

Belford Medical Practice

Inspection report

Croft Field
Belford
Northumberland
NE70 7ER

Date of inspection visit: 28/08/2018 to 28/08/2018
Date of publication: 24/09/2018

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



Overall summary

At our previous inspection on 23 January 2018, we rated the practice as good overall, but requires improvement for providing safe services.

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at Belford Medical Group on 23 January 2018. The overall rating for the practice was good, with all population groups also being rated as good. The practice was rated as requires improvement for the safe key question. The full report on the January 2018 inspection can be found by selecting the 'all reports' link for Belford Medical Group on our website.

This inspection was an announced focussed inspection, carried out on 28 August 2018, to confirm that the practice had carried out their plan to meet the legal requirement, in relation the breach of regulation that we identified in our previous inspection.

Overall the practice is still rated as good; and now as good for safe.

This report covers our findings in relation to this requirement and additional improvements made since our last inspection.

At this inspection we found:

- The practice had made improvements since our last inspection. The breach of legal requirement we identified during our previous inspection had been addressed. The provider had also made other improvements to help strengthen their arrangements for handling medicines in their dispensary.

Professor Steve Field CBE FRCP FFPH FRCGPChief Inspector of General Practice

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by a CQC medicines inspector.

Background to Belford Medical Practice

The Belford Medical Practice is located in the Belford and Seahouses areas of Northumberland and provides care and treatment to 4464 patients of all ages, based on a Personal Medical Services (PMS) contract. The practice is part of the NHS Northumberland clinical commissioning group (CCG). Prescriptions are dispensed at Belford and Seahouses for patients who do not live near a pharmacy.

We visited the following locations as part of the inspections:

Belford Medical Practice, Croft Field, Belford, Northumberland, NE70 7ER.

Seahouses Health Centre, James Street, Seahouses, Northumberland, NE68 7XZ.

The practice serves an area where deprivation is lower than the England average. Information supplied by Public Health England places the practice in the fifth least deprived decile. In general, people living in more deprived areas tend to have a greater need for health services. Belford Medical Practice has fewer patients aged under 18 years of age, and more patients over 65 years, than the England averages. The percentage of people with a long-standing health condition is higher than the England average, 59.4% compared to 53.7%. Life expectancy for women (84.4) and men (80.7) is similar to the England averages of 83.2 and 79.2 respectively. National data showed that 0.9% of the population are from non-white ethnic groups.

The main surgery at Belford occupies a purpose-built building, which also hosts community healthcare staff. The Seahouses branch is located in a purpose-built health centre, which also provides accommodation for the branch surgery of another GP practice. All consultation and treatment rooms are on the ground floor. Disabled access is provided via a ramp at the front of each of the premises. A range of services are provided including, for example, clinic appointments for patients with heart disease, diabetes or asthma. The practice consists of three GP partners (one male and two female), a practice manager, two practice nurses (female), a nurse practitioner (female), a healthcare assistant (female), a medicines manager, three receptionist/dispensers, two dispensers and a small team of reception staff. The practice provided training opportunities for GP Registrars and placements for final year medical students.

The Belford practice is open Monday to Friday between 8:30am and 6pm. The Seahouses branch surgery is open: Monday and Thursday between 8:30am and 17:30pm; Tuesday between 10am and 17:30pm, and Friday between 8:30am and 12:30pm. Extended hours appointments are provided each Tuesday between 6:30pm and 8pm, in collaboration with other local practices.

When the practice is closed patients can access out-of-hours care via Vocare, known locally as Northern Doctors, and the NHS 111 service.

Are services safe?

We rated the practice as good for providing safe services.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

At our previous inspection, on 23 January 2018, we rated the practice as requires improvement for providing safe services, as the arrangements for managing medicines had the potential to place patients at risk of harm. In particular:

- The practice had not ensured the correct legal authority was in place for a non-clinical member of staff to administer vaccinations.
- The practice had not reviewed the standard operating procedures for the dispensary, to ensure they were fit for purpose and fully implemented.

At this inspection we found:

- The practice had, following our last visit, made a decision to postpone the administration of vaccines by their healthcare assistant. We were however shown a new protocol and paperwork to demonstrate how their healthcare assistant would administer vaccines under a patient specific directive, when the practice chooses to re-instate this process. All documents supplied to us were in line with the relevant regulation.
- Leaders had reviewed the dispensary's operating procedures to make sure they were fit for purpose and were being followed in practice.

- There was a robust system in place to help ensure medicine reviews were completed. The practice had completed an audit of their arrangements for carrying out medicine reviews. A new protocol was introduced to address issues identified as a result of the audit. From the first audit, dated 24th January 2018, up until the last audit, dated 11th July 2018, there had been a 42% increase in the number of reviews carried out, although the practice was aware that further improvement was still required.
- The practice now had a formal process to regularly check medicines were within their expiry date and monthly records of these checks were being maintained.
- The temperatures of the refrigerators used to store medicines were checked each day and no missed recordings were found. The practice also used a data logger system to provide a more detailed analysis of the refrigerator temperatures, should any out-of-range temperatures occur. The reports downloaded from the data logger were reviewed and actioned each week.
- Blank prescription forms were stored securely at both sites, in accordance with national guidance. The practice had implemented a robust system to track prescription forms after they had been received into the practice.

Please refer to the evidence table for further information.