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Salford Dental Practice

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 4 March 2019 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. We planned the inspection to check whether the registered provider was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations. The inspection was led by a CQC inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

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

- Is it safe?
- Is it effective?
- Is it caring?
- Is it responsive to people's needs?
- Is it well-led?

These questions form the framework for the areas we look at during the inspection.

Our findings were:

Are services safe?

We found that this practice was providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services effective?

We found that this practice was providing effective care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services caring?

We found that this practice was providing caring services in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services responsive?

We found that this practice was providing responsive care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services well-led?

We found that this practice was providing well-led care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Background

Salford Dental Practice provides NHS and private treatment to adults and children. The service also offers conscious sedation.

The practice has a portable ramp to facilitate access to the practice for wheelchair users. Car parking spaces are available near the practice.

The dental team includes five dentists, four dental nurses, a receptionist and a practice manager. The practice has three treatment rooms.

Summary of findings

The practice is owned by an individual who is the principal dentist there. They have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the practice is run.

On the day of inspection, we collected 10 CQC comment cards filled in by patients and five filled in by staff.

During the inspection we spoke with two dentists, two dental nurses, the receptionist and the practice manager. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 5:30pm

Wednesday from 9am to 6pm

Friday from 9am to 2:30pm

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.
- Improvements could be made to some infection control procedures.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. On the day of inspection some medical emergency equipment was not available. These were ordered immediately, and evidence sent.
- The practice had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff.
- The provider had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- The provider had staff recruitment procedures. Minor improvements could be made to ensure consistency in the recruitment process.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- Staff were providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system took account of patients' needs.
- The provider had effective leadership and culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved and supported and worked well as a team.
- The provider asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The provider dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The provider had suitable information governance arrangements.

There were areas where the provider could make improvements. They should:

- Review the practice's systems for environmental cleaning taking into account the guidelines issued by the Department of Health - Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices.
- Review the practice's recruitment policy and procedures to ensure accurate, complete and detailed records are maintained for all staff.
- Review the use of high strength midazolam in the provision of conscious sedation.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

We found that this practice was providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice had systems and processes to provide safe care and treatment. They used learning from incidents and complaints to help them improve.

Staff received training in safeguarding people and knew how to recognise the signs of abuse and how to report concerns.

Staff were qualified for their roles and the practice completed essential recruitment checks.

Premises were clean and properly maintained. Improvements could be made to some infection control processes to bring in line with nationally recognised guidance.

Staff had received training in how to deal with medical and other emergencies. On the day of inspection there was some medical emergency equipment missing. These were ordered immediately, and evidence sent.

We noted that high strength midazolam was used in the provision of conscious sedation.

No action



Are services effective?

We found that this practice was providing effective care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The dentists assessed patients' needs and provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance. Patients described the treatment they received as excellent and of a very high standard. The dentists discussed treatment with patients so they could give informed consent and recorded this in their records.

The practice had clear arrangements when patients needed to be referred to other dental or health care professionals.

The provider supported staff to complete training relevant to their roles and had systems to help them monitor this.

No action



Are services caring?

We found that this practice was providing caring services in accordance with the relevant regulations.

We received feedback about the practice from 10 patients and five members of staff. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were helpful, lovely and friendly.

They said that they were given good advice about dental treatment and said their dentist listened to them. Patients commented that they made them feel at ease, especially when they were anxious about visiting the dentist.

We saw that staff protected patients' privacy and were aware of the importance of confidentiality. Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect.

No action



Summary of findings

Are services responsive to people's needs?

We found that this practice was providing responsive care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice's appointment system took account of patients' needs. Patients could get an appointment quickly if in pain.

Staff considered patients' different needs. This included providing facilities for patients with a disability and families with children. The practice had access to interpreter services and had arrangements to help patients with sight or hearing loss.

The practice took patients views seriously. They valued compliments from patients and responded to concerns and complaints quickly and constructively.

No action



Are services well-led?

We found that this practice was providing well-led care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice had arrangements to ensure the smooth running of the service. These included systems for the practice team to discuss the quality and safety of the care and treatment provided. There was a clearly defined management structure and staff felt supported and appreciated.

The practice team kept complete patient dental care records which were, clearly written or typed and stored securely.

The provider monitored clinical and non-clinical areas of their work to help them improve and learn. This included asking for and listening to the views of patients and staff.

No action



Are services safe?

Our findings

Safety systems and processes, including staff recruitment, equipment and premises and radiography (X-rays)

The practice had clear systems to keep patients safe.

Staff knew their responsibilities if they had concerns about the safety of children, young people and adults who were vulnerable due to their circumstances. The practice had safeguarding policies and procedures to provide staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. We saw evidence that staff received safeguarding training. Staff knew about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns, including notification to the CQC.

The practice had a system to highlight vulnerable patients on records e.g. children with child protection plans, adults where there were safeguarding concerns, people with a learning disability or a mental health condition, or who require other support such as with mobility or communication.

The practice had a whistleblowing policy. Staff felt confident they could raise concerns without fear of recrimination.

The dentists used dental dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment. In instances where the rubber dam was not used, such as for example refusal by the patient, and where other methods were used to protect the airway, this was documented in the dental care record and a risk assessment completed.

The provider had a business continuity plan describing how they would deal with events that could disrupt the normal running of the practice.

The practice had a recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff and had checks in place for agency and locum staff. These reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at five staff recruitment records. We noted that in one staff folder there was no photographic identification and no evidence of immunity to Hepatitis B. We were told this would be addressed and a system put in place to ensure all documents were sought at the point of employment.

We noted that clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) and had professional indemnity cover.

The practice ensured that facilities and equipment were safe and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions, including electrical and gas appliances.

Records showed that fire detection equipment, such as smoke detectors and emergency lighting, were regularly tested and firefighting equipment, such as fire extinguishers, were regularly serviced.

The practice had suitable arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment and had the required information in their radiation protection file.

We saw evidence that the dentists justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The practice carried out radiography audits every year following current guidance and legislation.

Clinical staff completed continuing professional development (CPD) in respect of dental radiography.

Risks to patients

There were systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety.

The practice's health and safety policies, procedures and risk assessments were reviewed regularly to help manage potential risk. The practice had current employer's liability insurance.

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. The staff followed relevant safety regulation when using needles. A sharps risk assessment had been undertaken. We noted this risk assessment did not include the steps taken to reduce the risks associated with the dismantling of matrix bands. We were told this would be addressed and a system put in place to ensure a consistent approach to the removal of them.

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support (BLS) every year. Immediate Life Support training for staff involved in the provision of sedation was completed.

Are services safe?

On the day of inspection we checked the medical emergency medicines and equipment. We noted there was no size 0 and 3 masks for the self inflating bag. These were ordered immediately, and evidence sent to confirm receipt.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists when they treated patients in line with GDC Standards for the Dental Team.

The provider had suitable risk assessments to minimise the risk that can be caused from substances that are hazardous to health.

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures. These reflected guidance in The Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM 01-05) published by the Department of Health and Social Care. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

The practice had suitable arrangements for cleaning, checking and sterilising instruments in line with HTM 01-05. During the inspection we identified some areas which could be improved. There was no log in place to identify when heavy duty gloves needed changing, the dirty transportation box did not have a lockable lid and the composite dispensers were not sterilised after each use and was not bagged. We also noted that the process for stamping the sterilised instrument bags was not consistent. We saw some were stamped with the processed date and others with the use by date. We were told that these issues would be addressed.

Records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments was validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

The practice had systems in place to ensure that any work was disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before treatment was completed.

The practice had procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems, in line with a risk assessment. Records of water testing and dental unit water line management were in place. We were told that there had recently been some problems with the boiler and was producing water at an excessive temperature which could pose a risk of scalding. We were later sent evidence that an engineer had visited the practice and had arranged for the boiler to be fixed.

We saw cleaning schedules for the premises. The practice was visibly clean when we inspected.

The provider had policies and procedures in place to ensure clinical waste was segregated and stored appropriately in line with guidance.

The practice carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. The latest audit showed the practice was meeting the required standards. We noted some damage to a worksurface and the nurses chair. This had not been identified in the audit. We saw that there was a refurbishment plan in place including the refurbishment of the surgery with the damaged worksurface.

Information to deliver safe care and treatment

Staff had the information they needed to deliver safe care and treatment to patients.

We discussed with the dentist how information to deliver safe care and treatment was handled and recorded. We looked at a sample of dental care records to confirm our findings and noted that individual records were written and managed in a way that kept patients safe. Dental care records we saw were complete, legible, were kept securely and complied with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements.

Patient referrals to other service providers contained specific information which allowed appropriate and timely referrals in line with practice protocols and current guidance.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

The provider had reliable systems for appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

During the inspection we identified some out of date dental materials. We were assured a system would be put in place to identify and dispose of out of date materials.

The practice stored and kept records of NHS prescriptions as described in current guidance.

The dentists were aware of current guidance with regards to prescribing medicines.

Track record on safety and Lessons learned and improvements

Are services safe?

There were comprehensive risk assessments in relation to safety issues. The practice monitored and reviewed incidents. This helped it to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture that led to safety improvements.

There were adequate systems for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong. The practice learned and shared lessons identified themes and acted to improve safety in the practice.

There was a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. The practice learned from external safety events as well as patient and medicine safety alerts. We saw they were shared with the team and acted upon if required.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

The practice had systems to keep dental practitioners up to date with current evidence-based practice. We saw that clinicians assessed patients' needs and delivered care and treatment in line with current legislation, standards and guidance supported by clear clinical pathways and protocols.

Helping patients to live healthier lives

The practice was providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health in line with the Delivering Better Oral Health toolkit.

The dentists prescribed high concentration fluoride toothpaste if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them. They used fluoride varnish for children and adults based on an assessment of the risk of tooth decay.

The dentists/clinicians where applicable, discussed smoking, alcohol consumption and diet with patients during appointments. The practice had a selection of dental products for sale and provided health promotion leaflets to help patients with their oral health.

The practice was aware of national oral health campaigns and local schemes in supporting patients to live healthier lives. For example, local stop smoking services. They directed patients to these schemes when necessary.

The dentists described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcomes for patients with gum disease. This involved providing patients preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and recording detailed charts of the patient's gum condition

Patients with more severe gum disease were recalled at more frequent intervals for review and to reinforce home care preventative advice.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice obtained consent to care and treatment in line with legislation and guidance.

The practice team understood the importance of obtaining and recording patients' consent to treatment. The dentists

gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these so they could make informed decisions. Patients confirmed their dentist listened to them and gave them clear information about their treatment.

The practice's consent policy included information about the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The team understood their responsibilities under the act when treating adults who may not be able to make informed decisions. The policy also referred to Gillick competence, by which a child under the age of 16 years of age may give consent for themselves. The staff were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people under 16 years of age.

Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Monitoring care and treatment

The practice kept detailed dental care records containing information about the patients' current dental needs, past treatment and medical histories. The dentists assessed patients' treatment needs in line with recognised guidance.

We saw the practice audited patients' dental care records to check that the dentists/clinicians recorded the necessary information.

The practice carried out conscious sedation for patients, this included people who were very nervous of dental treatment. The practice had systems to help them do this safely. These were in accordance with guidelines published by the Royal College of Surgeons and Royal College of Anaesthetists in 2015.

The practice's systems included checks before and after treatment, emergency equipment requirements, medicines management, sedation equipment checks, and staff availability and training. They also included patient checks and information such as consent, monitoring during treatment, discharge and post-operative instructions.

The staff assessed patients appropriately for sedation. The dental care records showed that patients having sedation had important checks carried out first. These included a detailed medical history, blood pressure checks and an assessment of health using the American Society of Anaesthesiologists classification system in accordance with current guidelines.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

The records showed that staff recorded important checks at regular intervals. These included blood pressure and the oxygen saturation of the blood.

The operator-sedationist was supported by a trained second individual. The name of this individual was recorded in the patients' dental care record.

We noted during the inspection that high strength midazolam was used (2mg/ml). A patient safety alert which was released in 2002 and 2008 recommended avoiding the use of high strength midazolam when providing conscious sedation. We were told the use of this midazolam would be stopped.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles.

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured programme. We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

Staff discussed their training needs at annual appraisals. We saw evidence of completed appraisals and how the practice addressed the training requirements of staff.

Co-ordinating care and treatment

Staff worked together and with other health and social care professionals to deliver effective care and treatment.

The dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide.

The practice had systems to identify, manage, follow up and where required refer patients for specialist care when presenting with dental infections.

The practice also had systems for referring patients with suspected oral cancer under the national two week wait arrangements. This was initiated by NICE in 2005 to help make sure patients were seen quickly by a specialist.

The practice monitored all referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Kindness, respect and compassion

Staff treated patients with kindness, respect and compassion.

Staff were aware of their responsibility to respect people's diversity and human rights.

Patients commented positively that staff were helpful, lovely and friendly. We saw that staff treated patients with dignity and respect and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding. Patients could choose whether they saw a male or female dentist.

Privacy and dignity

The practice respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of reception and waiting areas provided some privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. If a patient asked for more privacy, staff would take them into another room. The reception computer screens were not visible to patients and staff did not leave patients' personal information where other patients might see it.

Staff password protected patients' electronic care records and backed these up to secure storage. They stored paper records securely.

Involving people in decisions about care and treatment

Staff helped patients to be involved in decisions about their care and were aware of the

Accessible Information Standards and the requirements under the Equality Act. The Accessible Information Standard is a requirement to make sure that patients and their carers can access and understand the information they are given:

- Interpretation services were available for patients who did not use English as a first language.
- Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand and communication aids and easy read materials were available.

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices about their treatment. Patients confirmed that staff listened to them, did not rush them and discussed options for treatment with them. The dentists described the conversations they had with patients to satisfy themselves they understood their treatment options.

The practice's information leaflet provided patients with information about the range of treatments available at the practice.

The dentists described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included for example photographs and X-ray images which were shown to the patient or relative to help them better understand the diagnosis and treatment.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The practice organised and delivered services to meet patients' needs. It took account of patient needs and preferences.

Staff were clear on the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care.

Patients described high levels of satisfaction with the responsive service provided by the practice.

The practice had made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. These included a portable ramp to access the premises and an accessible toilet with hand rails and a call bell.

Patients were sent text message reminders about upcoming appointments. If a patient did not have access to a mobile phone, then a member of staff would call them up to remind them of their appointment.

Timely access to services

Patients could access care and treatment from the practice within an acceptable timescale for their needs.

The practice displayed its opening hours in the premises and included it in their information leaflet.

The practice had an appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Patients who requested an urgent appointment were seen the same day. Patients had enough time during their appointment and did not feel rushed. Appointments ran smoothly on the day of the inspection and patients were not kept waiting.

Patients requiring emergency dental treatment outside normal working hours were signposted to the NHS 111 out of hour's service.

The practice's information leaflet and answerphone provided telephone numbers for patients needing emergency dental treatment during the working day and when the practice was not open. Patients confirmed they could make routine and emergency appointments easily and were rarely kept waiting for their appointment.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

The practice took complaints and concerns seriously and responded to them appropriately to improve the quality of care.

The practice had a policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. The practice information leaflet explained how to make a complaint.

The practice manager was responsible for dealing with these. Staff would tell the practice manager about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients received a quick response.

The practice manager aimed to settle complaints in-house. Information was available about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We looked at complaints the practice received in the last 12 months.

These showed the practice responded to concerns appropriately and discussed outcomes with staff to share learning and improve the service.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Leadership capacity and capability

Practice leaders had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care.

They were knowledgeable about issues and priorities relating to the quality and future of services. They understood the challenges and were addressing them.

Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. They worked closely with staff and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.

Culture

The practice had a culture of high-quality sustainable care.

Staff stated they felt respected, supported and valued. They were proud to work in the practice.

The practice focused on the needs of patients.

We saw the provider took action to deal with poor performance.

Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints. Staff were aware of the duty of candour requirements to be open, honest and to offer an apology to patients should anything go wrong.

Staff could raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They had confidence that these would be addressed.

Governance and management

There were clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

The principal dentist had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice. The practice manager was responsible for the day to day running of the service. Staff knew the management arrangements and their roles and responsibilities.

The provider had a system of clinical governance in place which included policies, protocols and procedures that were accessible to all members of staff and were reviewed on a regular basis.

There were clear and effective processes for managing risks, issues and performance.

Appropriate and accurate information

The practice acted on appropriate and accurate information.

Quality and operational information was used to ensure and improve performance. Performance information was combined with the views of patients.

The practice had information governance arrangements and staff were aware of the importance of these in protecting patients' personal information.

Engagement with patients, the public, staff and external partners

The practice involved patients, the public, staff and external partners to support high-quality sustainable services.

The practice used patient surveys to obtain patients' views about the service.

Patients were encouraged to complete the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT). This is a national programme to allow patients to provide feedback on NHS services they have used.

The practice gathered feedback from staff through meetings and informal discussions. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on.

Continuous improvement and innovation

There were systems and processes for learning, continuous improvement and innovation.

The practice had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, radiographs, sedation and infection prevention and control. We noted the infection prevention and control audit had not identified the damage to the worksurface in one surgery and the damage to the upholstery of some of the nurse's chairs. In addition, we noted the action plans for the radiography audit could be improved to be more descriptive.

The principal dentist showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff.

Are services well-led?

The dental nurses had annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional standards. This included undertaking medical emergencies and basic life support training annually. The provider supported and encouraged staff to complete CPD.