

Peartree Surgery

Inspection report

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

Ratings

Overall rating for this location

Good 

Are services responsive?

Good 

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at Peartree Surgery on 27 July 2017. The overall rating for the practice was good with requires improvement for providing responsive services. The full comprehensive report on the July 2017 inspection can be found by selecting the 'all reports' link for Peartree Surgery on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

This inspection was an announced desk based focused inspection carried out on 11 September 2018 to confirm that the practice had made the recommended improvements that we identified in our previous inspection on 27 July 2017. This report covers our findings in relation to those improvements made since our last inspection.

Overall the practice is rated as good.

Our key findings were as follows:

- The practice had comprehensive systems in place to collect and review patient feedback and audit their telephone and appointment booking systems. An improvement plan had been put in place in 2017 in order to increase access and improve patient experience.
- The practice and the Patient Reference Group completed patient surveys on an ongoing basis and the practice carried out regular audits to manage busy periods and monitor their appointment and telephone system.

Professor Steve Field CBE FRCP FFPH FRCGP

Chief Inspector of General Practice

Population group ratings

Older people	Good 
People with long-term conditions	Good 
Families, children and young people	Good 
Working age people (including those recently retired and students)	Good 
People whose circumstances may make them vulnerable	Good 
People experiencing poor mental health (including people with dementia)	Good 

Our inspection team

This inspection was carried out by a CQC inspector.

Background to Peartree Surgery

Peartree Surgery provides primary medical services to approximately 21,000 patients in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. Services are provided on a General Medical Services (GMS) contract (a nationally agreed contract). The practice has a registered manager in place. A registered manager is an individual registered with CQC to manage the regulated activities provided.

The service is registered with the CQC to provide the following regulated activities:

- Diagnostic and screening procedures
- Treatment of disease, disorder or injury
- Maternity and midwifery services
- Family planning
- Surgical procedures

The practice operates across three premises. Peartree Surgery is the main surgery and was purpose built in 1993. All patient consultations are held on the ground floor. There is an on-site pharmacy which has been operating since 2012. Moorswalk Surgery is a branch surgery located approximately two miles away from the main surgery and Hollybush Lane Surgery is a branch surgery located approximately one mile away from the main surgery.

The practice serves a slightly higher than average population of those aged between 5 to 14 years and a slightly lower than average population of those aged between 65 to 74 years. The population is 88% White British (2011 Census data). The area served is less deprived compared to England as a whole.

The practice team consists of seven GP Partners and four salaried GPs; five of which are male and seven are female. There is one nurse practitioner, who is qualified to prescribe certain medicines, five practice nurses and one health care assistant. The non-clinical team is made up of a practice manager, deputy practice manager and 29 members of the administration and reception team.

Peartree Surgery is a training practice and has been approved to train doctors who are undertaking further training (from four months up to one year depending on where they are in their educational process) to become general practitioners.

Peartree Surgery and Moorswalk Surgery are open to patients between 8am and 6.30pm Mondays to Fridays. Appointments with a GP are available from approximately 8.30am to 12.30pm and from 3pm to 6pm daily. A duty doctor is available from 8am. Hollybush Lane Surgery is open to patients between 8.30am and 11am three days a week.

Emergency appointments are available daily. A telephone consultation service is also available for those who need urgent advice. The practice offers extended opening hours at the main surgery between 6.30pm and 8pm three evenings each week, and pre-booked appointments are available on Saturdays from 8am to 11am on a fortnightly basis.

Home visits are available to those patients who are unable to attend the surgery and the Out of Hours service is provided by Hertfordshire Urgent Care and can be accessed via the NHS 111 service.

Why we carried out this inspection

We undertook a comprehensive inspection of Peartree Surgery on 27 July 2017 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. The practice was rated as good with requires improvement for providing responsive services. This inspection was an announced desk based focused inspection carried out on 11 September 2018 to confirm that the practice had made the recommended improvements that we identified in our previous inspection on 27 July 2017.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

At our previous inspection on 27 July 2017, we rated the practice as requires improvement for providing responsive services as results from the National GP Patient Survey, published in July 2017, showed that patient's satisfaction with how they could access care and treatment was below average in some areas.

The practice remained below the local and national average in some areas of the latest National GP Patient Survey published in August 2018. However, the practice had made significant changes to their appointment and telephone booking system. The practice carried out extensive engagement activities with their patients and results from an internal patient survey showed improvements had been made. The practice is now rated as good for providing responsive services.

Timely access to the service

- Patients had timely access to initial assessment, test results, diagnosis and treatment.
- Patients with the most urgent needs had their care and treatment prioritised.
- Waiting times, delays and cancellations were communicated and managed appropriately.

Results from the latest National GP Patient Survey published in August 2018 showed:

- 45% of respondents waited 15 minutes or less after their appointment time to be seen. This was lower than the local average of 66% and national average of 69%.
- 65% were satisfied with the type of appointment they were offered. This was comparable with the local average of 72% and national average of 74%.
- 41% described their experience of making an appointment as good. This was lower than the local average of 63% and national average of 69%.
- 38% found it easy to get through to this GP practice by phone. This was significantly lower than the local average of 64% and national average of 70%.

The latest National GP Patient Survey was distributed between January and March 2018. A total of 288 surveys were sent out and 112 surveys returned. This was a survey response rate of 39% and 0.5% of the practice population.

The practice worked closely with their Patient Representation Group (PRG) and commenced an internal patient survey on 18 June 2018. The practice had received 189 responses to date, which was approximately 1% of the practice population.

The results from the internal patient survey had so far demonstrated:

- 68% Satisfied with telephone access
- 90% Able to see/speak to someone at the surgery, last time they tried
- 89% Convenient appointment was provided
- 93% have used triage
- 90% satisfied (or very satisfied) with the outcome be it advice, prescription or appointment with GP, nurse or other.

The practice had a detailed improvement plan in place and had introduced a new telephone system and appointment booking system between April and May 2017. The practice had created a multi-disciplinary team to manage a telephone triage service which ensured all patients requesting a same day appointment were assessed and seen as required. The practice had two duty doctors on call at all times and had increased the number of staff members answering the telephone during busy times. The practice had also introduced two dedicated call handlers to improve access. The telephone triage system ensured the practice offered 250 GP telephone appointments and 50 pharmacist telephone appointments on a daily basis.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is one of nine GP practices in the Welwyn Hatfield locality, covering the areas of Hatfield, Welwyn and Welwyn Garden City, providing care for a population of 108,000 patients. Peartree Lane is a member of a local federation which launched an extended access service across the locality in April 2018. The extended access service offers GP and nursing appointments outside core hours to all patients in the locality, including evenings and weekends. Patients registered at Peartree Surgery are allocated 42 of these appointments each week.

The practice told us that the extended access scheme is being extended from October 2019 which would result in an extra 30 hours a week of service provision. The practice's Duty Doctors are able to access and book these appointments. As a result of this service, the practice is able to offer routine GP appointments from 8.30am to 8pm Monday to Friday from 8am to 4pm on Saturday and Sunday.

The practice provided us with evidence which showed that they were continuing to monitor access and busy periods. The practice had clear communication channels in place to update patients on further changes made to the system, in order to continue to improve access and the patient experience.

Please refer to the evidence tables for further information.