

Thorntree Surgery

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 Thorntree Surgery on 13 & 14 July 2015. Overall the practice is rated as good.

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

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

- Patients who used the service were kept safe and protected from avoidable harm. The building was well maintained and clean.
- All the patients we spoke with were positive about the care and treatment they received. Patients told us they were treated with dignity and respect and staff were caring, professional and helpful.

- There was good collaborative working between the practice and other health and social care agencies that ensured patients received the best outcomes. Clinical decisions followed best practice guidelines.
- The practice met with the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to discuss service performance and improvement issues.
- There were good governance and risk management measures in place. The leadership team were visible and staff we spoke with said they found them very approachable.

However there were areas of practice where the provider should make improvements

- Ensure the practice has a written strategy which outlines their vision and plans for the future.

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. Staff understood and fulfilled their responsibilities to raise concerns, and to report incidents and near misses. Lessons were learned and communicated to support improvement. Information about safety was recorded, monitored, appropriately reviewed and addressed. Risks to patients were assessed and well managed. There were enough staff to keep patients safe.

Good



Are services effective?

The practice is rated as good for providing effective services. Data showed on the whole patient outcomes were at or above average for the locality. Staff referred to guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and used it routinely. Patients' needs were assessed and care was planned and delivered in line with current legislation. This included assessing capacity and promoting good health. Staff had received training appropriate to their roles and any further training needs had been identified and appropriate training planned to meet these needs. There was evidence of appraisals and personal development plans for all staff. Staff worked with multidisciplinary teams.

Good



Are services caring?

The practice is rated as good for providing caring services. Data showed that patients rated the practice well for several aspects of care. Feedback from patients about their care and treatment was positive. Patients said they were treated with compassion, dignity and respect and they were involved in decisions about their care and treatment. Information to help patients understand the services available was easy to understand. We also saw that staff treated patients with kindness and respect, and maintained confidentiality.

Good



Are services responsive to people's needs?

The practice is rated as good for providing responsive services. It reviewed the needs of its local population and engaged with the NHS Area Team and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to secure improvements to services where these were identified. Patients told us they could get an appointment with a named GP and urgent appointments were 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 the practice responded to complaints and comments appropriately.

Good



Summary of findings

Are services well-led?

The practice is rated as good for being well-led. The leadership team was visible and it had a clear vision and purpose. Staff were clear about the vision and their responsibilities in relation to this. There was a leadership structure and staff felt supported by management. Governance arrangements were in place and there were systems for identifying and managing risks. Staff were committed to maintaining and improving standards of care. Key staff were identified as leads for different areas in the practice and staff were clear who the leads were. Staff were well supported by the GPs and practice manager.

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 was knowledgeable about the number and health needs of older patients using the service and actively reviewed the care and treatment needs of these patients. Nationally reported data showed that outcomes for patients were good for conditions commonly found in older people. Patients over the age of 75 had a named GP. The practice was responsive to the needs of older people, and offered home visits and rapid access appointments for those with enhanced needs.

Good



People with long term conditions

The practice is rated as good for the care of people with long-term conditions. Nursing staff had lead roles in chronic disease management and patients at risk of hospital admission were identified as a priority. Longer appointments and home visits were available when needed. All these patients had a named GP and a structured annual review to check that their health and medication needs were being met. For those people 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. The practice offered comprehensive vaccination programmes which were managed effectively. Immunisation rates were relatively high for all standard childhood immunisations. The practice monitored any non-attendance of babies and children at vaccination clinics and worked with the health visiting service to follow up any concerns.

Appointments were available outside of school hours and the premises were suitable for children and babies. We saw good examples of joint working with midwives, health visitors and school nurses. There was a midwife clinic held at the practice and patients' care was shared between the midwife and GPs.

The practice had worked to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies which had been on average six per year over the past eight years. There had only been one to date in 2015.

Good



Summary of findings

Working age people (including those recently retired and students)

Good



The practice is rated as good for the care of working-age people (including those recently retired and students). The needs of this population group 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 provided a range of options for patients to consult with the GP and nurse. The practice was proactive in offering online services. Useful information was available in the practice and on the website as well as a full range of health promotion and screening that reflected the needs for this age group. Extended hours were provided on a Saturday morning once a month at Thorntree surgery and on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the provider's Park Surgery site.

The practice offered an enhanced service to provide vasectomy surgery for their own patients and those from any practice in the South Tees area. They also provided a sexual health enhanced service at their Park surgery site.

People whose circumstances may make them vulnerable

Good



The practice is rated as good for the care of people whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The practice held a register where necessary, of patients living in vulnerable circumstances including homeless people, travellers and those with a learning disability. The practice offered these patients longer appointments. We found that all of the staff had a very good understanding of what services were available within their catchment area, such as supported living services, care homes and families with carer responsibilities.

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. They had access to the practices' policy and procedures and discussed vulnerable patients at the clinical meetings.

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). The practice maintained a register of patients who experienced mental health problems including dementia. The register supported clinical staff to offer patients an annual appointment for a health check and a

Summary of findings

medicines review. Data for 2013/2014 showed 83.3% of patients diagnosed with dementia had received a face to face review in the previous 12 months; this was 5.2% above the local CCG average and 5.4% above the national average.

The practice regularly worked with multi-disciplinary teams in the case management of people experiencing poor mental health, including those with dementia. Information was available for patients on counselling services and support groups. A counsellor and an alcohol support worker attended the Park surgery site practice once a week which patients could access when needed.

Summary of findings

What people who use the service say

The National GP patient survey results published on the 15 June 2015 showed the practice was performing below the local CCG and national average in most areas. There were 432 survey forms distributed for Thorntree Surgery and 51 forms were returned, a response rate of 12%.

- 73% find it easy to get through to this surgery by phone compared with a CCG average of 77% and a national average of 73%.
- 76% find the receptionists at this surgery helpful compared with a CCG average of 89% and a national average of 87%.
- 73% were able to get an appointment to see or speak to someone the last time they tried compared with a CCG average of 87% and a national average of 85%.
- 82% say the last appointment they got was convenient compared with a CCG average of 93% and a national average of 92%.
- 60% describe their experience of making an appointment as good compared with a CCG average of 76% and a national average of 73%.
- 77% usually wait 15 minutes or less after their appointment time to be seen compared with a CCG average of 72% and a national average of 65%.

- 53% feel they don't normally have to wait too long to be seen compared with a CCG average of 64% and a national average of 58%.

As part of our inspection we also asked for CQC comment cards to be completed by patients prior to our inspection. We received 10 completed comment cards all of which were very positive about the service and standard of care received. Patients said staff were polite and helpful and always treated them with dignity and respect. Patients described the service as brilliant, excellent, very good and very helpful. They said the staff were friendly, polite and showed compassion and care.

We spoke with 2 patients during the inspection and they also confirmed that they had received very good care and attention and they felt that all the staff treated them with dignity and respect.

We looked at the results of the Practice's 'Family and Friends' survey results for Dec 2014 to March 2015. They were also positive about the services delivered.

Areas for improvement

Action the service SHOULD take to improve

- Ensure the practice has a written strategy which outlines their vision and plans for the future.

Thorntree Surgery

Detailed findings

Our inspection team

Our inspection team was led by:

a CQC Inspector and included a second CQC Inspector, a GP Specialist Advisor, a Practice Manager Specialist Advisor and an Expert by Experience.

Background to Thorntree Surgery

Thorntree Surgery is situated on a housing estate in east Middlesbrough and provides services under a General Medical Services (GMS) contract with NHS England, Durham, Darlington And Tees Area Team to the practice population of 2259, covering patients of all ages.

The proportion of the practice population in the 65 years and over age group is lower than the England average. The practice population in the under 18 age group is higher than the England average. The practice scored one on the deprivation measurement scale, which is the lowest decile. People living in more deprived areas tend to have greater need for health services. The overall practice deprivation score is much higher than the England average, the practice is 61.5 and the England average is 23.6.

The practice has three GP partners and three associate GPs, three male and three female. The practice manager is also a partner. There is an assistant practice manager, three nurse practitioners, five practice nurses and three health care assistants. The practice has a team of secretarial, administration and reception staff.

The practice has opted out of providing out of hours services (OOHs) for their patients. When the practice is closed patients use the 111 service to contact the OOHs

provider. The Out of Hours service is provided by Northern Doctors Urgent Care (NDUC). Information for patients requiring urgent medical attention out of hours is available in the waiting area, in the practice information leaflet and on the practice website.

The practice is open between 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. Appointments are from 9.00am to 4.50pm daily. Extended hours surgeries are provided on a Saturday morning once a month at Thorntree surgery and on a Tuesday and Thursday evening until 7.50pm at the provider's Park Surgery site. The practice closes on a Wednesday between 12pm and 2.00pm for staff training or meetings, the phone line is transferred and is always answered so any urgent queries are dealt with. The practice, along with all other practices in the South Tees CCG area have a contractual agreement for NDUC to provide OOHs services from 6.00pm and this has been agreed with the NHS England area team.

Why we carried out this inspection

We inspected this service as part of our comprehensive inspection programme. We carried out an announced inspection to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

How we carried out this inspection

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

Detailed findings

- 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 are provided for specific groups of people and what good care looks 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)

Before visiting, we reviewed a range of information we held about the service and asked other organisations to share what they knew about the service. We reviewed policies, procedures and other information the practice provided before and during the inspection. We carried out an announced visit on the 13 and 14 July 2015.

During our visit we spoke with a range of staff including two GPs, two nurse practitioners, two practice nurses and a health care assistant. We also spoke with the practice manager and assistant practice manager, two receptionists, the secretary and one administrator. We spoke with two patients who used the service and observed how staff spoke to, and interacted with patients when they were in the practice and on the telephone. We also reviewed 10 CQC comment cards where patients were able to share their views and experiences of the service.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Safe track record and learning

There was an open and transparent approach and a system in place for reporting and recording significant events. People affected by significant events received a timely apology and were told about actions taken to improve care. Staff told us they would inform the practice manager of any incidents. There was also a paper form and a form available on the practice's computer system that staff could complete. All complaints received by the practice were entered onto the system and automatically treated as a significant event. The practice carried out an analysis of the significant events.

We reviewed safety records, incident reports 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, a patient was seen by a nurse practitioner but they were not the correct patient and had mistakenly gone in when the nurse had called the name which was similar to their own. The error was identified when the patient looked at the prescription they had been given, an apology was given and a new prescription was issued. The practice reiterated its' policy to all staff that they should check a patient's identity, name and date of birth, before commencing a consultation. This was discussed at staff meetings and all staff reminded of the correct procedure.

Safety was monitored using information from a range of sources, including National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance. This enabled staff to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture of safety. The practice used the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) eForm to report patient safety incidents.

Overview of safety systems and processes

The practice had clearly defined systems, processes and practices in place to keep people safe, which included:

- Arrangements were in place to safeguard adults and children 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 staff told us they had received training relevant to their role.

- Information telling patients that they could ask for a chaperone was visible in the consulting rooms. Nursing staff acted as chaperones and understood their responsibilities, including where to stand to be able to observe the examination. Nursing staff had received a disclosure and barring check (DBS). (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).
- There were procedures in place for monitoring and managing risks to patients and staff safety. There was a health and safety policy available with a poster in the reception office. The practice had a fire risk assessment and fire drills had been carried out twice yearly. Staff were up to date with fire training and staff we spoke with were able to describe the action they would take 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 also had a variety of other risk assessments in place to monitor safety of the premises such as control of substances hazardous to health, infection control and legionella.
- Appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene were followed. We observed the premises to be clean and tidy. One of the nurse practitioners was the infection prevention and control (IPC) lead who liaised with the local IPC teams to keep up to date with best practice. There was an infection control protocol in place and staff had received training. Annual infection control audits and quarterly monitoring were undertaken and we saw evidence that action was taken to address any improvements identified as a result.
- The arrangements for managing medicines in the practice, including emergency drugs and vaccinations, kept patients safe (including obtaining, prescribing, recording, handling, storing and security). Regular medication audits were carried out with the support of

Are services safe?

the local CCG pharmacy teams to ensure the practice was prescribing in line with best practice guidelines for safe prescribing. Prescription pads were securely stored and there were systems in place to monitor their use.

- The practice had a recruitment policy which outlined the process and checks to be undertaken for all new staff. Recruitment checks were carried out and the four files we reviewed showed that 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.
- 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.

Arrangements to deal with 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 and oxygen with adult and children's masks.

There was also a first aid kit and accident book available.

Emergency medicines were easily accessible to staff in a secure area of the practice and all staff knew of their location. All the medicines we checked were in date and fit for use.

The practice had a 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 carried out assessments and treatment 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 ensure all clinical staff were kept up to date. The practice had access to guidelines from NICE and used this information to develop how care and treatment was delivered to meet patients' needs. The practice monitored that these guidelines were followed through audits.

Management, monitoring and improving outcomes for people

The practice participated in the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF). (This is a system intended to improve the quality of general practice and reward good practice). The practice used the information collected for the QOF and performance against national screening programmes to monitor outcomes for patients. Results from 2013/2014 showed the practice achieved 96.1% of the total number of points available. This practice was not an outlier for any QOF (or other national) clinical targets. Data from 2013/14 showed;

- Performance for diabetes related indicators was 87.7% which was 4.5% below the CCG and 2.4% below the national average.
- The percentage of patients with Chronic Obstructive Airways Disease (COPD) who have had a review, undertaken by a healthcare professional in the preceding 12 months, was 75% which was 1.6% above the CCG and 5.4% below the national average.
- Performance for asthma was 98.8% which was 5.1% above the CCG and 1.6% above the national average.
- Performance for the secondary prevention of coronary heart disease was 99.8.% which was 5.5% above the CCG and 6.7% above the national average.

Clinical audits were carried out to demonstrate quality improvement and all relevant staff were involved to improve care and treatment and people's outcomes. We were shown four clinical audits that had been completed in the last two years, and saw where improvements or changes in practice had been identified. There was one audit with a completed cycle. The practice participated in

applicable local audits, national benchmarking, accreditation and peer review. Findings were used by the practice to improve services. For example, an audit had been undertaken to ensure an anti-inflammatory medicine was being prescribed in line with current guidelines and was not being taken by patients in the identified at risk groups. The practice reviewed all the patients taking the medicine and discontinued the anti-inflammatory medicine for those in the high risk group and prescribed an alternative for their pain relief.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and treatment.

- The practice had an induction programme for newly appointed members of staff that covered such topics as safeguarding, fire safety, health and safety and confidentiality.
- 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 these learning needs and to cover the scope of their work. This included on-going support during meetings, peer support, appraisals, facilitation and support for the revalidation of doctors. All staff had had an appraisal in April 2014 after which the practice had decided to move their appraisals to August each year. We saw that all the pre-appraisal questionnaires had been completed and staff had appraisal appointments booked.
- Staff told us they received training that included: safeguarding, fire procedures, basic life support and information governance awareness. Staff had access to and made use of e-learning training modules and in-house training.

Coordinating patient care and information sharing

The information needed to plan and deliver care and treatment was available to relevant staff in a timely and accessible way through the practice's patient record system and their intranet system. This included care and risk assessments, care plans, medical records and test results. Information such as NHS patient information leaflets were also available. All relevant information was shared with other services in a timely way, for example when people were referred to other services.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Staff worked together, and with other health and social care services to understand and meet the range and complexity of people's needs and to assess and plan on-going care and treatment. This included when people 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 bi-monthly basis and that care plans were routinely reviewed and updated.

Consent to care and treatment

Patients' consent to care and treatment was always sought 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, assessments of capacity to consent were also carried out in line with relevant guidance. Where a patient's mental capacity to consent to care or treatment was unclear the GP or nurse assessed the patient's capacity and, where appropriate, recorded the outcome of the assessment.

Health promotion and prevention

Patients who may be in need of extra support were identified by the practice. These included patients in the last 12 months of their lives, carers, those at risk of developing a long-term condition, those requiring advice on their diet, smoking and alcohol cessation and those with mental health problems. Patients were then signposted to the relevant service. A clinical psychologist

and alcohol support worker service were available on the premises. Smoking cessation advice was available from a local support group. Patients who may be in need of extra support were identified by the practice.

The practice had a comprehensive screening programme. QOF data from 2013/2014 showed the practice's uptake for the cervical screening programme was 67.3%, which was 7.1% below the CCG and 9.6% below the national average. There was a policy to offer telephone reminders for patients who did not attend for their cervical screening test. By July 2015 the uptake had increased to 80.69%. The practice also encouraged its patients to attend national screening programmes for bowel and breast cancer screening.

Data from 2013/2014 showed childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given were above or comparable to the CCG and national averages for children aged 12 months, 2 and 5 years. For example, childhood immunisation rates for the vaccinations given to two and five year olds ranged from 82.4% to 96.1%. Flu vaccination rates for at risk groups were below the CCG and national average for diabetes and above the local CCG and national average for heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Patients had access to appropriate health assessments and checks. These included health checks for new patients and NHS health checks for people aged 40–74. Appropriate follow-ups on the outcomes of health assessments and checks were made, where abnormalities or risk factors were identified.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion and empathy

We observed throughout the inspection that members of staff were courteous and very helpful to patients both attending at the reception desk and on the telephone and that people were treated with dignity and respect. Curtains were provided in consulting rooms so that patients' privacy and dignity was maintained during examinations, investigations and treatments. We noted that consultation and treatment room doors were closed during consultations and that 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.

Patient feedback on the CQC comment cards and from patients we spoke with was very positive about the service experienced. Patients said they felt the practice offered a very good service and staff were helpful, caring and treated them with dignity and respect. Comments highlighted that staff responded compassionately when they needed help and provided support when required.

Results from the national GP patient survey published in June 2015 showed patients were satisfied with how they were treated and that this was with compassion, dignity and respect. The practice was below the CCG and national average for consultations with doctors. It was above or similar to the CCG and national average for its satisfaction scores on consultations with nurses. For example:

- 71% said the GP gave them enough time compared to the CCG average of 88% and national average of 87%.
- 71% said the GP was good at listening to them compared to the CCG average of 89% and national average of 89%.
- 63% said the last GP they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the CCG average of 86% and national average of 85%.
- 88% said they had confidence and trust in the last GP they saw compared to the CCG average of 95% and national average of 95%.
- 94% said the nurse gave them enough time compared to the CCG average of 93% and national average of 92%.

- 89% said the nurse was good at listening to them compared to the CCG average of 93% and national average of 91%.
- 92% said the last nurse they spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern compared to the CCG average of 92% and national average of 90%.
- 100% said they had confidence and trust in the last nurse they saw compared to the CCG average of 97% and national average of 97%.
- 76% patients said they found the receptionists at the practice helpful compared to the CCG average of 89% and national average of 87%.

Care planning and involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Patients we spoke with told us that health issues were discussed with them and 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 published in June 2015 did not reflect what patients told us during the inspection and feedback on the comment cards. During the inspection patients were positive to questions about their involvement in planning and making decisions about their care and treatment from the GPs and nurses. The results in the survey were below the local CCG and national averages for GPs, for example:

- 59% said the last GP they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 87% and national average of 86%.
- 60% said the last GP they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the CCG average of 82% and national average of 81%.
- 87% said the last nurse they saw was good at explaining tests and treatments compared to the CCG average of 91% and national average of 90%.
- 90% said the last nurse they saw was good at involving them in decisions about their care compared to the CCG average of 87% and national average of 85%.

Staff told us that translation services were available for patients who did not have English as a first language. There was the facility available on the practice website so

Are services caring?

information could be translated into other languages. The GPs in the practice also spoke other languages including Chinese and Urdu. There was no notice in the reception area informing patients the translation service was available.

Patient and carer support to cope emotionally with care and treatment

There was information available in the waiting room for patients about how to access a number of support groups and organisations.

The practice's computer system alerted GPs if a patient was also a carer. There was a practice register of all people who were carers. Information was available on the website for carers to ensure they understood the various avenues of support available to them.

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. A Bereavement Counsellor was also available to help recently bereaved patients.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The practice worked with the local CCG to plan services and to improve outcomes for patients in the area. For example, the practice worked with the CCG and the community matron to identify their patients who were at high risk of attending accident and emergency or having an unplanned admission to hospital. Care plans were developed to reduce the risk of unplanned admissions or A/E attendances.

Services were planned and delivered to take into account the needs of different patient groups and to help provide flexibility, choice and continuity of care. For example;

- The practice opened on a Saturday morning once a month.
- The practice offered late evening appointments until 8.00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Park surgery site for working patients who could not attend during normal opening hours.
- There were longer appointments available for people with a learning disability.
- Appointments could be made on line, via the telephone and in person.
- Telephone consultations were available for working patients who could not attend during surgery hours or for those whose problem could be dealt with on the phone.
- Home visits were available for older patients and patients who would benefit from these.
- Urgent access appointments were available for children and those with serious medical conditions.
- There were disabled facilities and translation services available. There was a hearing loop available for patients who had hearing difficulties.
- The practice offered an enhanced service to provide vasectomy surgery for their patients and those from any practice in the South Tees area. They also provided a sexual health enhanced service at the providers Park Surgery site.

Access to the service

The practice was open between 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. Appointments were available from 9.00am to 4.50pm daily. The practice, along with all other practices in the South Tees CCG area had a contractual agreement for

the Northern Doctors Urgent Care service to provide Out of Hours services from 6.00pm Monday to Friday. This had been agreed with the NHS England Area Team. Between 5.30pm and 6.00pm the telephone lines were transferred to the providers Park Surgery site.

In addition to pre-bookable appointments that could be booked up to one week in advance, urgent appointments were also available for people that needed them. If patients needed to be seen urgently they would be fitted in that day and staff explained they may have a wait until the GP saw them. The patients we spoke with told us they could ring up on a morning and get an appointment the same day.

Results from the national GP patient survey published in June 2015 showed that patient's satisfaction with how they could access care and treatment was below the local CCG and national averages. This did not reflect the feedback we received on the day where patients told us they were satisfied with access. For example:

- 49% of patients were satisfied with the practice's opening hours compared to the CCG average of 79% and national average of 75%.
- 73% of patients said they could get through easily to the surgery by phone compared to the CCG average of 77% and national average of 73%.
- 60% of patients described their experience of making an appointment as good compared to the CCG average of 76% and national average of 73%.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

The practice had a 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. Information was on the practice website, in the patient information and complaints leaflets. We saw that the complaints policy had details of who patients should contact and the timescales they would receive a response by. Patients we spoke with were aware of the process to follow if they wished to make a complaint.

There had been no complaints received in the last 12 months. We looked at complaints that had been received in the last 12 months for the providers Park Surgery site and

Are services responsive to people's needs? (for example, to feedback?)

found these were satisfactorily handled and dealt with in a timely way. We saw that patients had been involved in the complaint investigation and the practice was open when dealing with the complaint.

Lessons were learnt from concerns and complaints and action was taken to as a result to improve the quality of care.

Are services well-led?

Good 

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

Our findings

Vision and strategy

The practice had a vision to deliver high quality care and promote good outcomes for patients although this was not displayed on the website or in the practice for patients and staff to see. Staff we spoke with knew and understood the vision. The practice did not have a written strategy or supporting business plan which outlined how they would deliver their vision.

Governance arrangements

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

- 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. Some of the policies needed to be reviewed.
- A comprehensive understanding of the performance of the practice.
- 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, openness and transparency

The partners in the practice had the experience, capacity and capability to run the practice and ensure high quality

care. They prioritised safe, high quality and compassionate care. The partners were visible in the practice and staff told us that they were approachable and always took the time to listen to all members of staff. The partners encouraged a culture of openness and honesty.

Leads had been identified for key areas including infection control, governance and safeguarding although not all staff were clear who the lead was for infection control.

Staff told us that regular team meetings were held and minutes showed significant events, complaints, audits new guidelines and patient feedback was discussed. Staff told us that 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 valued and supported, by the GPs and practice manager.

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

The practice encouraged and valued feedback from patients, proactively gaining patients' feedback and engaging patients in the delivery of the service. It had gathered feedback from patients through surveys and complaints received.

The practice had also gathered feedback from staff, generally 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.