

Five Leadership qualities the CQC wants to see in your Practice

Of the five key questions asked by the CQC during GP practice inspections, one of the most important is whether or not the practice benefits from good leadership. In exactly the same way any business will thrive when led well, so too will a GP practice. Good management techniques will make staff feel engaged and empowered. This leads to a better working atmosphere and a GP practice in which patients feel valued and not forgotten.

Investment in GP practice leadership should be considered as an integral part of annual budgeting, in the same way that individuals should heed the benefits of continuing professional development (CPD). To this end, GP practices might consider programmes such as the [National Skills Academy's Leadership Qualities Framework \(LQF\)](#) as a model for practice management. Below are five qualities of leadership that practices should aim to foster.

1. Leadership is about understanding

Employees and patients have individual concerns which need to be taken into account. Good managers treat their people with empathy, and understand that common ground found is a connection made.

2. Leadership is about listening

Good leaders listen to their people, and in a GP practice take notice of patients. Ideas for improvement, concerns over working practices, complaints and praise should be encouraged as discussion topics. Listening is a prime way to encourage engagement.

3. Leadership is about honesty and openness

The positive impact of openness should not be ignored. Open door policies help establish trust, as do open meetings and a positive attitude toward staff and environment. Discuss concerns openly and with honesty.

4. Good leaders encourage feedback

Ask for feedback – you'll receive good and bad. When you take notice of feedback given, your people will know you care about them and empathise with them.

5. Leaders are always learning

Good leaders learn from feedback, realise mistakes early, and are willing to alter course to achieve goals.

As a leader it's important to look toward the long term, and understand that GP practices, just like other businesses, rely on staff pulling in one direction. By understanding their concerns, listening to their views, and delivering on your promises, you'll find your people will be with you and your practice all the way. This will have a positive impact on patients, which the CQC will not fail to recognise.

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