

Dr Neeta Ghosh-Chowdhury

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 8.30am on 23 February 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 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 they could get an appointment within a reasonable time with urgent appointments available the same day. However, an appointment with the principal GP was not always easy to book.
- 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 improvements are:

- Develop a formal strategy to deliver the practice vision.
- Review the long-term sustainability of current staffing levels.

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.

- 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 could get an appointment within a reasonable time with urgent appointments available the same day. However, an appointment with the principal GP was not always easy to book.
- 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.

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 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.

Good



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.

- The practice provided a dedicated weekly clinic for patients with more than one long-term condition.
- 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.

- Immunisation rates were relatively high for all standard childhood immunisations.
- The percentage of patients diagnosed with asthma, on the register, who had an asthma review in the last 12 months was 76%, which was in line with local / national averages.
- Patients told us that children and young people were treated in an age-appropriate way and were recognised as individuals.
- The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 90%, which was above the national average of 82%.
- The premises were suitable for children and babies.
- We saw positive examples of joint working with district nurses and health visitors.
- Staff sent congratulation letters out to all new parents and encouraged them to register their new baby with the practice.

Good



Summary of findings

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 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).

- 92% of patients diagnosed with dementia had had their care reviewed in a face to face meeting in the last 12 months, which was above the national average of 84%.
- 100% of patients with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses had a comprehensive, agreed care plan documented in the record in the preceding 12 months, which was above the national average of 88%.
- The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of people experiencing poor mental health, including those with dementia.

Good



Summary of findings

- 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.
- The practice had 14 patients on the dementia register all of which had received an annual health check.

Summary of findings

What people who use the service say

- The national GP patient survey results published on 2 July 2015. The results showed the practice was performing in line with local and national averages. Four hundred and forty survey forms were distributed and 84 were returned. This represented 3% of the practice's patient list.
- 84% found it easy to get through to this surgery by phone compared to a CCG average of 68% and a national average of 73%.
- 65% were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried (CCG average 78%, national average 85%).
- 91% described the overall experience of their GP surgery as fairly good or very good (national average 78%).
- 89% said they would definitely or probably recommend their GP surgery to someone who has just moved to the local area (national average 71%).
- As part of our inspection we also asked for CQC comment cards to be completed by patients prior to our inspection. We received 27 comment cards which were all positive about the standard of care received.

We spoke with twelve patients during the inspection. All twelve patients said they were happy with the care they received and thought staff were approachable, committed and caring. The latest results from the NHS Friends and Family Test showed that out of 25 respondents, 100% would recommend the practice.

Dr Neeta Ghosh-Chowdhury

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 and a practice manager specialist adviser.

Background to Dr Neeta Ghosh-Chowdhury

Dr Neeta Ghosh-Chowdhury also known as Hilltop Medical Practice is situated at 150 Hilltop Avenue, Harlesden, London, NW10 8RY. The practice is based in a primary care centre which it shares with three GP practices and other community services. The practice provides NHS primary care services through a General Medical Services (GMS) contract to approximately 2,984 people living in the London Borough of Brent. The practice is part of the NHS Brent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and within the CCG one of a local network of 21 GP practices.

The practice population is ethnically diverse and has a much higher than average number of children under five years old and above average number of patients in the 20-50 age range. The practice area is rated in the most deprived decile of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). People living in more deprived areas tend to have greater need for health services.

The practice is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide the regulated activities of diagnostic and screening procedures; treatment of disease, disorder or injury; maternity and midwifery services, surgical procedures [BR1] and family planning.

The practice team consists of a full time female principal GP, three regular locum GPs (11 sessions/week in total), a locum nurse (12 hours/week), two full time reception staff and two part time reception staff. The principal GP also acts as the practice manager and is currently trying to recruit more staff, including a practice manager, practice nurse and another permanent GP.

The practice is open between 9.00am and 7.00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 9.00am to 2.00pm Wednesdays. Appointments are from 9.30am to 11.30am every morning and 4.30pm to 6.30pm daily (not Wednesdays). The practice is closed at weekends. To access out of hours care patients are directed to LCW (London Central and West, Urgent Care Collaborative) the local Out Of Hours (OOH) service. In addition patients can access appointments including at the weekend through the locality Hub service (A GP practice offering appointments to all patients in the locality). There is also a local walk-in centre open 8.00am to 8.00pm seven days a week.

Services provided by the practice include chronic disease management, cervical screening, family planning, childhood immunisations, travel advice and vaccinations and health screening. Phlebotomy and minor surgery are not provided by the practice however these services are available through the other practices in the primary care centre through the network.

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

Detailed findings

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 23 February 2016.

During our visit we:

- Spoke with a range of staff including the principal GP, the locum nurse, three non-clinical staff and spoke with twelve 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, one incident involved a repeat prescribing error. The practice took action to correct the mistake and learning shared with appropriate staff to minimise the risk of recurrence.

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 policies clearly outlined who to contact for further guidance if staff had concerns about a patient's welfare. There was a lead member of staff 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 relevant to their role. GPs were trained to Safeguarding level 3 and other staff to level 2.
- Notices in the waiting room and on consultation room doors 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 principal GP was the infection control clinical lead who 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.
- 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. Patient Group Directions had been adopted by the practice to allow nurses to administer medicines in line with legislation.
- We reviewed five personnel files including permanent staff and locums 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.
- 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 staff room which identified local health and safety representatives. The practice had up to date fire risk

Are services safe?

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. There was a rota system in place for all the different staffing groups to ensure that enough staff were on duty. Although staffing levels were adequate on the day of our inspection and patients kept safe we did raise concerns about the sustainability of current staffing levels. The principal GP told us that they were actively trying to recruit a practice manager, a regular nurse and an additional GP, however they had not been successful as yet.

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. Although there was oxygen on the premises it was shared with another GP practice and was therefore not available quickly in the event of an emergency. We raised our concerns with the principal GP who following our inspection provided evidence to show that an oxygen cylinder had been purchased.
- 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.

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.

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 95% of the total number of points available, with 6% 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). Data from 2014/15 showed;

- Performance for diabetes related indicators was 79% (6% below CCG average and 10 % below national average).
- The percentage of patients with hypertension in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) was 150mm/Hg or less was 85% (3% above CCG average and 2% above national average).
- Performance for mental health related indicators was 100% (9% above CCG average and 7% above national average).

Clinical audits demonstrated quality improvement.

- We saw three clinical audits completed in the last two years, all of which were completed audits where the improvements made were implemented and monitored. For example, a diabetes audit showed an

improvement in the number of patients on newer hypoglycaemic medicines in line with NICE guidance and a repeat prescribing audit showed improvements in repeat prescribing practice.

- The practice participated in benchmarking and data showed they were comparable to other practices in relation to prescribing and emergency admissions to secondary care.

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. An induction programme for locum staff was also in place.
- 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.
- 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. All staff had had an appraisal within the last 12 months.
- 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.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

- 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.

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 the principal GP. Data showed the practice had achieved a smoking quit rate of 75% for the previous two years.

The practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 90%, which was above 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 all the vaccinations given in 2015 and the first quarter of 2016 ranged from 93% to 98%.

Flu vaccination rates for the over 65s were 74%, and at risk groups 54%. These were also 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. Data showed the practice had achieved 99 health checks so far in 2015/16 which was above the CCG target of 78%. 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 27 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 three members of the patient participation group. 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 generally above average for its satisfaction scores on consultations with GPs and nurses. For example:

- 96% said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the CCG average of 85% and national average of 89%.
- 93% said the GP gave them enough time (CCG average 81%, national average 87%).
- 96% said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw (CCG average 93%, national average 95%).
- 89% said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern (CCG average 81%, national average 85%).

- 88% said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern (CCG average 84%, national average 90%).
- 85% said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful (CCG average 83%, 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 above local and national averages. For example:

- 96% said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 82% and national average of 86%.
- 95% said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care (CCG average 77%, national average 81%).
- 86% said the last nurse they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care (CCG average 78%, 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 had identified 19 carers, 11 of which had been offered a flu vaccination with seven accepting the offer. 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 was participating in the Whole Systems Integrated Care Scheme (a scheme which integrates health and social care).

- The practice offered a weekly dedicated Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) clinic to better manage patients with long-term conditions.
- There were longer appointments available for patients with a learning disability.
- Home visits were available for older patients and patients who would benefit from these.
- Patients over the age of 75 had a named GP and care plans in place.
- The practice participated in the avoiding unplanned admissions enhanced service for older patients. These patients were care planned and referred for social care assessment where appropriate.
- Same day appointments were available for children and those with serious medical conditions.
- Online appointment booking and repeat prescription requests were available.
- Patients were able to receive travel vaccinations available on the NHS as well as those only available privately.
- There were disabled facilities, access to a hearing loop and translation services available.

Access to the service

The practice was open between 9.00am and 7.00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and between 9.00am and 2.00pm Wednesdays. The practice was not providing extended hours. GP appointments were from 9.30am to 11.30am every morning and 4.30pm to 6.30pm daily, however the practice was closed on Wednesday afternoons. Nurse appointments were available Monday and Thursday, 9.00am to 1.00pm and 4.00pm to 6.00pm. In addition to pre-bookable appointments that could be booked up to two months 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 above local and national averages.

- 79% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the CCG average of 71% and national average of 75%.
- 84% patients said they could get through easily to the surgery by phone (CCG average 68%, national average 73%).
- 35% patients said they always or almost always see or speak to the GP they prefer (national average 31%).

People told us on the day of the inspection that they were generally able to get appointments when they needed them although appointments with the principal GP were not always available quickly.

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 including posters displayed in the waiting room, information in the patient leaflet and on the practice website.

We looked at eight complaints received in the last 12 months and found these 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. For example, a patient complained about a HUB appointment which they thought was with their regular GP (A HUB is a GP practice offering appointments to all patients in the locality). The patient was offered the choice of a telephone call or meeting to discuss further however they declined. Learning was that staff would in future provide more information about the HUB service to patients and ensure patients understand the difference between a HUB appointment and one with their regular GP.

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 strategy in place which reflected the vision and values however it was not formalised. There was also no mission statement in place for patients to view.

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 comprehensive understanding of the performance of the practice was maintained
- 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 principal GP in the practice had the experience, capacity and capability to run the practice and ensure high quality care. They prioritise safe, high quality and compassionate care. The principal GP was 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.
- 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 principal GP 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, carried out patient surveys and submitted proposals for improvements to the practice management team. Improvements made as a result of feedback included a review of the practices' policy on patients who do not attend their appointments and a review of the appointment system to ensure easier access.
- The practice had gathered feedback from staff through staff meetings, appraisals and discussion. 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.