

SELDOC Base - Dulwich Community Hospital

Inspection report

Dulwich Community Hospital
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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?

Good 

Are services well-led?

Good 

Overall summary

The location was last inspected on 20 January 2015. At that inspection the location was rated as good overall and in all of the key question areas.

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at SELDOC Base – Dulwich Community Hospital on Wednesday 26 February 2020. We undertook the inspection as it was five years since the location had received a comprehensive inspection. **This service is rated as Good overall.**

The key questions are rated as:

Are services safe? – Good

Are services effective? – Good

Are services caring? – Good

Are services responsive? – Good

Are services well-led? – Good

At this inspection we found:

- The service had good systems to manage risk so that safety incidents were less likely to happen. When they did happen, the service learned from them and improved their processes.

- The service routinely reviewed the effectiveness and appropriateness of the care it provided. It ensured that care and treatment was delivered according to evidence-based guidelines.
- Staff involved and treated people with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect.
- Patients were able to access care and treatment from the service within an appropriate timescale for their needs.
- There was a strong focus on continuous learning and improvement at all levels of the organisation.

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

- The service should undertake disease specific audits as well as the clinician specific audits that are currently in place.
- The service should review training so that reception staff at the Dulwich site and drivers have received the correct level of training for their role.
- The service should work with the local 111 service to review the allocation of patients to the home visiting service.

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Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by a CQC lead inspector. The team included a GP specialist adviser.

Background to SELDOC Base - Dulwich Community Hospital

SELDOC Base – Dulwich Hospital is the base hub for the out of hours service for the South East London boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. The provider is SELDOC who have responsibility for two out of hours services in London, and they are a GP co-operative within this region who are directly contracted to provide out of hours care at two hubs, and home visiting services. SELDOC head office houses all of the senior and non-patient facing staff for both services, and service specific staff are based in two sites, one in Dulwich, the other in Lewisham.

The corporate headquarters for the service is at Hanover House, 78 Coombe Road, Kingston-Upon-Thames, Surrey, KT2 7AZ. The first of the two hubs is based at Dulwich Community Hospital, East Dulwich Grove, London, SE22 8PT. This service is the larger of the two hubs and has five consulting rooms which are utilised by a variety of medical professionals, although a general practitioner is always on site. The home visiting service is based at this hub. The second hub is based at Urgent Care Centre,

University Hospital Lewisham, Lewisham High Street, London, SE13 6LH. At this site there is only one room, and this service is staffed by general practitioners only. The service utilises reception staff from the hospital run urgent care centre.

The service covers a large urban area, with large populations of both high and low deprivation. The populations of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham include a large number of different nationalities and there are substantial populations of patients from ethnic minorities.

The service manages between 1,400 and 1,800 face to face consultations at the two hubs and between 500 and 600 home visits per calendar month depending on the time of year.

The service is registered with the CQC to provide the regulated activities of Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely and Treatment of disease, disorder or injury.

Are services safe?

We rated the service as good for providing safe services.

Safety systems and processes

The service had clear systems to keep people safe and safeguarded from abuse.

- The provider conducted safety risk assessments. It had safety policies, including Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and Health & Safety policies, which were regularly reviewed and communicated to staff. Staff received safety information from the provider as part of their induction and refresher training. The provider had systems to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from abuse. Policies were regularly reviewed and were accessible to all staff. They outlined clearly who to go to for further guidance.
- The service worked with other agencies to support patients and protect them from neglect and abuse. Staff took steps to protect patients from abuse, neglect, harassment, discrimination and breaches of their dignity and respect.
- The provider carried out staff checks at the time of recruitment and on an ongoing basis where appropriate. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks were undertaken where required. (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).
- All staff received up-to-date safeguarding and safety training and for most staff it was appropriate to their role. However, receptionists at Dulwich and drivers who had patient facing roles were trained to child safeguarding level 1 only, not level 2 as is recommended in the latest guidance. However, staff knew how to identify and report concerns. Staff who acted as chaperones were trained for the role and had received a DBS check.
- There was an effective system to manage infection prevention and control.
- The provider ensured that facilities and equipment were safe and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions. This included all equipment use at the hubs and on home visits.
- There were systems in place to ensure the safety of the out of hours vehicles operated from the Dulwich site. The service used a comprehensive checklist which was

undertaken by the driver at the beginning of each shift. Records were kept of MOT and servicing requirements. We checked the vehicles and found that they were clean, tidy and appeared to be in good working condition.

- There were systems for safely managing healthcare waste.

Risks to patients

There were systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety.

- There were arrangements for planning and monitoring the number and mix of staff needed. Where staffing was unavailable, systems were in place to ensure that staff could be transferred from site to site, and if staffing at Lewisham was not available they could ensure that patients were transferred to Dulwich only. There was an effective system in place for dealing with surges in demand.
- There was an effective induction system for bank staff tailored to their role. Clinical staff could only work at the site if they had undertaken bank staff onboarding, the process by which staff are inducted and receive training about the provider's policies and processes.
- Staff understood their responsibilities to manage emergencies and to recognise those in need of urgent medical attention. They knew how to identify and manage patients with severe infections, for example sepsis. The Medical Director had provided sepsis training to non-clinical staff. In line with available guidance, patients were prioritised appropriately for care and treatment, in accordance with their clinical need. Systems were in place to manage people who experienced long waits.
- Staff told patients when to seek further help. They advised patients what to do if their condition got worse.
- When there were changes to services or staff the service assessed and monitored the impact on safety.

Information to deliver safe care and treatment

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

- Individual care records were written and managed in a way that kept patients safe. The care records we saw showed that information needed to deliver safe care and treatment was available to relevant staff in an accessible way.

Are services safe?

- The service had systems for sharing information with staff and other agencies to enable them to deliver safe care and treatment.
- Clinicians made appropriate and timely referrals in line with protocols and up to date evidence-based guidance.

Appropriate and safe use of medicines

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

- The systems and arrangements for managing medicines, including medical gases, emergency medicines and equipment, and controlled drugs and vaccines, minimised risks. The service kept prescription stationery securely and monitored its use. Arrangements were also in place to ensure medicines and medical gas cylinders carried in vehicles were stored appropriately.
- The service carried out regular medicines audits to ensure prescribing was in line with best practice guidelines for safe prescribing.
- Medicines were kept in cassettes which were sealed at the point of packaging. A third-party provider monitored use of the cassettes and changed them on a weekly basis or as required. Cassettes carried an appropriate range of medicines based on the needs of patients using the service. Additional medicines were accessed through local pharmacies by patients if required.
- Staff prescribed, administered or supplied medicines to patients and gave advice on medicines in line with legal requirements and current national guidance. The service had audited antimicrobial prescribing. There was evidence of actions taken to support good antimicrobial stewardship.
- Patients' health was monitored in relation to the use of medicines and was followed up with the patient's own GP or other
- Palliative care patients were able to receive prompt access to pain relief and other medication required to control their symptoms.

Track record on safety

The service had a good safety record.

- There were comprehensive risk assessments in relation to safety issues. A corporate risk register was maintained which was discussed at regular meetings and were removed or downgraded as risks were mitigated.
- The service monitored and reviewed activity. This helped it to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture that led to safety improvements.
- There was a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts.
- Joint reviews of incidents were carried out with partner organisations, including the local 111 provider.

Lessons learned and improvements made

The service learned and made improvements when things went wrong.

- There was a system for recording and acting on significant events and incidents. Staff understood their duty to raise concerns and report incidents and near misses. Leaders and managers supported them when they did so. The service had not recorded a large number of significant events, but they regularly discussed this with staff as part of their overall risk strategy.
- There were adequate systems for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong. The service learned and shared lessons, identified themes and took action to improve safety in the service.
- The service learned from external safety events and patient safety alerts. The service had an effective mechanism in place to disseminate alerts to all members of the team including sessional and agency staff.
- The provider took part in end to end reviews with other organisations. Learning was used to make improvements to the service. This included reviews with the local 111 provider.

Are services effective?

We rated the service as good for providing effective services.

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 supported by clear clinical pathways and protocols.

- Clinical staff had access to guidelines from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and used this information to help ensure that people's needs were met. The provider monitored that these guidelines were followed.
- Patients' needs were fully assessed. This included their clinical needs and their mental and physical wellbeing.
- Care and treatment was delivered in a coordinated way which took into account the needs of those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- We saw no evidence of discrimination when making care and treatment decisions.
- Staff assessed and managed patients' pain where appropriate.

Monitoring care and treatment

The service had a comprehensive programme of quality improvement activity and routinely received the effectiveness and appropriateness of the care provided. Where appropriate clinicians took part in local and national improvement initiatives

- Providers of out-of-hours services were required to comply with the National Quality Requirements (NQR) for out-of-hours providers. The NQR are used to show the service is safe, clinically effective and responsive. Providers are required to report monthly to their clinical commissioning group (CCG) on their performance against the standards which includes: audits; response times to phone calls: whether telephone and face to face assessments happened within the required timescales: seeking patient feedback: and, actions taken to improve quality.
- Patients who were referred to the out of hours hubs urgently by the 111 service were seen within two hours of being referred more than 97% of the time in each of the last six months.

- Patients who were referred to the out of hours hubs routinely were seen within six hours of being referred more than 99% of the time in each of the last six months.
- Patients who were referred for a home visit urgently were seen within two hours of being referred between 82% and 88% of the time in each of the last six months. Although this was slightly below the 90% rate required by the NQRs, the service had seen a significant increase in the number of such referrals in the last year from approximately 30% of all referrals to 60%. The service was working with the local 111 service to understand why this might be the case and had been increasing the number of available clinicians where possible.
- Patients who were referred for a home visit routinely were seen within six hours of being referred more than 91% of the time in all but one of the last six months. Again, although this was slightly below the rate required by the NQRs, the increase in urgent referrals had impacted on time for routine referrals.
- The service made improvements through the use of completed audits. There was clear evidence of action to resolve concerns and improve quality. The service had systems in place to meet the national quality requirements for auditing at least 1% of clinical patient contacts. We saw evidence that where audits showed care that did not meet the required standard, training was offered, support given, and if appropriate, the clinician was no longer used by the service
- The service did not conduct disease specific audits. This was in part because Adastra (the clinical record system) had been configured to code insufficient detail of diagnoses so this software could not then be used to undertake detailed disease specific audits.

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.
- The provider ensured that all staff worked within their scope of practice and had access to clinical support when required.

Are services effective?

- 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.
- The provider provided staff with ongoing support. This included one-to-one meetings, appraisals, coaching and mentoring, clinical supervision and support for revalidation. The provider could demonstrate how it ensured the competence of staff employed in advanced roles by audit of their clinical decision making, including non-medical prescribing.
- There was a clear approach through the services quality audit programme, for supporting and managing staff when their performance was poor or variable. Measures included direct staff feedback, mentoring and supervision.

Coordinating care and treatment

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

- We saw records that showed that all appropriate staff, including those in different teams, services and organisations, were involved in assessing, planning and delivering care and treatment.
- Patients received coordinated and person-centred care. This included when they moved between services or when they were referred. Care and treatment for patients in vulnerable circumstances was coordinated with other services. Staff communicated promptly with patient's registered GP's so that the GP was aware of the need for further action. There were established pathways for staff to follow to ensure callers were referred to other services for support as required.
- Patient information was shared appropriately, and the information needed to plan and deliver care and treatment was available to relevant staff in a timely and accessible way.

- The service ensured that care was delivered in a coordinated way and took into account the needs of different patients, including those who may be vulnerable because of their circumstances.
- There were clear and effective arrangements for booking appointments, transfers to other services, and dispatching ambulances for people that require them. Staff were empowered to make direct referrals and/or appointments for patients with other services.

Helping 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.

- The service identified patients who may needed extra support such as through alerts on the computer system.
- Where appropriate, staff gave people advice so they could self-care. Systems were available to facilitate this.
- Risk factors, where identified, were highlighted to patients and their normal care providers so additional support could be given.

Consent to care and treatment

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

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

Are services caring?

We rated the service as good for caring.

Kindness, respect and compassion

Staff treated patients with kindness, respect and compassion.

- Staff understood patients' personal, cultural, social and religious needs. They displayed an understanding and non-judgmental attitude to all patients.
- The service gave patients timely support and information. There were arrangements and systems in place to support staff to respond to people with specific health care needs such as end of life care and those who had mental health needs.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Staff helped patients be involved in decisions about their care and were aware of the Accessible Information Standard (a requirement to make sure that patients and their carers can access and understand the information they are given):

- Interpretation services were available for patients who did not have English as a first language. We saw notices in the reception areas, including in languages other than English, informing patients this service was available.

- For patients with learning disabilities or complex social needs family, carers or social workers were appropriately involved.
- Staff communicated with people in a way that they could understand.
- Staff helped patients and their carers find further information and access community and advocacy services. They helped them ask questions about their care and treatment.

Privacy and dignity

The service respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity.

- Staff respected confidentiality at all times.
- 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 responsive to people's needs?

We rated the service as good for providing responsive services.

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The provider organised and delivered services to meet patients' needs. It took account of patient needs and preferences.

- The provider understood the needs of its population and tailored services in response to those needs by providing access to local and regional out of hours bases.
- The service had a system in place that alerted staff to any specific safety or clinical needs of a person using the service, for example there were alerts about a person being on the end of life pathway.
- The facilities and premises were appropriate for the services delivered. The Dulwich site was due to move to a new purpose built building several months after the inspection.

Timely access to the service

Patients were able to access care and treatment from the service within an appropriate timescale for their needs.

- Patients were able to access care and treatment at a time to suit them.
- Patients could access the out of hours service via NHS 111. The service did not see walk-in patients and a 'Walk-in' policy was in place which clearly outlined what approach should be taken when patients arrived without having first made an appointment, for example patients were told to call NHS 111 or referred onwards if they needed urgent care. All staff were aware of the policy and understood their role with regards to it, including ensuring that patient safety was a priority.
- The reception staff had a list of emergency criteria they used to alert the clinical staff if a patient had an urgent need. The criteria included guidance on sepsis and the symptoms that would prompt an urgent response. The receptionists informed patients about anticipated waiting times.
- Waiting times, delays and cancellations were minimal and managed appropriately. (Where people were

waiting a long time for an assessment or treatment there were arrangements in place to manage the waiting list and to support people while they waited. Clinicians could be moved between the sites and from or to home visiting to manage demand.

- Patients with the most urgent needs had their care and treatment prioritised.
- Where patient's needs could not be met by the service, staff redirected them to the appropriate service for their needs.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

The service took complaints and concerns seriously and responded to them appropriately to improve the quality of care.

- Information about how to make a complaint or raise concerns was available and it was easy to do. Staff treated patients who made complaints compassionately.
- The complaint policy and procedures were in line with recognised guidance. We reviewed a sample of the complaints received by the service and found that all were satisfactorily handled in a timely way. We saw that the electronic database had a record of every step of the process of handling the complaint from receipt through to resolution. Letters of apology detailing the findings of the investigations were clear and sufficiently detailed. We also saw that action was taken to address poor performance where it had been highlighted by complaints.
- Complaints were investigated across relevant providers, and staff were able to feedback to other parts of the patient pathway if relevant. For example, where shared care learning required involvement from the 111 service, these organisations were involved in responding to the complaint.
- The service learned lessons from individual concerns and complaints and from analysis of trends. It acted as a result to improve the quality of care. We saw learning from complaints and other patient feedback being shared through service bulletins, staff meetings, and through management of staff performance.

Are services well-led?

We rated the service as good for leadership.

Leadership capacity and capability

Leaders had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care.

- Leaders had the experience, capacity and skills to deliver the service strategy and address risks to it.
- They were knowledgeable about issues and priorities relating to the quality and future of services. They understood the challenges and were addressing them.
- Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. They worked closely with staff and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.
- Senior management was accessible throughout the operational period, with an effective on-call system that staff were able to use.
- The provider had effective processes to develop leadership capacity and skills, including planning for the future leadership of the service.

Vision and strategy

The service had a clear vision and credible strategy to deliver high quality care and promote good outcomes for patients.

- There was a clear vision and set of values. The service had a realistic strategy and supporting business plans to achieve priorities.
- The service developed its vision, values and strategy jointly with patients, staff and external partners.
- Staff were aware of and understood the vision, values and strategy and their role in achieving them.
- The strategy was in line with health and social priorities across the region. The provider planned the service to meet the needs of the local population.
- The provider monitored progress against delivery of the strategy.
- The provider ensured that staff who worked away from the main base felt engaged in the delivery of the provider's vision and values.

Culture

The service had a culture of high-quality sustainable care.

- Staff felt respected, supported and valued. They were proud to work for the service.
- The service focused on the needs of patients.
- Leaders and managers acted on behaviour and performance inconsistent with the vision and values.
- Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints. The provider was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the duty of candour.
- Staff we spoke with told us they were able to raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They had confidence that these would be addressed.
- There were processes for providing all staff with the development they need. This included appraisal and career development conversations. All staff received regular annual appraisals in the last year. Staff were supported to meet the requirements of professional revalidation where necessary.
- Clinical staff, including nurses, were considered valued members of the team. They were given protected time for professional time for professional development and evaluation of their clinical work.
- There was a strong emphasis on the safety and well-being of all staff.
- The service actively promoted equality and diversity. It identified and addressed the causes of any workforce inequality. Staff felt they were treated equally.
- There were positive relationships between staff and teams.

Governance arrangements

There were clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

- Structures, processes and systems to support good governance and management were clearly set out, understood and effective. The governance and management of partnerships, joint working arrangements and shared services promoted interactive and co-ordinated person-centred care.
- Staff were clear on their roles and accountabilities.

Are services well-led?

- Leaders had established proper policies, procedures and activities to ensure safety and assured themselves that they were operating as intended.

Managing risks, issues and performance

There were clear and effective processes for managing risks, issues and performance.

- There was an effective process to identify, understand, monitor and address current and future risks including risks to patient safety.
- The provider had processes to manage current and future performance of the service. Performance of employed clinical staff could be demonstrated through audit of their consultations, prescribing and referral decisions. Leaders had oversight of MHRA alerts, incidents, and complaints. Leaders also had a good understanding of service performance against the national and local key performance indicators. Performance was regularly discussed at senior management and board level. Performance was shared with staff and the local CCG as part of contract monitoring arrangements.
- Clinical audit had a positive impact on quality of care and outcomes for patients. There was clear evidence of action to resolve concerns and improve quality. However
- The providers had plans in place and had trained staff for major incidents.
- The provider implemented service developments and where efficiency changes were made this was with input from clinicians to understand their impact on the quality of care.

Appropriate and accurate information

The service acted on appropriate and accurate information.

- Quality and operational information was used to ensure and improve performance. Performance information was combined with the views of patients.
- Quality and sustainability were discussed in relevant meetings where all staff had sufficient access to information.

- The service used performance information which was reported and monitored, and management and staff were held to account.
- The information used to monitor performance and the delivery of quality care was accurate and useful. There were plans to address any identified weaknesses.
- The service used information technology systems to monitor and improve the quality of care.
- The service submitted data or notifications to external organisations as required.
- There were robust arrangements in line with data security standards for the availability, integrity and confidentiality of patient identifiable data, records and data management systems.

Engagement with patients, the public, staff and external partners

The service involved patients, the public, staff and external partners to support high-quality sustainable services.

- A full and diverse range of patients', staff and external partners' views and concerns were encouraged, heard and acted on to shape services and culture.
- Staff could describe to us the systems in place to give feedback, including written through feedback forms, staff surveys and verbal feedback through internal meetings and service delivery managers. We saw evidence of the most recent staff survey and how the findings were fed back to staff. We also saw staff engagement in responding to these findings.
- The service was transparent, collaborative and open with stakeholders about performance.

Continuous improvement and innovation

There were systems and processes for learning, continuous improvement and innovation.

- Staff knew about improvement methods and had the skills to use them.
- The service made use of internal and external reviews of incidents and complaints. Learning was shared and used to make improvements.
- Leaders and managers encouraged staff to take time out to review individual and team objectives, processes and performance.

Are services well-led?

- There were systems to support improvement and innovation work.