

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing

East Kent Out of Hours GP Services and NHS 111 provided by Primecare

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Background

Primecare was commissioned in 2016 to provide an integrated NHS 111 and out of hours GP service across the four East Kent CCGs. The aim of this was to provide a seamless transition for patients between NHS 111 and out of hours GP services.

Following a planned mobilisation phase, the out of hours GP service went live on 28 September 2016 and NHS 111 followed in a phased approach starting from November 2016.

The contract has been closely performance managed on a monthly basis since the service went live. A key part of this process is to monitor the arrangements to ensure that patients are provided with a safe effective service and that patient experience is reviewed regularly and lessons embedded into the service.

Regular contract management identified some concerns in relation to quality of care and the CCG has been working with Primecare to oversee improvements and also support Primecare to make the necessary changes.

CQC inspection

The CQC carried out an inspection in May 2017 and the report was published on 3 August. The CQC report identified a number of concerns and the overall rating was inadequate. The provider was placed in special measures. The concerns identified by the CQC replicated concerns that the CCG had already raised with Primecare.

Following the inspection CQC took enforcement action against the provider, namely the service of three warning notices.

The warning notices covered:

- **Safe care and treatment** (care and treatment must be provided in a safe way for service users). Primecare had failed to ensure they properly assessed the risks to the health and care of service users, particularly in respect of reporting, recording and learning from significant events.

- **Good governance** (systems or processes must be established and operated effectively). Primecare demonstrated a lack of key senior staff, used interim staff, staff were not fully aware of their roles and responsibilities, the disaster /recovery plan was unclear, and there was an absence of patient feedback.
- **Staffing** (sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, competent, skilled and experienced persons must be deployed). Primecare did not have enough staff to meet the needs of patients and there was a lack of induction and mandatory training.

Primecare ratings for each area inspected

Are services safe? Inadequate

Are services effective? Inadequate

Are services caring? Requires improvement

Are services responsive to people's needs? Requires improvement

Are services well-led? Inadequate

The full inspection report can be viewed on the [CQC website](#).

Progress since report

Primecare have put in place a plan to address all of the concerns raised by the CQC and the CCG has received updated copies of this plan on a weekly basis since. The CCG is working closely with Primecare to oversee the improvements required and has provided direct support to Primecare to support the changes needed.

There are very clear processes within the NHS to monitor and support NHS providers and these are in place.

NHS England has convened a Quality Oversight Group for Primecare which meets regularly. The purpose of the meetings is to support and hold Primecare to account and to ensure timely action to addresses the concerns raised during the CQC inspection.