

# Higham Hill 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 Higham Hill Medical Centre on 19 October 2016. Overall the practice is rated as Good.

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 been trained to provide them with 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. Improvements were made to the quality of care as a result of complaints and concerns.

- 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.
- 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 provider was aware of and complied with the requirements of the duty of candour.

The areas where the provider should make improvement are:

- Ensure that all staff members complete fire training.
- Review the GP patient satisfaction survey and put a plan in place to improve patient satisfaction with services provided.
- Review how patients with caring responsibilities are identified and recorded on the clinical system to ensure information, advice and support is available to them.

**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 things went wrong patients received reasonable support, truthful information, and a 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 (QOF) showed patient outcomes were at or above average 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, however we saw that there was no recent fire training.
- Staff worked with other health care professionals 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 lower than the CCG and national averages others for some 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.

Good



# Summary of findings

- We saw staff treated patients with kindness and respect, and maintained patient and information confidentiality.

## Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is rated as good for providing responsive services.

- 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.
- 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.
- The practice offered extended hours surgery twice a week for patients unable to attend the surgery during normal working hours.

Good



## Are services well-led?

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

- 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 it.
- 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 notifiable safety incidents and ensured this information was shared with staff to ensure appropriate action was taken.

Good



## Summary of findings

- The practice proactively sought feedback from staff and patients, which it acted on. The practice currently had a virtual Patient Participation Group (PPG). The PPG was kept informed of issues and developments regularly by the practice.
- 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.
- Longer appointments for this population group were available when needed.
- Those patients aged 75 and over had a named GP.

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.
- 95% of patients on the diabetes register had a record of a foot examination and risk classification, which was comparable to the CCG and national average of 88%.
- 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.

Good



# Summary of findings

- 83% of women aged 25 to 64 had a record of a cervical screening test being performed in the preceding five years, which is similar to the CCG average of 81% and the national average of 82%.
- Appointments were available outside of school hours and the premises were suitable for children and babies.
- 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.
- The practice offered extended hours two evenings a week for these patients.

**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 and those with a learning disability.
- The practice offered longer appointments for patients with a learning disability.
- The practice regularly worked with other health care professionals in the case management of vulnerable patients.
- The practice informed vulnerable patients about how to access various support groups and voluntary organisations.
- The practice was a part of the social prescribing scheme, which provided advice on housing, financial services and social welfare.
- 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**



# Summary of findings

## People experiencing poor mental health (including people with dementia)

Good



The practice is rated as good for the care of people experiencing poor mental health (including people with dementia).

- 100% of patients (a total of nine) diagnosed with dementia had their care reviewed in a face to face meeting in the last 12 months, which is higher than the CCG average of 89% and the national average of 90%.
- 100% of patients (a total of 40) with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses had a comprehensive agreed care plan documented in their record in the preceding 12 months, which was higher than the CCG average of 86% and the national average of 88%.
- The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of patients 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 were published in July 2016. The results showed the practice was performing in line with local averages and were sometimes slightly lower than the national averages. Three hundred and thirty three survey forms were distributed and 99 were returned. This represented 2% of the practice's patient list.

- 89% of patients found it easy to get through to this practice by phone compared to the national average of 73%.
- 83% of patients were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried compared to the national average of 76%.
- 76% of patients described the overall experience of this GP practice as good which is the same as the CCG average and comparable to the national average of 85%.

- 67% of patients said they would recommend this GP practice to someone who has just moved to the local area compared to the CCG average of 69% national average of 79%.

As part of our inspection we also asked for CQC comment cards to be completed by patients prior to our inspection. We received 37 comment cards which were all positive about the standard of care received. There was a recurring theme of friendly caring staff; several comment cards mentioned how easy it was to get an appointment.

We spoke with four patients during the inspection. All four patients said they were satisfied with the care they received and thought staff were approachable, committed and caring. The Friends and Family Test undertaken by the practice during the months April 2016 – September 2016 revealed that 194 out of 228 patients would recommend the practice.

# Higham Hill 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 GP specialist adviser.

## Background to Higham Hill Medical Centre

Higham Hill Medical Centre is located in a converted house within a residential area of Waltham Forest. The practice is a part of Waltham Forest Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

There are 4695 patients registered with the practice, 41% of which have a long standing health condition compared to the CCG average of 50% and the national average of 54%. The practice has a young mobile population. Six percent of patients are aged over 65 compared with the CCG average of 10% and the national average of 17% and 27% of patients are aged under 18 compared with a CCG average of 23% and a national average of 21%.

The practice has two GP partners and one salaried GP providing 20 sessions per week. There are two practice nurses (female) who work eight sessions per week. The administrative team is led by a practice manager, who has oversight for eight reception/administration staff members. The practice is a training practice and was hosting one GP trainee on the day of inspection.

The practice operates under a Personal Medical Services (PMS) contract (a locally agreed alternative to the standard GMS contract used when services are agreed locally with a practice which may include additional services beyond the standard contract).

The practice is open Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 6:30pm with the exception of Tuesday evening when the practice opens until 7:30pm and Wednesday when the practice opens until 7:15pm. Phone lines are answered from 8am and clinical sessions are as follows:

- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 6:30pm (Monday, Friday)
- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 7:30pm (Tuesday)
- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 7pm (Wednesday)
- 9am - 12pm (Thursday)
- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 6:30pm (Friday)

The locally agreed out of hours provider covers calls made to the practice whilst it is closed.

Higham Hill Medical Centre operates regulated activities from one location and is registered with the Care Quality Commission to provide treatment of disease, disorder or injury, maternity and midwifery services and diagnostic and screening procedures.

## Why we carried out this inspection

We inspected this service as a part of our comprehensive programme. This location had not previously been inspected.

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.

# Detailed findings

## 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 19 October 2016. During our visit we:

- Spoke with a range of staff including GP's, a nurse, practice manager and reception/administration staff. We also 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 incident recording form supported the recording of notifiable incidents under the duty of candour. (The duty of candour is a set of specific legal requirements that providers of services must follow when things go wrong with care and treatment).
- We saw evidence that when things went wrong with care and treatment, patients were informed of the incident, received reasonable support, truthful information, a written apology and were told about any actions to improve processes to prevent the same thing happening again.
- The practice carried out a thorough analysis of the significant events.

We reviewed safety records, incident reports, patient safety alerts and minutes of meetings where these were discussed. We saw evidence that lessons were shared and action was taken to improve safety in the practice. For example, we viewed a significant event about a patient who did not receive their two week wait appointment. We saw the practice had checked the patients' records and found that the referral was faxed to the hospital and followed up with a telephone call to make sure it was received. The hospital was contacted and it transpired the appointment was not issued due to a filing error. This was discussed at a practice meeting where it was agreed that the referral process worked and should continue to be followed up with a telephone call. The patient was contacted with an explanation and apology for the delay, as well as information regarding what was being done to obtain a rescheduled appointment.

### 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. These arrangements

reflected relevant legislation and local requirements. Policies were accessible to all staff and information booklets were available in the reception for patients. The policies clearly outlined who to contact for further guidance if staff had concerns about a patient's welfare. There was a GP lead for safeguarding. 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 on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults relevant to their role. GPs and nurses were trained to child safeguarding level 3 and non-clinical staff were trained to level 1.

- 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 (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 practice nurse was the infection control clinical lead who liaised with the local infection prevention teams to keep up to date with best practice, and practice staff had received up-to-date infection control training. On the day of inspection, the practice could not locate their infection control policy and evidence of recent audit. However, subsequent to the inspection, the practice provided copies of both documents. Annual infection control audits were undertaken and we saw there was an action plan template to address any improvements, should any be identified as a result of an audit.
- The arrangements for managing medicines, including emergency medicines and vaccines, in the practice kept patients safe (including obtaining, prescribing, recording, handling, storing, security and disposal). Processes were in place for handling repeat prescriptions which included the review of high risk medicines. 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. Blank prescription forms and pads were securely stored and

## Are services safe?

there were systems in place to monitor their use. Patient Group Directions (PGD) (a PGD is a set of written instructions for the supply or administration of medicines to groups of patients who may not be individually identified before presentation for treatment) had been adopted by the practice to allow nurses to administer medicines in line with legislation.

- We reviewed three personnel files and found appropriate recruitment checks had been undertaken prior to employment. For example, proof of identification, references, qualifications, registration with the appropriate professional body and the appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

### 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 which identified local health and safety representatives. The practice had up to date fire risk assessments and carried out regular fire drills, however staff members had not received fire training. In addition, there were no instructions within the practice advising patients where to congregate in the event of a fire. 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. There was a rota system in place for all the different staffing groups and staff had to book their annual leave in advance to ensure enough staff were on duty.

### 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 the practice which alerted staff to any emergency.
- All staff received annual basic life support training and there were emergency medicines available in the treatment room.
- We saw that 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 stored securely.

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. Copies of the plan were also held offsite to be accessed in case of emergency.

# Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

## Our findings

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 patients' needs.
- The practice monitored that these guidelines were followed through discussion at practice meetings.

### 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 99% of the total number of points available, with an exception reporting rate of 9% (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).

This practice was not an outlier for any QOF (or other national) clinical targets. Data from 2015/16 showed:

- Performance for diabetes related indicators was higher than the national average. For example the percentage of patients on the diabetes register with a record of a foot examination and risk classification in the preceding 12 months was 95% compared with a CCG and national average of 88%.
- Performance for mental health related indicators was higher than the national average. For example the percentage of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses who had a comprehensive agreed care plan recorded in the record within the preceding 12 months was 100% (a total of 9 patients) compared with a CCG average of 86% and the national average of 88%.

There was evidence of quality improvement including clinical audit.

- There had been five clinical audits completed in the last two years, three of these were completed audits where the improvements made were implemented and monitored.
- The practice participated in local audits, national benchmarking, accreditation and peer review.
- Findings were used by the practice to improve services. For example, the practice set out to examine whether all patients with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) had the correct blood tests in line with good practice. The first audit found 26 patients with CKD, 15 of whom had a record of albumin creatinine ratio recorded in their record in the preceding 12 months, 11 patients had not had this recorded in the preceding 12 months. Albumin Creatinine is a test which can identify possible kidney disease in patients who have been diagnosed with diabetes. Twenty five out of the 26 patients had a recent blood pressure recorded. The findings were discussed at a clinical meeting where it was agreed to put alerts on the system to highlight to staff and GPs, the tests which were outdated and needed to be carried out. Letters needed to be sent to patients and an administrative member of staff to monitor CKD performance. The second audit showed 25 patients with CKD, all of whom had a record of albumin creatinine ratio recorded in their record in the preceding 12 months.

### 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. This covered such topics as safeguarding, infection prevention and control, fire safety, health and safety and confidentiality. However we looked at three staff files and found that no recent fire training had taken place in the past 12 months.
- 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 vaccines and taking samples for the cervical screening programme had received specific training which had included an assessment of competence. Staff who administered vaccines could



# Are services effective?

## (for example, treatment is effective)

demonstrate how they stayed up to date with changes to the immunisation programmes, for example by attending updates, 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, one-to-one meetings, clinical supervision and facilitation and support for revalidating GPs. All staff had received an appraisal within the last 12 months.
- Staff received training that included: safeguarding, basic life support and information governance. 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.
- 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 professionals 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. Meetings took place with other health care professionals on a monthly basis when care plans were routinely reviewed and updated for patients with complex needs.

### 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.
- The process for seeking consent was monitored through discussions at clinical meetings.

### Supporting patients to live healthier lives

The practice identified patients who may be in need of extra support. For example:

- Patients receiving end of life care, carers, those at risk of developing a long-term condition and those requiring advice on their diet, smoking and alcohol cessation. Patients were signposted to the relevant service. The practice was a part of the social prescribing scheme, which provided telephone consultations to patients giving them advice on housing, financial and social welfare advice.
- Smoking cessation advice was available on the premises and dietary 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 81% 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 they ensured a female sample taker was available. 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. The practice also encouraged its patients to attend national screening programmes for bowel and breast cancer screening, 57% of female patients aged 50 to 70 had been screened for breast cancer in the last 36 months which was comparable to the CCG average of 62%.

Childhood immunisation rates for the vaccines given were comparable to CCG/national averages. For example, childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given to under two year olds ranged from 89% to 91% which was comparable to the CCG average of 83% to 86% and the

# Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

national average of 73% to 93%. Vaccines given to five year olds ranged from 83% to 97%, which was comparable to the CCG average of 77% to 90% and the national average of 81% to 95%.

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

NHS health checks for patients 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.

All of the 37 patient Care Quality Commission comment cards we received were positive about the service experienced. 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 two members of the Patient Participation Group (PPG). They also told us they were satisfied with the care provided by the practice and said their dignity and privacy was respected. 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 mostly in line with local and national averages for its satisfaction scores on consultations with GPs and nurses. For example:

- 79% of patients said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the clinical commissioning group (CCG) average of 83% and the national average of 89%.
- 75% of patients said the GP gave them enough time compared to the CCG average of 80% and the national average of 87%.
- 85% of patients said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw compared to the CCG average of 91% and the national average of 95%.
- 66% of patients said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the national average of 85%.

- 86% of patients said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the national average of 91%.
- 94% of patients said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful compared to the CCG average of 83% and the national average of 87%

The practice were aware that their scores were below the national averages and stated that they had made steps to address this through the introduction of ad-hoc patient feedback forms in order for them to have a current view on how the practice is performing from the perspective of the patient.

### 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 from the comment cards we received was also positive and aligned with these views. We also saw that care plans were personalised.

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 mostly lower than local and national averages. For example:

- 72% of patients said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 79% and the national average of 86%.
- 66% of patients said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the national average of 82%.
- 89% of patients said the last nurse they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the national average of 85%.

The practice provided facilities to help patients be involved in decisions about their care:

- 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.
- Information leaflets were available in easy read format.

## Are services caring?

- Information posters were displayed in the patient waiting area in other languages.

### **Patient and carer support to cope emotionally with care and treatment**

Patient information leaflets and notices were available in the patient waiting area which told patients how to access a number of support groups and organisations.

Information about support groups was also available on the practice website.

The practice's computer system alerted GPs if a patient was also a carer. The practice had identified eight patients as carers which is less than 1% of the practice list. Written information was available to direct carers to the various avenues of support available to them, this included referrals to a local carers support group.

Staff told us that if families had suffered bereavement, their usual GP contacted them or sent them a sympathy card. This call was usually 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 takes part in a social prescribing scheme, which is run by the CCG. The scheme offers patients the opportunity to have a referral through the practice, to a range of social welfare services, such as being able to gain local advice on housing and finances.

- The practice offered extended hours until 7.15pm two evenings a week for working patients who could not attend during normal opening hours.
- There were longer appointments available for patients with a learning disability.
- Home visits were available for older patients and patients who had clinical needs which resulted in difficulty attending the practice.
- Telephone consultations were available to those unable to attend the practice.
- Same day appointments were available for children and those patients with medical problems that require same day consultation.
- Patients were able to receive travel vaccinations available on the NHS, those only available privately were referred to other clinics.
- There were disabled facilities, a hearing loop and translation services available.
- The practice offered sexual health and contraception clinics.

### Access to the service

The practice is opening times are as follows:-

Monday: 8:30am - 6:30pm

Tuesday: 8:30am - 7:30pm

Wednesday: 8:30am - 7:15pm

Thursday: 8:30am - 7:00pm

Friday: 8:30am - 6:30pm

The practice telephone lines are answered from 8am  
Monday - Friday and appointment times are as follows:

- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 6:30pm (Monday, Friday)

- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 7:30pm (Tuesday)
- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 7pm (Wednesday)
- 9am - 1pm (Thursday)
- 9am - 1pm, 4pm - 6:30pm (Friday)

The locally agreed out of hours provider covers calls made to the practice whilst it is closed.

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.

- 82% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the national average of 78%.
- 89% of patients said they could get through easily to the practice by phone compared to the national average of 73%.

People told us on the day of the inspection that they were able to get appointments when they needed them.

The practice had a system in place to assess:

- whether a home visit was clinically necessary; and
- the urgency of the need for medical attention.

A GP would call the patient requesting a home visit in order to assess the clinical need, in cases where the urgency of need was so great that it would be inappropriate for the patient to wait for a GP home visit, alternative emergency care arrangements were made. Clinical and non-clinical staff were aware of their responsibilities when managing requests for home visits.

### 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.
- The practice manager handled all complaints in the practice.

# Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

- We saw that information was available to help patients understand the complaints system, there was a complaints poster and leaflet in the reception area and information on how to complain was available on the practice website.

We looked at two out of four complaints received in the last 12 months and found that these were satisfactorily handled and dealt with in a timely way with openness and transparency. Lessons were learnt from individual concerns

and complaints and also from analysis of trends, and action was taken as a result to improve the quality of care. For example, we viewed a complaint from a patient who was unhappy when told by a receptionist that they were unable to be seen by the GP after they arrived for their appointment late. After discussion with the patient, the patient was given an emergency appointment for that day. We saw that this incident was discussed at a practice meeting.

# 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 and staff knew and understood the values.
- The practice had a strategy and supporting business plans which reflected the vision and values and were regularly monitored. This included a plan to extend the practice building.

### 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 as well as the roles of others.
- Practice specific policies were implemented and were available to all staff.
- An understanding of the performance of the practice was maintained.
- A programme of continuous clinical and internal audit was used to monitor quality and to make improvements.
- There were effective arrangements for identifying, recording and managing risks, issues and implementing mitigating actions.

### Leadership and culture

On the day of inspection the principle GP in the practice demonstrated he had the experience, capacity and capability to run the practice and ensure high quality care. He told us the practice prioritised safe, high quality and compassionate care. Staff told us the GPs and managers were approachable and always took the time to listen to all members of staff.

The provider was aware of and had systems in place to ensure compliance with the requirements of the duty of candour. (The duty of candour is a set of specific legal requirements that providers of services must follow when things go wrong with care and treatment). This included support training for all staff on communicating with

patients about notifiable safety incidents. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty. The practice had systems in place to ensure that when things went wrong with care and treatment:

- The practice gave affected people reasonable support, truthful information and a verbal and written apology
- The practice 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.
- 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 and supported in doing so.
- 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 surveys and complaints received. The practice had pro-actively attempted to recruit members of the PPG but had encountered some difficulty in sustaining a regular PPG. They attributed this to the fact that the majority of their patient list was made up from a young mobile population. At the time of our inspection, the PPG at the practice was a virtual group. The Practice Manager sent a quarterly newsletter to the current members informing them of the latest practice news and other information of interest to the group, as well as soliciting views from the group on issues of concern to them.
- The practice had gathered feedback from staff through staff meetings, appraisals and discussion. Staff told us they would give feedback and discuss any concerns or issues with colleagues and management. Staff told us they felt involved and engaged to improve how the

## Are services well-led?

Good 

(for example, are they well-managed and do senior leaders listen, learn and take appropriate action)

practice was run. The practice has recently started an on-line group for non-clinical staff (all of whom work part-time) to share non-confidential information, such as the location of extra copies of leaflets held at the practice.