

NELFT CQC Inspection Rating – sent on behalf of John Brouder, Chief Executive

On 27 September the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) report from our inspection on 4-8 April 2016 and 14 April 2016 will be published on their [website](#).

Of our 14 core services that were inspected, the CQC rated nine as 'Good' and four as 'Requires Improvement' and one as 'Inadequate'. This has led to an overall CQC rating of 'Requires Improvement' for the trust.

As you can imagine, we are disappointed with this overall rating given the hard work, dedication and commitment of our staff and the amount of nationally recognised, award winning services and innovations we are delivering.

However, as an organisation committed to delivering the best care by the best people, we welcome the learning we can take from the inspection report and we have already made significant improvements in a number of areas since April 2016 when the inspection was carried out.

We feel the report is balanced in terms of highlighting the areas of good work taking place across the trust, in particular:

- Staff knew and agreed with the trust values and felt that objectives reflected the trust's vision. Staff spoke about how the values of putting the patient first worked well the trust.
- Directors and managers demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm to the trust and spoke passionately of the work being undertaken to develop services.
- Caring was good across the majority of core services where we found that people were treated with compassion, kindness and respect.
- There was good medicines management practice across the trust sites inspected.
- The trust used a number of nationally recognised tools and audits to measure and improve the outcomes of patients and people using their services.
- The teams across the trust had a range of experienced staff in different disciplines including nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, doctors and recovery support workers and there was good multi-disciplinary working.
- The CQC observed many examples of positive interactions where staff communicated with people in a calm and professional manner.
- The trust had taken positive steps in response to the recent NHS staff survey to involve and engage staff more in the development of the trust.

- The diabetes team in Essex community health adults service had developed a number of initiatives to meet the needs of the local population more effectively.

Overall the CQC report praised our caring staff across all services that were inspected. They said *‘We found that people were treated with compassion, kindness and respect. Staff demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm to the trust and spoke passionately of the work being undertaken to develop services.’*

The inspectors said that they *‘We observed many examples of positive interactions where staff communicated with people in a calm and professional manner’* and *‘trust worked collaboratively with commissioners and other NHS trusts in East London and Essex to plan and meet the needs of local populations.’* In their report the Inspectors confirmed that we are a *‘well-led’* organisation with *‘a healthy culture that works hard to engage with people who use services and staff’*.

Areas for improvement highlighted in the report are all issues that the leadership team were aware of and we have already made significant improvements across a number of these in the three months following the inspection. An update is below:

- We have demonstrated significant improvements in relation to staff issues across the trust with a sustained reduction in agency staffing and spend and dedicated resource to support recruitment of new staff across all areas. There has been some additional investment from commissioners to support an increase in staffing levels to manage the high demand on our services and we continue to work with our commissioners to keep this under review.
- We took the decision to temporarily close Brookside, our child and adolescent inpatient unit in order to address issues with the environment and to ensure that we had a full complement of staff available to support young people. We have carried out extensive refurbishment work, developed an innovative new model of care and recruited and trained the staff team. Brookside is reopening this month and will deliver a modern and innovative service for our young people.
- In our adult mental health inpatient services we have reviewed our management arrangements and we now have a new management team who are implementing a number of significant improvements across risk assessments, the patient environment and care planning.
- We have commissioned an independent review of the governance structure and arrangements that are in place across the trust in order to ensure that we have effective clinical and corporate governance processes in place across the organisation.

We have action plans in place and are working with our staff, patients and partners to continue to improve the quality, safety and effectiveness of all of our services. We will continue with this approach, based on the CQC recommendations, in order to deliver the best possible care for our patients.

The CQC are holding the Quality Summit on 14 October and representatives from all our partner organisations, Governors, patient groups and staff have been invited to attend.

We appreciate your continued support to ensure that we can continue to deliver improved services for patients and local communities.

Ends