

Theale Medical Centre




Inspection report

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Theale
Reading
RG7 5AS
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This report describes our judgement of the quality of care at this service. It is based on a combination of what we found when we inspected, information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and information given to us from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

Ratings

Overall rating for this location	Good	
Are services safe?	Good	
Are services effective?	Good	
Are services well-led?	Good	

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection at Theale Medical Centre in Berkshire on 27 February 2019 and 5 March 2019. The overall rating for the practice was Requires Improvement. Given the concerns we found, we issued a Warning Notice for Regulation 17 (Good Governance).

We carried out an announced focussed follow-up inspection on 16 July 2019 to confirm that the practice had met the legal requirements in relation to the breach of regulation that we identified in our previous inspection in February and March 2019. This was an unrated inspection, however we found that the practice had made significant improvement and had met the requirements of the Regulation 17 (Good governance) Warning Notice.

The full history of reports and inspection findings including the comprehensive report from February 2019, March 2019 and the unrated focussed inspection in July 2019 can be found by selecting the 'all reports' link for Theale Medical Centre on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Why we carried out this inspection

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection on 24 November 2021. This inspection was undertaken to ensure improvements had continued to be made and sustained since our previous inspections and to provide a new rating.

How we carried out the inspection

Throughout the pandemic CQC has continued to regulate and respond to risk. However, taking into account the circumstances arising as a result of the pandemic, and in order to reduce risk, we have conducted our inspections differently.

This inspection was carried out in a way which enabled us to spend a minimum amount of time on site. This was with consent from the provider and in line with all data protection and information governance requirements.

This included:

- Conducting staff interviews using video conferencing
- Completing clinical searches on the practice's patient records system and discussing findings with the provider
- Reviewing patient records to identify issues and clarify actions taken by the provider
- Requesting evidence from the provider
- A short site visit including observations of the dispensary
- Discussions with practice staff, local care homes who access GP services from the practice and the patient participation group.

We based our judgement of the quality of care at this service on a combination of:

- What we found when we inspected
- Information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and
- Information from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

Our findings

This practice is now rated as GOOD overall.

Overall summary

The key questions at this inspection are rated as:

- Are services safe? – Good
- Are services effective? – Good
- Are services well-led? – Good

We found that:

- It was evident the practice had gone through a period of transition since our previous inspections in 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant improvements had been made and systems implemented to manage and monitor risks. Staff we spoke with recognised the endeavours of the new leadership team and were keen to be part of the new developments.
- The practice provided care in a way that kept patients safe and protected them from avoidable harm, including associated risks to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The practice was able to demonstrate staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles. Staff members were appraised annually and received appropriate supervision and training.
- The practice adjusted how it delivered services to meet the needs of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Continuous monitoring of practice procedures, clinical outcomes and clinical registers was in place to ensure improvements were maintained. This included child immunisations and cervical screening uptake.
- The way the practice was led and managed promoted the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care. The practice had an effective governance system in place, was well organised and actively sought to learn from previous inspections, performance data, complaints, incidents and feedback.
- The practice had clear and visible clinical and managerial leadership and supporting governance arrangements. There was a high level of constructive engagement with staff and all staff we spoke with told us they felt they were an integral part of the practice, they felt valued and safe during the pandemic.

Details of our findings and the evidence supporting our ratings are set out in the evidence tables.

Dr Rosie Benneyworth BM BS BMedSci MRCGP

Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by a Care Quality Commission (CQC) lead Inspector and included a second Inspector and a GP Specialist Advisor. They spoke with staff using video conferencing facilities on 15, 16, 18 and 19 November 2021 and the two Inspectors undertook a site visit to the main practice (Theale Medical Centre) on 24 November 2021. The GP specialist advisor spoke with staff using video conferencing facilities and completed clinical searches and records reviews on 15 November 2021 without visiting the location.

Background to Theale Medical Centre

Theale Medical Centre is a two site GP practice with a patient list size of 10,847 and based in semi-rural areas of Reading, Berkshire. The practice is part of the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group. (A CCG is responsible for planning and designing local health services in a specific geographic area. They do this by 'commissioning' or buying health and care services).

GP services are provided from two different locations:

- Theale Medical Centre, Englefield Road, Reading, West Berkshire, RG7 5AS
- Calcot Surgery, 72a Royal Avenue, Calcot, Reading, West Berkshire RG31 4UR.

At the time of our November 2021 inspection, the branch practice (Calcot Surgery) was temporarily closed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The practice website is: www.thealemedicalcentre.com

The provider is registered with CQC to deliver the following Regulated Activities:

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

The practice clinical team consists of three GP partners, five salaried GPs, four practice nurses, one trainee practice nurse, two phlebotomists and a pharmacist. The practice is registered as a training practice for doctors who are training to become GPs. At the time of the inspection there was one trainee GP attached to the practice. One of the GPs is the designated dispensary lead and the dispensary team consists of three dispensers and a pharmacy technician.

According to national statistics, there are fewer people aged 19 to 44 and more people aged 50 to 74, when compared to national averages. The practice serves a small ethnic minority population (8%), with the majority of patients being from a white British background. The practice is located in a part of Reading with low levels of income deprivation, although there are pockets of high deprivation within the practice boundary.

The practice is open between 8am and 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. Pre-bookable extended hours appointments are available on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and Tuesday and Thursday evenings, alongside pre-bookable Saturday morning appointments between 8.30am and 12.30pm. The dispensary has core opening hours between 9am and 6pm every weekday.

Most GP appointments are provided via telephone consultations, due to the enhanced infection prevention and control measures put in place since the pandemic and to adhere with national guidance. If a clinician decides a patient requires a face-to-face appointment, an appointment is made.