nursing staff and GPs had lead roles in chronic disease management and patients at risk of hospital admission were identified as a priority.
- Performance indicators for patients with long term conditions were around or above the CCG and National average. For example:

Good



Summary of findings

The percentage of patients on the diabetes register, in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the last 12 months) was 140/80mmHg or less was 81%. The CCG average was 80% and the national average was 78%.

The percentage of patients with asthma, on the register, who have had an asthma review in the preceding 12 months that includes an assessment of asthma control using the three RCP questions was 78% (compared to the CCG average of 74% and national average of 75%).

- Longer appointments and home visits were available when needed for patients with long term conditions and multiple conditions.
- All these patients had a structured annual review to check their health and medicines needs were being met.
- 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.
- Medical records for vulnerable patients with long term conditions were highlighted so that all staff knew their needs and arranged appointments and care accordingly.

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 good for all standard childhood immunisations with immunisations uptake for all children aged five and under around 98%.
- 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.
- Unwell children were always offered same day/urgent appointments.
- The percentage of women aged 25-64 whose notes recorded that a cervical screening test had been performed in the preceding five years was around the national average at 81%. (CCG average – 81%, national average – 82%).
- Appointments were available outside of school hours.
- We saw positive examples of joint working with midwives, health visitors and school nurses.

Good



Summary of findings

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.
- For example, it offered online bookings of appointments and prescription requests and offered evening appointments and telephone consultations. Appointments could be pre booked or booked on the day and emergency appointments were also available daily for those in need and all children.
- The practice offered a full range of health promotion and screening that reflected the needs for this age group for example NHS health checks for those aged 40 to 75 years old.

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, those with substance or alcohol misuse and those with a learning disability.
- The practice promoted “No Barriers” to accessing GP services and people were able to register without fear of stigma or prejudice.
- 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.

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).

Good



Summary of findings

- 96% of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses had a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the preceding 12 months which was above the national average of 88% and CCG average of 91%.
- 88% of patients diagnosed with dementia had their care reviewed in a face to face meeting in the last 12 months which is above the national average of 84%.
- 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 and could signpost to relevant specialist services.
- 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 and for those who did not attend appointments.
- Staff had a good understanding of how to support patients with mental health needs and dementia. Longer appointments were offered to those patients with poor mental health.

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. 279 survey forms were distributed and 101 were returned (a 36.2% response rate). This represented 2% of the practice's patient list. Results showed, for example;

- 80% of patients found it easy to get through to this practice by phone compared to the national average of 73%.
- 82% of patients were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried compared to the national average of 76%.
- 97% of patients described the overall experience of this GP practice as very good, good or fairly good compared to the national average of 85%.
- 93% of patients said they would recommend this GP practice to someone who has just moved to the local area compared to 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 19 comment cards which were all positive about the standard of care received. Comments told us

patients found they received a very good service in all aspects of care, good access to appointments, staff who were responsive to their needs, helpful, kind and professional.

We spoke to eight patients via the telephone just prior to the inspection. All said they were satisfied with the care they received. They found staff were approachable, committed and caring. Some commented that staff go out of their way to care and go above and beyond their roles.

The practice took into account comments from the Friends and Family Test (FFT). For the year 2015/2016, 100% of the responses were positive (with patients saying they were extremely likely or likely to recommend the practice). (The NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) was created to help service providers and commissioners understand whether their patients are happy with the service provided, or where improvements are needed. It is a quick and anonymous way for patients to give views after receiving care or treatment across the NHS).

The practice undertook their own internal satisfaction survey annually (called the Speedy Survey). Results showed that patients were satisfied with the service provided with comments including staff being friendly, helpful, supportive and caring.

Areas for improvement

Action the service SHOULD take to improve

- Review the system for documenting and sharing the assessments of the safety of temperature sensitive medicines in fridges.
- Review the system in place to log and account for prescription pads.

Allport Medical Centre - H Walton

Detailed findings

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by:

A CQC Lead Inspector. The team included a GP specialist adviser and an Expert by Experience. (Experts by Experience are members of the inspection team who have received care and experienced treatments from a similar service).

Background to Allport Medical Centre - H Walton

Allport Medical Centre - H Walton is registered with the Care Quality Commission to provide primary care services. The practice provides GP services for approximately 4,400 patients living in Wirral and is situated in a purpose built medical centre. The practice has two female GPs, one male GP, an advanced nurse practitioner, healthcare assistant, administration and reception staff and a practice management team. It is a training practice and occasionally has GP trainees working at the practice. Allport Medical Centre - H Walton holds a General Medical Services (GMS) contract with NHS England.

The practice is open Monday – Thursday 8.15am – 7pm, Friday 8.15am – 6.30pm.

Appointments for GPs start at 9am and nurses at 8.30am, with the last appointments at 6.50pm excluding Friday (6.20pm).

Patients can book appointments in person, via the telephone or online. The practice provides telephone

consultations, pre-bookable consultations, urgent consultations and home visits. The practice treats patients of all ages and provides a range of primary medical services.

The practice is part of Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and is situated in a more affluent area of the Wirral. The practice population is made up of around national average population groups with 42% of the population under 18 years old and 32% of the population aged over 65 years old. Fifty six percent of the patient population has a long standing health condition and there is lower than the national and CCG average number of unemployed patients. Life expectancy for both males and females is higher than the CCG and national average.

The practice does not provide out of hours services. When the surgery is closed patients are directed to the Wirral GP out of hour's service (via NHS 111). Information regarding out of hours services was displayed on the website and in the practice information leaflet.

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.

Detailed findings

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 19 July 2016. During our visit we:

- Spoke with a range of staff (GPs, practice nurse, healthcare assistant, reception and administration staff and the practice management team) and spoke with patients who used the service and PPG members prior to the inspection via the telephone.
- Explored how the GPs made clinical decisions.
- Observed how staff interacted with patients face to face and when speaking with people on the telephone.
- Reviewed CQC comment cards which included feedback from patients about their experiences of the service.
- Looked at the systems in place for the running of the service.
- Viewed a sample of key policies and procedures.

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 and partners of any incidents and there was a recording form available on the practice's computer system. The incident recording form 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 verbal and sometimes 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 the significant events including reviewing them annually to identify themes and trends.

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, new procedures were implemented for checking immunisations were returned to the fridge after use and not left out and procedures for contacting vulnerable adults to remind them of follow up appointments.

Patient safety alerts were received by relevant staff and we saw evidence of action taken where relevant, for example review and revision of the policy for prioritisation of home visit requests.

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 up to date and included recent national guidance and policy requirements. Policies were

accessible to all staff and what to do in the event of concerns flowcharts were displayed in clinical and non-clinical areas for reference. The policies clearly outlined who to contact for further guidance if staff had concerns about a patient's welfare. There were clinical leads for both adult and child safeguarding. The GPs attended safeguarding meetings when possible and always provided reports where necessary for other agencies. Staff demonstrated they understood their responsibilities and had received training on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults relevant to their role. GPs were trained to child protection or child safeguarding level 3. Clinical staff, such as nurses, were trained to level 2 and non-clinical staff 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).
- We observed the premises to be clean and tidy. Cleaning schedules were in place and monitored. The advanced nurse practitioner 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. We saw evidence of an infection control audit having been undertaken this year with identified areas for improvement. We did not see evidence of a plan to re-audit in order to demonstrate improvements had been made.
- One of the medicines fridge recordings showed that on some occasions the temperature had read outside of the normal operating range for medicine storage. Staff monitoring the fridges had followed protocol and were aware of the reasons for the slight increase in temperature (during vaccination/immunisation clinics where the fridges were opened and closed frequently). They were aware that the risk to the efficacy of the temperature sensitive medicines was low and aware of advice from the Public Health medicines management team that there was a low risk in these circumstances. We were shown some documented evidence to demonstrate when the temperatures were checked,

Are services safe?

risks had been assessed and reasoning for the fridge thermometers showing out of the range temperatures was recorded. However this evidence had not been fully shared in order for all staff and management to be assured there was no risk of breach of the cold chain.

- The arrangements for managing medicines, including emergency medicines, 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. Blank prescription forms and pads were securely stored and there were systems in place to monitor their use, however we found that a supply of blank hand written prescription pads had not been logged in to storage in order to account for them. The practice told us they would immediately rectify this. One of the nurses had qualified as an independent prescriber and could therefore prescribe medicines for specific clinical conditions. They received mentorship and support from the medical staff for this extended role. Patient Group Directions had been adopted by the practice to allow nurses to administer medicines in line with legislation. The health care assistant was trained to administer vaccines and medicines against a patient specific prescription or direction from a prescriber.
- We reviewed five staff 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.
- Patient records were stored securely in fire retardant containers and in a locked room.

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 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 calibrated and 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 general environmental, control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) 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 all the different staffing groups to ensure enough staff were on duty. The GPs operated a buddy system to ensure appropriate cover and the practice regularly monitored staffing levels to ensure they met the needs of patients.

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 and panic button alarms which alerted staff to any emergency.
- All staff received annual basic life support training and there were emergency medicines available in the office and treatment rooms.
- 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 showed the practice had achieved 96.8% of the total number of points available. Exception reporting was around average. (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).

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 above and similar to the national average. For example:

The percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) was 140/80 mmHg or less was 81% compared to the national average of 78%.

The percentage of patients on the diabetes register, with a record of a foot examination and risk classification within the preceding 12 months was 83% compared to the national average of 88%.

- Performance for mental health related indicators was better than the national average. For example:

96% of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses had a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the record, in the preceding 12 months (01/04/2014 to 31/03/2015), national average 88%.

The percentage of patients diagnosed with dementia whose care had been reviewed in a face to face review in the preceding 12 months was 88% compared to the national average of 84%.

There was evidence of quality improvement including clinical audit.

- The practice did not have an audit timetable, however clinical audits were undertaken according to national and local priorities/guidelines and included re auditing of annual audits which demonstrated improvements and clinical outcomes. Following the inspection the practice developed and showed us an audit programme they were implementing for the year.
- There had been a number of clinical audits completed in the last two years; most of these were completed audits where the improvements made were implemented and monitored. Examples of audits seen included urinary tract treatment audit, treatment of atrial fibrillation and sedative prescribing audits.
- Improvements in practice were seen as a result of audits undertaken, for example in the prescribing of anticoagulation for the treatment of atrial fibrillation.
- Findings were used by the practice to improve services. For example, recent action taken as a result included new systems for the monitoring of prescribing by all doctors to ensure guidelines were adhered to.

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 and included a period of supervision/mentorship. An employee handbook was also available for staff and included policies and procedures.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

- 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 and diabetes care.
- 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 and took cervical smears could demonstrate how they stayed up to date for example by access to on line resources, face to face training and discussion at 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. Staff received an appraisal annually.
- 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, protected learning time and in-house face to face 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 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 or six weekly basis when care plans were routinely reviewed and updated for patients with complex needs.

A team approach was adopted in the practice for caring for patients with a terminal illness at the end stage of their life, for example six weekly multi-disciplinary meetings took place involving the district nurses, palliative care nurses, and community matron where required updates and information was shared with all professionals. There was a lead GP for palliative care at the practice and systems were in place to liaise with the out of hours GP service provider.

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.

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. The practice was able to signpost patients to local support groups for example, smoking cessation and weight management.

The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 75%, which was above the CCG average of 73% and the national average of 74%. There was a policy to offer written reminders for patients who did not attend for their cervical screening test and the practice encouraged uptake by ensuring a female sample taker was available. 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.

The practice also encouraged its patients to attend national screening programmes for bowel and breast cancer screening. Bowel and breast cancer screening rates were above the national and CCG average with persons

Are services effective? (for example, treatment is effective)

(aged 60-69) screened for bowel cancer in the last 30 months at 61% (national average 58%, CCG average 56%) and females (aged 50-70) screened for breast cancer in the last 36 months at 73% (national and CCG average 72%).

Childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given were good when compared to CCG/national averages. For example, childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given to under two year olds were at 98% and five year olds were also at 98%.

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 19 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, polite, caring and treated them with dignity and respect.

We spoke with eight patients including 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 above average for its satisfaction scores on consultations with GPs and nurses. For example:

- 95% of patients said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) average of 92% and the national average of 89%.
- 97% of patients said the GP gave them enough time compared to the CCG average of 91% and the national average of 87%.
- 99% of patients said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw compared to the CCG average of 97% and the national average of 95%.

- 91% of patients said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the CCG average of 90% and the national average of 85%.
- 96% of patients said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the CCG average of 92% and the national average of 91%.
- 92% of patients said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful compared to the CCG average of 91% and the national average of 87%.

Care planning and involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Patients told us they felt involved in making decisions 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 higher than local and national averages. For example:

- 96% of patients said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 90% and the national average of 86%.
- 92% of patients said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the CCG average of 87% and the national average of 82%.
- 97% of patients said the last nurse they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the CCG average of 88% and 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.

Are services caring?

- Various information leaflets were available and available in easy read format.
- A lift to all consultation rooms and disabled accessible toilet facilities were available.

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. 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 50 patients as carers (1.1% of the practice list). Written information was available to direct carers to the various avenues of support available to them.

Staff told us that if families had suffered bereavement, their usual GP contacted them by telephone. 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 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 in order to help reduce avoidable unplanned admissions to hospital the practice was taking part in an enhanced service. Their focus was on reducing admissions by improving services particularly those patients who were the most vulnerable or those with long term conditions. In order to do this the practice had identified patients who were at high risk of unplanned admissions by using a risk stratification tool. They had personalised care plans which were completed by the named GP with the patient face to face or over the telephone. Care plans were reviewed at regular intervals and any admissions were flagged up for review. Other examples showing how the practice had responded to meetings patients' needs were as follows:

- The practice offered extended hours access to nurse and doctor appointments four days per week (from 6.30pm – 7pm) 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 as well as those available privately.
- There were disabled facilities, a hearing loop and translation services available.
- The practice offered a full range of online access such as appointment booking, prescription requests and online queries.

Access to the service

The practice was open Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 7pm and Fridays until 6.30pm

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 around and above local and national averages.

- 85% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the CCG average of 85% and the national average of 78%.
- 80% of patients said they could get through easily to the practice by phone compared to the CCG average of 79% and the national average of 73%.

People we spoke to told us that they were able to get appointments when they needed them.

The practice had a recently reviewed (in light of recent national guidelines) system in place to assess whether a home visit was clinically necessary; and the urgency of the need for medical attention. These assessments were done through a telephone triage system. 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 for example a specific complaint information leaflet and information on the website.

The practice had not received any formal written complaints in the last 12 months; however they recorded informal and verbal complaints and investigated these. We found these had been dealt with in a timely way and with openness and transparency. Lessons were learnt from individual concerns and complaints and also from an analysis of trends and action was taken to as a result to improve the quality of care. For example, patients were informed if the GP was running late with their appointments.

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, values and vision based on a strong team working approach.
- They had business plans and strategies to improve and develop services to meet the increasing needs of the population.
- Staff were aware of the vision and values that were promoted at the practice.

There was a clear approach to working with others in the healthcare community (such as the CCG and other GP practices) to improve outcomes for patients. The practice had a clear strategy and objectives which included engaging with other key partners in providing health services.

There was evidence of working with local GP practices to enhance and extend services for example; in the areas of health promotion and ill health prevention and better integration and effective proactive use of the multidisciplinary team. The practice played an active part in the developing Primary Care Wirral Federation of GP practices

The practice management worked as part of the local health economy strategy team in developing new ideas and innovative ways of working in order to improve outcomes for patients in the Wirral. For example, the practice trialled a direct access physiotherapy clinic (in collaboration with the community trust). This meant that patients could access physiotherapy appointments as an alternative to a GP appointment. The trial was successful and led to improved outcomes for those patients benefitting from the system.

Governance arrangements

The practice had a robust 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 with clinical staff taking lead roles

- Staff were aware of their own roles and responsibilities.
- Practice specific policies were up to date, implemented and all staff were familiar with them and used.
- A comprehensive 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 in place for identifying, recording and managing risks.

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 and compassionate care. Staff told us the partners were approachable and always took the time to listen to all members of staff. They were encouraged and felt able to contribute to the practice, improvements to service and service developments.

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 were well supported by management.

- The practice held regular documented team, clinical and business meetings.
- There was an evident open culture within the practice and staff had the opportunity to raise any issues at appraisals and meetings. Management had an open door policy where staff were welcomed to raise any issues at any time.

Are services well-led?

Good 

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

- Staff were respected, valued and supported, particularly by the partners and management 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.
- Staff had worked at the practice for long periods of time with a low staff turnover rate. Staff told us they were happy and proud to work at the practice and believed they were part of an innovative, hardworking team that put patients' well-being and needs at the forefront of the service.

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 active patient participation group (PPG), through a variety of surveys (both internal and external) and complaints received. The PPG were valued and worked well with the practice. They met regularly, carried out patient surveys, reviewed patient feedback and suggested improvements to the practice management team which were acted on. For example, review and changes were made to an internal door following comments by patients and feedback through the PPG.
- Improvements had been made to the appointment system following analysis of the national GP patient survey. Appointments were altered to 15 minutes and longer for those in need.

- The practice had gathered feedback from staff 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.

Continuous improvement

There was a 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 working with the CCG to improve patient pathways, forward planning to improve services by increasing facilities, promoting better health and health education for patients.

The practice showed us their business plans and objectives for this year and previous years. Objectives were monitored and we saw evidence of achievement year on year. For example, there was a practice target for 2015/2016 to improve prevalence and accuracy of patient registers for atrial fibrillation, heart failure and osteoporosis. The increase of prevalence was achieved and indicated an improvement in care outcomes for those patient groups. These demonstrated sustained achievements over the years with governance and performance management arrangements being proactively reviewed and revised to take account of best practice models and to improve outcomes for patients. Future plans included developments such as looking at a new telephone provider to include extra lines to improve patient access and reviewing staffing needs to assess potential for improved and additional services.