

# Highfield ENT Clinic

## Inspection report

Highfield Hospital, Highfield Road  
Widnes  
WA8 7DJ  
Tel: 01515115732

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November 2021  
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This report describes our judgement of the quality of care at this service. It is based on a combination of what we found when we inspected, information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and information given to us from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

### Ratings

#### Overall rating for this location

Good 

Are services safe?

Good 

Are services effective?

Good 

Are services caring?

Good 

Are services responsive to people's needs?

Good 

Are services well-led?

Good 

# Overall summary

**This service is rated as Good overall.**

The key questions are rated as:

Are services safe? – Good

Are services effective? – Requires improvement

Are services caring? – Good

Are services responsive? – Good

Are services well-led? – Good

We carried out an announced focused inspection at Highfield ENT Clinic as part of our inspection programme to follow up on breaches of regulations. The key question we inspected was:

Effective.

CQC inspected the service on 4 March 2019 and asked the provider to make improvements regarding Regulation 11 HSCA (RA) Regulations 2014 Need for consent. We checked this area as part of this focused inspection and found this had been resolved.

Highfield ENT Clinic is operated by Widnes Highfield Health Ltd. The service holds a contract with Warrington and Halton NHS Trust to provide an ear, nose and throat service. This service is delivered by hospital consultants and a specialist ear care nurse. The clinic provides the service to children from two years of age and adults who are registered with a Halton GP Practice.

This service is registered with CQC under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 in respect of some, but not all, of the services it provides. There are some exemptions from regulation by CQC which relate to particular types of regulated activities and services and these are set out in Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. Highfield ENT Clinic provides a range services and treatments, for example ear wax removal, hearing aid tests and electrocardiogram (ECG) which are not within CQC scope of registration. Therefore, we did not inspect or report on these services.

Dr Paul Lawrence is the registered manager. A registered manager is a person who is registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

## **Our key findings were:**

- The provider had addressed the breach of regulation 11: consent. Consent was monitored through audit and appropriate actions were taken.
- The provider had made improvements to policies for complaints, duty of candour and safeguarding to meet legislation.

# Overall summary

The areas where the provider **should** make improvements are:

- Review the level of safeguarding children training undertaken by nursing staff as detailed in the Intercollegiate Document @Safeguarding Children and Young People : Roles for Healthcare Staff.

**Dr Rosie Benneyworth BM BS BMedSci MRCGP**

Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care

## Our inspection team

The inspection was led by a CQC inspector who had access to advice from a specialist advisor.

## Background to Highfield ENT Clinic

Highfield ENT Clinic works in partnership with Warrington and Halton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to bring hospital services closer to the patients home. These services include specialist ear care nursing, free NHS hearing aid test, ear wax removal, micro-suction, management of mastoid cavity, treatment of outer and middle ear infections, removal of foreign body in the ear canal and perforated eardrum.

The service is registered at:

Highfield Hospital

Highfield Road

Widnes

Cheshire

WA8 7DL

The clinic is set back off a main road with a large car park with wheelchair access. The team consists of a registered manager, lead operations director, operations manager, two ENT consultants, an ear care nurse specialist, audiologist, health care assistant and administration team. Highfield ENT Clinic is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide the following regulated activities:

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

The clinic is open:

Monday 09:30 – 17:30

Tuesday 12:30 – 20:00

Wednesday 09:30 – 17:30

Thursday 09:30 – 17:30

Friday 09:30 – 17:30

# Are services safe?

We did not inspect this area as part of our focused inspection.

# Are services effective?

## **We rated effective as Good because:**

We found that this service was providing effective care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

### **Effective needs assessment, care and treatment**

#### **The provider had systems to keep clinicians up to date with current evidence based practice. We saw evidence that clinicians assessed needs and delivered care and treatment in line with current legislation, standards and guidance (relevant to their service)**

- Clinicians followed UK guidelines and worked in line with the local hospital processes and procedures.
- Patients' immediate and ongoing needs were fully assessed. Where appropriate this included their clinical needs and their mental and physical wellbeing.
- Clinicians had enough information to treat and discharge patients for ear, nose and throat procedures referred by Halton General Practices.
- Arrangements were in place to deal with repeat patients. For example, patients who may require procedures completed at the local hospital. The patient had their procedure with a general anaesthetic at hospital and would attend the clinic for post operative assessment.
- Staff assessed and managed patients' pain where appropriate. Patients were offered anaesthetic spray for nasal suction procedures if required.
- The service used technology/equipment to improve treatment. The service had up to date equipment and had direct electronic records links with Halton GP services through a data sharing agreement. Prescriptions were sent electronically to the GP if required usually on the same day.

### **Monitoring care and treatment**

#### **The service was actively involved in quality improvement activity.**

- The service used information about care and treatment to make improvements. Audits were completed by the local hospital as part of the governance arrangements which the service paid a fee for. For example, the service benchmarked against the local hospital service. The number of procedures and types of procedures were compared. The service made improvements through the use of completed audits. Clinical audit had a positive impact on quality of care and outcomes for patients.
- At the time of the inspection not all services were operating fully and there was no back log of appointments.

### **Effective staffing**

#### **Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles.**

- All staff were appropriately qualified. The provider had an induction programme for all newly appointed staff. However, nursing staff had not completed the required level of safeguarding children training as per the latest Intercollegiate Guidance.
- Relevant professionals were registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) / Nursing and Midwifery Council and were up to date with revalidation
- The provider understood the learning needs of staff and provided protected time and training to meet them. Up to date records of skills, qualifications and training were maintained. Staff were encouraged and given opportunities to develop.

# Are services effective?

## Coordinating patient care and information sharing

### Staff worked together, and worked well with other organisations, to deliver effective care and treatment.

- Patients received coordinated and person-centred care. Staff referred to, and communicated effectively with, other services when appropriate. For example, if the patient required a prescription, the request was sent same day electronically to the patients GP to issue.
- Before providing treatment, staff at the service ensured they had adequate knowledge of the patient's health, any relevant test results and their medicines history.
- The clinic provided NHS services in the community and patients information was shared through a data sharing agreement. The clinic accessed patient GP records to review the relevant information needed and issue prescriptions when necessary.
- Care and treatment for patients in vulnerable circumstances was coordinated with other services.

## Supporting patients to live healthier lives

### Staff were consistent and proactive in empowering patients, and supporting them to manage their own health and maximise their independence.

- Risk factors were identified, highlighted to patients and where appropriate highlighted to their normal care provider for additional support. The clinic had a collaboration with the local health improvement team and signposted patients when needed.
- Where patients' needs could not be met by the service, staff redirected them to the appropriate service for their needs. For example, general anaesthetic procedures were referred to the local hospital.

## Consent to care and treatment

### The service obtained consent to care and treatment in line with legislation and guidance.

- Staff understood the requirements of legislation and guidance when considering consent and decision making.
- Staff supported patients to make decisions. Where appropriate, they assessed and recorded a patient's mental capacity to make a decision.
- The service monitored the process for seeking consent appropriately.

# Are services caring?

We did not inspect this area as part of our focused inspection.



# Are services responsive to people's needs?

We did not inspect this area as part of our focused inspection.

# Are services well-led?

We did not inspect this area as part of our focused inspection.