

Northumberland Heath Medical Centre

Quality Report

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

Ratings

Overall rating for this service		Good	
Are services safe?		Good	
Are services effective?		Good	
Are services caring?		Good	
Are services responsive to people's needs?		Good	
Are services well-led?		Good	

Summary of findings

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Overall summary

Letter from the Chief Inspector of General Practice

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at Northumberland Heath Medical Centre on 18 November 2015. Overall the practice is rated as good.

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.

Our key findings across all the areas we inspected were as follows:

- There was an open and transparent approach to safety and an effective system in place for reporting and recording significant events.
- Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.
- Staff assessed patients' needs and delivered care in line with current evidence based guidance. Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.

- Patients said they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect and they were involved in their care and decisions about their treatment.
- Information about services and how to complain was available and easy to understand.
- Patients said that it was not always easy to make appointments at the surgery.
- The practice had good facilities and was well equipped to treat patients and meet their needs.
- There was a clear leadership structure and staff felt supported by management. The practice proactively sought feedback from staff and patients, which it acted on.

The areas where the provider should make improvement are:

- The practice should consider implementing internal appraisals for the salaried GPs at the practice.
- The practice should consider implementing a formal register of patients who are carers.

Summary of findings

- In light of patient feedback, the practice should consider undertaking a review of the level of staffing of both clinical and non-clinical staff to ensure that it is sufficient to meet the needs of the practice's patients.
- The practice should consider further increasing the number of staff who take telephone calls.

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

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

The practice is rated as good for providing safe services.

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

Good



Are services effective?

The practice is rated as good for providing effective services.

- Data from the Quality and Outcomes Framework showed patient outcomes were at or above average for the locality and 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 multidisciplinary teams to understand and meet the range and complexity of patients' needs.

Good



Are services caring?

The practice is rated as good for providing caring services.

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

Good



Summary of findings

Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is rated as good for providing responsive services.

Good



- Practice staff reviewed the needs of its local population and engaged with the NHS England Area Team and Clinical Commissioning Group to secure improvements to services where these were identified. For example the practice had targeted teenage pregnancy as a high priority and had implemented a clinic to manage these patients.
- Patients said they found it easy to make an appointment with a named GP and there was continuity of care, with urgent appointments available the same day.
- The practice had good facilities and was well equipped to treat patients and meet their needs.
- Information about how to complain was available and easy to understand and evidence showed the practice responded quickly to issues raised. Learning from complaints was shared with staff and other stakeholders.

Are services well-led?

The practice is rated as good for being well-led.

Good



- 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 this.
- There was a clear leadership structure and staff felt supported by management. The practice had a number of policies and procedures to govern activity and held regular governance meetings.
- There was an overarching governance framework which supported the delivery of the strategy and good quality care. This included arrangements to monitor and improve quality and identify risk.
- The provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the Duty of Candour. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty. The practice had systems in place for knowing about 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 offered proactive, personalised care to meet the needs of the older people in its population.
- The practice was responsive to the needs of older people, and offered home visits and urgent appointments for those with enhanced needs.

Good



People with long term conditions

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

- Nursing staff had lead roles in chronic disease management and patients at risk of hospital admission were identified as a priority.
- Diabetes monitoring outcomes were similar to or better than national averages.
- Longer appointments and home visits were available when needed.
- All these patients had a named GP and 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.

Good



Families, children and young people

The practice is rated as good for the care of families, children and young people.

- There were systems in place to identify and follow up children living in disadvantaged circumstances and who were at risk, for example, children and young people who had a high number of A&E attendances. Immunisation rates were relatively high for all standard childhood immunisations.
- Patients told us that children and young people were treated in an age-appropriate way and were recognised as individuals, and we saw evidence to confirm this.
- Cervical screening rates were similar to the national average, with 83.4% of eligible patients having been tested.
- Appointments were available outside of school hours and the premises were suitable for children and babies.

Good



Summary of findings

- We saw positive examples of joint working with midwives, health visitors and school nurses.

Working age people (including those recently retired and students)

The practice is rated as good for the care of working-age people (including those recently retired and students).

- The needs of the working age population, those recently retired and students had been identified and the practice had adjusted the services it offered to ensure these were accessible, flexible and offered continuity of care.
- The practice was proactive in offering online services as well as a full range of health promotion and screening that reflects the needs for this age group.

Good



People whose circumstances may make them vulnerable

The practice is rated as good for the care of people whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

- The practice held a register of patients living in vulnerable circumstances including homeless people, travellers and those with a learning disability.
- The practice offered longer appointments for patients with a learning disability.
- The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of vulnerable people.
- 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).

- Ninety two per cent of patients diagnosed with dementia had had their care reviewed in a face to face meeting in the last 12 months, which is better than the national average.
- Performance for mental health related indicators was better than national average. For example the percentage of patients

Good



Summary of findings

with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses who have a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the record, in the preceding 12 months was 94% compared to 86% nationally.

- The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of people experiencing poor mental health, including those with dementia.
- The practice carried out advance care planning for patients with dementia.
- The practice had told patients experiencing poor mental health about how to access various support groups and voluntary organisations.
- The practice had a system in place to follow up patients who had attended accident and emergency where they may have been experiencing poor mental health.
- Staff had a good understanding of how to support patients with mental health needs and dementia.

Summary of findings

What people who use the service say

The national GP patient survey results for 2014/5 showed the practice was performing in line with local and national averages in some areas, but below in others. Three hundred and four survey forms were distributed and 123 were returned. This represented 1.3% of the practice's patient list.

- 27% found it easy to get through to this surgery by phone compared to a CCG average of 61% and a national average of 73%.
- 71% were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried (CCG average 79%, national average 85%).
- 71% described the overall experience of their GP surgery as fairly good or very good (CCG average 78%, national average 85%).

- 65% said they would definitely or probably recommend their GP surgery to someone who has just moved to the local area (CCG average 69%, national average 78%).

As part of our inspection we also asked for CQC comment cards to be completed by patients prior to our inspection. We received 52 comment cards which were all positive about the standard of care received. Fifty one of the cards that we received were entirely complimentary about the practice. In particular, many of the comment cards stated that patients felt treated with dignity and respect and that doctors at the practice were caring.

We spoke with 11 patients during the inspection. The majority of patients said they were happy with the care they received and thought staff were approachable, committed and caring. However, most of the patients that we spoke to said that making an appointment could be difficult and that the telephone rang for a long time when they contacted the surgery.

Northumberland Heath Medical Centre

Detailed findings

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by:

Our inspection team was led by a CQC Lead Inspector. The team included a further CQC inspector, a GP specialist advisor, and a practice manager specialist advisor.

Background to Northumberland Heath Medical Centre

Northumberland Heath Medical Centre is in Erith in the London Borough of Bexley. The practice has three partners who manage the practice which is based at a single site. The practice is based in a purpose built building designed specifically for use as a GP surgery.

The practice provides primary medical services to approximately 9,500 patients. The practice also employs three salaried GPs who worked full time. There are also three practice nurses, one of whom is a nurse practitioner, a nursing assistant, a practice manager, and a practice administrator. There are 10 other reception and administrators at the practice.

The practice is contracted to provide Personal Medical Services (PMS) and is registered with the CQC for the following regulated activities: treatment of disease, disorder or injury, maternity and midwifery services, family planning, surgical procedures and diagnostic and screening procedures at one location.

The practice provides a number of enhanced services, including childhood immunisation, extended opening hours, learning disabilities, patient participation and rotavirus and shingles immunisations.

The practice is open from 8:00am until 6:30pm Monday to Friday and provided extended hours from 6:30pm to 8:40pm on Mondays. Outside of normal opening hours the practice uses a locally based out of hours provider.

Why we carried out this inspection

We inspected this service as part of our new comprehensive inspection programme.

We carried out a comprehensive inspection of this service under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. The inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

How we carried out this inspection

Before visiting, we reviewed a range of information we hold about the practice and asked other organisations to share what they knew. We carried out an announced visit on 18 November 2015. During our visit we:

Detailed findings

- Spoke with a range of staff including doctors, nurses, managers and administrative staff, and spoke with patients who used the service.
- Observed how patients were being cared for and talked with carers and/or family members
- Reviewed an anonymised sample of the personal care or treatment records of patients.
- Reviewed comment cards where patients and members of the public shared their views and experiences of the service.

To get to the heart of patients' experiences of care and treatment, we always ask the following five questions:

- Is it safe?
- Is it effective?
- Is it caring?
- Is it responsive to people's needs?
- Is it well-led?

We also looked at how well services were provided for specific groups of people and what good care looked like for them. The population groups are:

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

Please note that when referring to information throughout this report, for example any reference to the Quality and Outcomes Framework data, this relates to the most recent information available to the CQC at that time.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Safe track record and learning

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

- Staff told us they would inform the practice manager of any incidents and there was a recording form available on the practice's computer system.
- The practice carried out a thorough analysis of the significant events.

We reviewed safety records, incident reports national patient safety alerts and minutes of meetings where these were discussed. Lessons were shared to make sure action was taken to improve safety in the practice. For example, after an incident where a vaccine was incorrectly administered, an update was provided to all clinical staff and the parent of the patient was made aware of the error even though there was no risk to the patient.

When there were unintended or unexpected safety incidents, patients received reasonable support, truthful information, a verbal and written apology and were told about any actions to improve processes to prevent the same thing happening again.

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 that reflected relevant legislation and local requirements and policies were accessible to all staff. The practice had separate leads for safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The policies clearly outlined who to contact for further guidance if staff had concerns about a patient's welfare. The GPs attended safeguarding meetings when possible and always provided reports where necessary for other agencies. Staff demonstrated they understood their responsibilities and all had received training relevant to their role. GPs were trained in child protection to level 3, nurses to a minimum of level 2 and all other staff to level

one which were the required levels. The practice held registers of both vulnerable children and adults, and there were notices throughout the practice detailing who to contact in the event of safeguarding concern.

- 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 check (DBS check). (DBS checks identify whether a person has a criminal record or is on an official list of people barred from working in roles where they may have contact with children or adults who may be vulnerable).
- The practice maintained appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene. We observed the premises to be clean and tidy. The nurses in the practice were responsible for leading on infection control and we saw that they had liaised with the local infection prevention teams to keep up to date with best practice. There was an infection control protocol in place and staff had received up to date training. Annual infection control audits were undertaken and we saw evidence that action was taken to address any improvements identified as a result. For example the most recent audit had highlighted that the practice should have purple topped sharps bins in treatment rooms which were now in place.
- The arrangements for managing medicines, including emergency drugs and vaccinations, in the practice kept patients safe (including obtaining, prescribing, recording, handling, storing and security). The practice carried out regular medicines audits, with the support of the local CCG pharmacy teams, to ensure prescribing was in line with best practice guidelines for safe prescribing. Prescription pads were securely stored and there were systems in place to monitor their use. One of the nurses had qualified as an Independent Prescriber and could therefore prescribe medicines for specific clinical conditions. She told us that she had been supported by the practice in achieving this role. Patient Group Directions had been adopted by the practice to allow nurses to administer medicines in line with legislation.
- We reviewed five personnel files and found appropriate recruitment checks had been undertaken prior to employment. For example, proof of identification, references, qualifications, registration with the

Are services safe?

appropriate professional body and the appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service. The personnel records were in good order and all information was easily accessible from the files.

- 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.

Monitoring risks to patients

Risks to patients were assessed and well managed.

- There were procedures in place for monitoring and managing risks to patient and staff safety. There was a health and safety policy available with a poster in the reception office which identified local health and safety representatives. The practice had up to date fire risk assessments and carried out regular fire drills. All electrical equipment was checked to ensure the equipment was safe to use and clinical equipment was checked to ensure it was working properly. The practice had a variety of other risk assessments in place to monitor safety of the premises such as control of substances hazardous to health and infection control and legionella (Legionella is a term for a particular bacterium which can contaminate water systems in buildings).
- Arrangements were in place for planning and monitoring the number of staff and mix of staff needed to meet patients' needs. The practice had undertaken an audit of clinical capacity including the number of

patients seen. There was a rota system in place for all the different staffing groups to ensure that enough staff were on duty. We saw records of when this had been used to ensure that there were sufficient staff on site.

- The premises were purpose built for clinical use and all of the clinical rooms were fit for purpose.

Arrangements to deal with emergencies and major incidents

The practice had adequate arrangements in place to respond to emergencies and major incidents.

- There was an instant messaging system on the computers in all the consultation and treatment rooms which alerted staff to any emergency.
- All staff received annual basic life support training and there were emergency medicines available in the treatment room.
- The practice had a defibrillator available on the premises and oxygen with adult and children's masks. A first aid kit and accident book were available.
- Emergency medicines were easily accessible to staff in a secure area of the practice and all staff knew of their location. All the medicines we checked were in date and fit for use. When GPs undertook home visits they took medicines from the cupboard which ensured that all medicines being used were in date.
- 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 peoples' needs.
- The practice monitored that these guidelines were followed through risk assessments, audits and random sample checks of patient records.
- The practice had implemented a system of peer referral review to ensure that best practice was being followed. There was also a "buddying" meeting every two months where two week referrals were discussed.

Management, monitoring and improving outcomes for people

The practice used the information collected for the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) and performance against national screening programmes to monitor outcomes for patients. (QOF is a system intended to improve the quality of general practice and reward good practice). The most recent published results were 100% of the total number of points available, with 13.1% exception reporting. (Exception reporting is the removal of patients from QOF calculations where, for example, the patients are unable to attend a review meeting or certain medicines cannot be prescribed because of side effects). The exception reporting for this practice is higher than national averages, and the practice staff did not specify whether or not this high rate was being addressed. This practice was not an outlier for any QOF (or other national) clinical targets. Data from QOF showed;

- Performance for diabetes related indicators was similar to the CCG and national average. For example, the percentage of patients with diabetes, on the register, who have a record of an albumin:creatinine ratio test in the preceding 12 months was 86%, the same as the national average.

- The percentage of patients with hypertension having regular blood pressure tests was similar to the national average. For example, the percentage of patients with hypertension in whom the last blood pressure reading measured in the preceding nine months was 150/90mmHg or less was 83% compared to 84% nationally.
- Performance for mental health related indicators was better than national average. For example the percentage of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses who have a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the record, in the preceding 12 months was 94% compared to 86% nationally.

Clinical audits demonstrated quality improvement.

- We saw three clinical audits completed in the last two years, and we could see how improvements made were implemented and monitored. The practice encouraged FY2 doctors (Foundation Year 2, a training grade of doctors) to contribute to the practices audits.
- The practice participated in local audits, national benchmarking and peer review.

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. It covered such topics as safeguarding, infection prevention and control, fire safety, health and safety and confidentiality.
- The practice could demonstrate how they ensured role-specific training and updating for relevant staff for example, for those reviewing patients with long-term conditions. Staff administering vaccinations and taking samples for the cervical screening programme had received specific training which had included an assessment of competence. Staff who administered vaccinations could demonstrate how they stayed up to date with changes to the immunisation programmes, for example by access to on line resources and discussion at practice meetings.
- The learning needs of staff were identified through a system of appraisals, meetings and reviews of practice development needs. Staff had access to appropriate training to meet their learning needs and to cover the scope of their work. This included ongoing support

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

during sessions, one-to-one meetings, appraisals, coaching and mentoring, clinical supervision and facilitation and support for revalidating GPs. All staff had had an appraisal within the last 12 months. However, the salaried GPs in the practice had received a clinical appraisal only, and had not been internally appraised by the practice.

- Staff received training that included: safeguarding, fire procedures, basic life support and information governance awareness. Staff had access to and made use of e-learning training modules and in-house training.

Coordinating patient care and information sharing

The information needed to plan and deliver care and treatment was available to relevant staff in a timely and accessible way through the practice's patient record system and their intranet system.

- This included care and risk assessments, care plans, medical records and investigation and test results. Information such as NHS patient information leaflets were also available.
- 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 services 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. We saw evidence that multi-disciplinary team meetings took place on a monthly basis and that care plans were routinely reviewed and updated. Representatives of the practice met with health visitors, the local mental health team, district nurses and the palliative care team on a monthly basis. Minutes of these meetings were kept and we saw that relevant issues were brought forward to other practice meetings.

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.

- These included patients in the last 12 months of their lives, carers, those at risk of developing a long-term condition and those requiring advice on their diet, smoking and alcohol cessation. Patients were then signposted to the relevant service.
- A dietician was available on the premises and smoking cessation advice was available from a local support group.

The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 83%, which was comparable to the CCG average of 77% and the national average of 82%. There was a policy to offer telephone reminders for patients who did not attend for their cervical screening test. The practice demonstrated how they encouraged uptake of the screening programme by using information in different languages and for those with a learning disability and they ensured a female sample taker was available. The practice also encouraged its patients to attend national screening programmes for bowel and breast cancer screening.

Childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given were comparable to CCG/national averages. For example, childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given to under two year olds ranged from 80% to 89% and five year olds from 76% to 89%.

Flu vaccination rates for the over 65s were 69%, and at risk groups 48%. These were comparable to CCG and national averages.

Patients had access to appropriate health assessments and checks. These included health checks for new patients and NHS health checks for people 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.

Almost all of the of the 52 patient Care Quality Commission comment cards we received were positive about the service experienced by patients. Patients said they felt the practice offered an excellent service and staff were helpful, caring and treated them with dignity and respect.

We spoke with 11 other patients during the inspection. The majority of these patients also told us they were satisfied with the care provided by the practice and said their dignity and privacy was respected. However, three of the patients said that they had been unhappy with the way members of the practice team had spoken to them. 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 average for its satisfaction scores on consultations with GPs and nurses. For example:

- 89% said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the CCG average of 86% and national average of 89%.
- 87% said the GP gave them enough time (CCG average 83%, national average 87%).
- 92% said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw (CCG average 93%, national average 95%).
- 84% said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern (CCG average 80%, national average 85%).

- 89% said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern (CCG average 87%, national average 90%).
- 84% said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful (CCG average 81%, national average 87%).

Care planning and involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Patients told us they felt involved in decision making about the care and treatment they received. They also told us they felt listened to and supported by staff and had sufficient time during consultations to make an informed decision about the choice of treatment available to them. Patient feedback on the comment cards we received was also positive and aligned with these views.

Results from the national GP patient survey showed patients responded positively to questions about their involvement in planning and making decisions about their care and treatment. Results were in line with local and national averages. For example:

- 90% said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 83% and national average of 86%.
- 87% said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care (CCG average 78%, national average 81%).
- 86% said the last nurse they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care (CCG average 82% , national average 85%).

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.

Patient and carer support to cope emotionally with care and treatment

Notices in the patient waiting room told patients how to access a number of support groups and organisations.

The practice's computer system alerted GPs if a patient was also a carer. The practice did not have a register of carers, although they were identified on the computer system with a note. Written information was available to direct carers to the various avenues of support available to them.

Are services caring?

Staff told us that if families had suffered bereavement, their usual GP contacted them or sent them a sympathy card. This call was either followed by a patient consultation at a flexible time and location to meet the family's needs and/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 the practice had targeted teenage pregnancy as a high priority and had implemented a clinic to manage these patients.

- The practice offered a 'Commuter's Clinic' on a Monday evening until 8.40pm for working patients who could not attend during normal opening hours.
- There were longer appointments available for people with complex and/or multiple illnesses, or learning disability.
- Home visits were available for older patients and patients who would benefit from these.
- Same day appointments were available for children and those with serious medical conditions.
- There were disabled facilities, and a hearing loop and translation services were available. All areas of the practice were wheelchair accessible.

Access to the service

The practice was open between 8:00am and 6:30pm Monday to Friday with appointments available throughout the day. Extended surgery hours were offered from 6:30pm until 8:40pm on Mondays. In addition to pre-bookable appointments that could be booked up to six weeks in advance, urgent appointments were also available for people that needed them.

Results from the national GP patient survey showed that patient's satisfaction with how they could access care and treatment was comparable to local and national averages.

- 68% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the CCG average of 70% and national average of 75%.
- 27% patients said they could get through easily to the surgery by phone (CCG average 61%, national average 63%).
- 37% patients said they always or almost always see or speak to the GP they prefer (CCG average 54%, national average 60%).

The GP survey from 2014/5 highlighted access to the practice as an issue, and it stated that the appointments system was difficult. The practice had reviewed the findings and had concluded the issue was mostly due to lack of telephone capacity, and had recruited a new member of staff whose role it was to answer calls only. Three of the patients that we spoke to said that this had improved access to appointments. However, six of the comment cards and four of the patients that we spoke to said that appointments were still difficult to access and three of the patients said they often had to wait in the waiting room for a long time prior to appointments.

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.

We looked at nine complaints received in the last 12 months and found they were satisfactorily handled, and dealt with in a timely way. Lessons were learnt from concerns and complaints and action was taken to as a result to improve the quality of care.

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 which was displayed in the waiting areas and staff knew and understood the values.
- The practice had a robust strategy and supporting business plans which reflected the vision and values and were regularly monitored.

Governance arrangements

The practice had an overarching governance framework which supported the delivery of the strategy and good quality care. This outlined the structures and procedures in place and ensured that:

- There was a clear staffing structure and that staff were aware of their own roles and responsibilities.
- Practice specific policies were implemented and were available to all staff.
- A programme of continuous clinical and internal audit which was used to monitor quality and to make improvements.
- There were robust arrangements for identifying, recording and managing risks, issues and implementing mitigating actions

Leadership and culture

The partners in the practice had the experience, capacity and capability to run the practice and ensure high quality care. They prioritised safe, high quality and compassionate care. The partners were visible in the practice and staff told us they were approachable and always took the time to listen to all members of staff.

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 knowing about notifiable safety incidents.

When there were unexpected or unintended safety incidents:

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

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

- Staff told us the practice held regular team meetings, some of which were scheduled and others that were arranged on an ad-hoc basis.
- Staff told us there was an open culture within the practice and they had the opportunity to raise any issues at team meetings and felt confident in doing so and felt supported if they did.
- Staff said they felt respected, valued and supported, particularly by the partners in the practice. All staff were involved in discussions about how to run and develop the practice, and the partners encouraged all members of staff to identify opportunities to improve the service delivered by the practice.

Seeking and acting on feedback from patients, the public and staff

The practice encouraged and valued feedback from patients, the public and staff. It proactively sought patients' feedback and engaged patients in the delivery of the service.

The practice had gathered feedback from patients through the patient participation group (PPG) and through surveys and complaints received. There was an active PPG which met regularly, although at the time of the inspection there was only one patient representative. The practice were actively looking at increasing patient involvement, but reported that they had not heard back from other patients who might be keen to be involved.

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