

GENERAL COMMENTS

Lead Surveyor

Moruya Medical Centre is in the riverside town of Moruya on the NSW far south coast, 175km east of Canberra. Prior to European settlement it was the traditional land of the Bugelli-Manji clan and there are still a significant number of indigenous patients living in the area. It has become a popular place for tourists in the summer months and for older people to retire to permanently. It has an older population but young families have started to move into the area since Covid. Australian born Caucasians make up nearly 80% of the population, followed by people migrating from England and New Zealand and small numbers of people from India, The Netherlands and Vietnam. There are also a significant number of indigenous people living here. The socio-economic status is towards the lower end.

Overview

The practice is in a large stand alone building on one of the main streets of Moruya. The original practice was in a nearby street and moved into the purposely built current premises in 2014. It is a welcoming, spacious and light filled practice with the waiting room as a central hub and the reception and staff areas, treatment room and consultation rooms arranged around the octagonal space.

There is also accommodation for 1 registrar on the site in premises attached to the main building. The main demographic is older Australian born people with chronic diseases but there are slowly increasing numbers of younger people and migrants. There are currently 9 doctors which includes 4 doctors in various stages of training, 6 nurses, 6 clerical staff, 2 office managers and a practice manager. The practice has 8 visiting medical specialists, a podiatrist, continence care practitioner, physiotherapist and diabetes management practitioner. As well as registrars, the practice teaches medical students. There is pathology on site, pharmacies and a radiology practice in town as well as the local hospital. The practice was very well prepared for accreditation. It is an exceptional practice with a focus on care of the patients, staff and local community that is maintained even in the face of challenges such as fire, flood and a pandemic. The systems developed to manage elderly patients and those with chronic care conditions show remarkable attention to detail and the warmth and camaraderie between staff members was very obvious. The practice also has a strong interest in environmental sustainability and has undertaken several initiatives in this area. It is an exemplar practice and the registrars and students who receive the benefit of teaching in this practice are very fortunate.

Services

The practice is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 5.00pm. After hours care is provided by the local hospital and patients are also directed to the Urgent Care Centre at Batemans Bay, just over 20 minutes' drive from Moruya as well as to the GP Helpline for telephone advice. Home visits are available and are at the discretion of each doctor. The practice also cares for the patients of 2 nursing homes. It is a private billing practice, but some doctors choose to bulk bill patients such as children < 16 years of age. Appointments are preferred and these can be booked online or via phone or in person. Urgent walk ins are accommodated, and the practice also keeps urgent on the day appointments. Services offered include skin biopsies, excisions, Implanon and IUD insertion / removal and venesection, pre-employment medicals and work cover. A number of doctors are bilingual but there is only a very small number of patients who require this service.

Clinical Systems

The spacious 4 bed treatment room was well set up and emergency and resuscitation equipment, oxygen, anaphylaxis kit, doctors' bag and spill kit were appropriately stocked. The S8 drugs, a small number of medications ordered by the practice and the emergency drugs were in date and stored appropriately. There are thorough check lists for all equipment and maintenance.

Sharps and clinical waste storage was compliant with regulations. The practice uses disposable instruments and does keep a log of patient, date and procedure but is encouraged to add batch numbers to this log. The cold chain and vaccine fridge are maintained correctly according to the principles of Strive for Five.

The electrical equipment had all been checked, calibrated and tagged by an external company.

The practice nurses are very well integrated into the chronic care of patients with detailed outlines of nurse consultation guides developed by one of the practice principals. This ensures that all aspects of a patient's history are complete and regular examinations are undertaken. The level of detail, particularly of patient's social history was impressive.

Governance

The doctors have full autonomy in all aspects of their practice and there was evidence of this with each doctor having their own billing policy and doctors working the days and sessions that suited them. The process for reviewing, recalling and acting on results was thorough and robust. The doctors have remote access and arrange their own cover with other practice doctors when they are on leave. The local pathology and radiology companies have the doctors' private mobile numbers for urgent out of hours contact. The reminder system is appropriately used for preventative and chronic health care. Regular meetings are held including clinical, administrative and managerial staff meetings and occasional whole of practice staff meetings. Lines of communication are clear, and the staff utilise the F8 function in Best Practice for day to day messages. As you would expect in a teaching practice, the doctors access a wide variety of resources including all those available via the RACGP, eTG and Health Pathways.

Medical Records

The practice uses Best Practice for the clinical files, billing and bookings and Automed for patients to make online bookings and for communication of recalls and reminders. Pencil is used for data extraction and analysis. The medical records were exceptionally thorough and of a very high standard. Every patient file checked by the assessor had ATSI, ethnicity, next of kin, emergency contact, allergies, complete and detailed social and family history. The past history, medications and observation sections were all thorough and up to date. Results were followed up promptly, with evidence of recalls and appropriate reminders were in place. The clinical notes were thorough and logical and it would be easy for another doctor to take over care. There was thoughtful and thorough management of elderly patients with chronic and complicated health problems and continuity of care was evident with patients seeing the same doctor over many years. This care extended outside the practice with documentation of home and nursing home visits. The only suggestion the assessor could recommend for improvement was the addition of documentation of ID, check of privacy and notification of billing to the telephone consultations.

Moruya Medical Centre is a wonderful practice providing exceptional care to the local community. Standards of excellence, compassion for staff and patients, quality improvement embedded in the ethos of the practice and sustainability are among the many outstanding qualities. The GP assessor has recommended the practice consider nomination for GP practice of the year.

Co-surveyor

Background

Moruya Medical Centre is located in suburbs of south coast town of Moruya, NSW. The practice is located closest to Moruya Hospital.

There is a practice manager, principal GP, GP's, nursing staff and support staff. The practice is opened over a Monday to Friday period. The practice has a current registrar intake. The practice has regular attending specialists, as well as CDM clinics available to their patients.

The practice uses Best Practice for clinical record and for appointment keeping. The practice uses internal electronic messaging system, to relay messages between staff. There is a process of scanning documents into inbox for electronic notation. Secure shredding bins are located at the practice for safe discarding of sensitive documentation.

Cold Chain Management & Infection Control

The practice has two vaccine fridges and documented evidence of procedures around the monitoring and maintenance of the vaccines and the fridges were able to be reviewed. There is evidence of the vaccine fridges being checked twice daily for manual entry minimum, maximum and current temperatures. There is a data logger which is monitored three times a week. There is evidence of the cold chain breach protocol being in place, and evidence of these protocols and continuity plans were understood by staff.

Infection control is monitored and maintained by delegated staff members in the practice. Infection control is also part of the orientation of all staff members. The practice uses single-use instruments.

Document Review

There was evidence of the practice having an infection control and cold chain policy which addressed all relevant information. The practice had a patient information sheet and a privacy policy which was appropriate. The practice website also contained information as per their patient information sheet, and included electronic policy and telehealth availability for patients.

The practice maintained a variety of registers, including risk and adverse events, incidents, complaints, and improvements. There was a documented business plan, and the practice could also describe their future aspirations and goals for the practice in the future.

The practice had robust and documented emergency response planning, with particular mentions to the practice having undergone a variety of emergency response scenarios in the past including bushfire, pandemic, and flood responses. The practice is to be commended for their ongoing efforts in ensuring that they can further service their community if these scenarios are encountered again in the future.

There was evidence of clinical and non-clinical meetings for practice staff, and these are scheduled regularly

The practice has ongoing staff driven initiatives to improve their practice services. There is ongoing data quality improvement initiatives, as well as ongoing quality improvements for the practice procedures and staff wellbeing.

All doctors had evidence of current medical registration, CPD evidence, VR status (or registrars in appropriate supervision or programs), and CPR evidence. Nursing staff had evidence of medical registration, CPR and CPD evidence. Evidence of training on safe use of equipment was demonstrated to occur on an annual basis.

Non-clinical staff had evidence of ongoing and frequent training relevant to their role, including CPR. There was evidence of a training register for all staff. Induction checklists and position descriptions for staff were reviewed and appropriate.

The practice has agreements in place for their safe disposal of waste and sharps, and IT third party contractor scope of works.

There is evidence of onsite delegated staff who are responsible for monitoring and maintaining the IT systems, in conjunction with the responsibilities of the third party contractors. There is documented evidence of the procedures for the practice data back-ups and test and restore structure, accountability of IT by role, as well as a disaster recovery and continuity plan.

The practice has an email and social media policy.

The practice had undertaken a commercial tool for their patient feedback survey, and could demonstrate how they discussed the findings, formed an action plan, and displayed this on their practice waiting room wall for patients to review. The practice also encourages ongoing feedback with their patients and makes this available to them. Feedback is reviewed by the practice manager regularly.