

Dr Nadim Safdar

Bradley and Partners

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this unannounced inspection on 3 July 2017 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.

We told the NHS England area team that we were inspecting the practice. They provided information which we took into account.

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

Bradley and Partners is in Canterbury and provides NHS and private treatment to patients of all ages.

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and pushchairs. Car parking spaces, including some for patients with disabled badges, are available near the practice.

Summary of findings

The dental team includes 10 dentists, seven dental nurses, two student nurses, three dental hygienists, three receptionists, a compliance manager and a practice manager. The practice has 10 treatment rooms.

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. The registered manager at Bradley and partners was the compliance manager.

On this occasion we did not supply CQC comment cards to be filled in by patients as this was an unannounced inspection.

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

The practice is open:

8am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday

Our key findings were:

- The practice was clean and well maintained.
- The practice had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.

- The practice had systems to help them manage risk.
- The practice had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- The practice had thorough staff recruitment procedures.
- 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.
- The appointment system met patients' needs.
- The practice asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The practice dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.

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

- Review current processes to ensure that all mandatory training has been completed in subjects such as, infection control, radiography, safeguarding vulnerable adults and children and the Mental Capacity Act.
- Review current processes to ensure that records are maintained consistently with regard to the equipment used to carry out decontamination procedures.

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 training in safeguarding had lapsed. However when questioned, staff 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 and equipment were clean; however, some maintenance of equipment had not been recorded. The practice followed national guidance for cleaning, sterilising and storing dental instruments. During our inspection we noticed some gaps in the decontamination process which we discussed with the registered manager who took immediate action to rectify the shortfalls.

The practice had suitable arrangements for dealing with medical and other emergencies.

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. 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.

Some training had lapsed with regard to infection control, radiography, safeguarding and the Mental Capacity Act.

No action



Are services caring?

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

We did not seek feedback from patients on this occasion as this was an unannounced inspection due to concerns.

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



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 was efficient and met patients' needs. Patients could get an appointment quickly if in pain.

No action



Summary of findings

Staff considered patients' different needs. This included providing facilities for disabled patients and families with children. The practice had access to telephone 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.

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.

The practice team kept patient dental care records which were, clearly written or typed and stored securely. However we noted that basic perodontal scores were not routinely recorded.

The practice 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

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

The practice had policies and procedures to report, investigate, respond and learn from accidents, incidents and significant events. Staff knew about these and understood their role in the process.

The practice recorded, responded to and discussed all incidents to reduce risk and support future learning.

The practice received national patient safety and medicines alerts from the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority (MHRA). Relevant alerts were discussed with staff, acted on and stored for future reference.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

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. Safeguarding training for staff had lapsed. However, staff knew about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns. The practice had a whistleblowing policy. Staff told us they felt confident they could raise concerns without fear of recrimination.

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. These included risk assessments. The practice followed relevant safety laws when using needles and other sharp dental items. The dentists used rubber dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment.

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

Medical emergencies

Staff knew what to do in a medical emergency and completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support every year.

Emergency equipment and medicines were available as described in recognised guidance. Staff kept records of their checks to make sure these were available, within their expiry date, and in working order.

Staff recruitment

The practice had a staff recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. This reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at eight staff recruitment files. These showed the practice followed their recruitment procedure.

Clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) and had professional indemnity cover.

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

The practice's health and safety policies and risk assessments were up to date and reviewed to help manage potential risk. These covered general workplace and specific dental topics. The practice had current employer's liability insurance and checked each year that the clinicians' professional indemnity insurance was up to date.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists and dental hygienists when they treated patients.

Infection control

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures to keep patients safe. They followed guidance in The Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM01-05) published by the Department of Health. Staff completed infection prevention and control training every year.

The practice had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in line with HTM01-05. The records showed that checks on the equipment staff used for cleaning and sterilising instruments were not always recorded so we could not be assured that they were being maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance. Following our inspection we were sent a declaration that these records were now being completed.

The practice carried out an infection prevention and control audits. The latest audit had not identified the gaps in the decontamination process we observed. Staff assured

Are services safe?

us that immediate training would take place, a new working protocol implemented and another audit would be carried out. We were sent evidence following our inspection that this had been carried out.

The practice had procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems, in line with a risk assessment.

We saw cleaning schedules for the premises. The practice was clean when we inspected and patients confirmed this was usual.

Equipment and medicines

We saw servicing documentation for the equipment used. Staff told us they always carried out checks in line with the manufacturers' recommendations. However records did not confirm this as there were gaps of 10 weeks where no records had been made. We were sent information following our inspection that other staff were now trained to complete the required records.

The practice had suitable systems for prescribing, dispensing and storing medicines.

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

Radiography (X-rays)

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

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

Not all of the clinical staff had completed continuous professional development in respect of dental radiography. We received training certification for staff following our inspection.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

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 noted that some information was omitted in a number of dental care records in regards to a patient's basic periodontal score (BPE). We discussed this with the registered manager who has sent us information following our inspection to demonstrate that this has been addressed.

We saw that the practice was in the process of auditing patients' dental care records to check that the dentists recorded the necessary information.

Health promotion & prevention

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

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

The dentists told us they 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.

Staffing

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured induction programme. We could not confirm clinical staff had completed some of the continuous professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

Staff told us they discussed training needs at annual appraisals. We saw evidence of completed appraisals. The appraisal system had recently been implemented and the some of the staff had received an appraisal.

Working with other services

Dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide. These included 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 urgent referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice team understood the importance of obtaining and recording patients' consent to treatment. The dentists told us they 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 had a consent policy. There was information available to staff regarding the Mental Capacity Act 2005, although not all staff were aware of how this would affect their work. The dentists 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 and the dentists were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people under 16. Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion and empathy

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

We saw that staff treated patients respectfully, appropriately and professionally and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Patients could choose whether they saw a male or female dentist.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of reception and waiting areas provided privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. Staff told us that if a patient asked for more privacy they would take them into another room. The reception computer screens were not visible to patients and staff did not leave 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.

Music was played in the practice and there were magazines and televisions in the waiting rooms. The practice provided drinking water.

Information folders and patient survey results were available for patients to read.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

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

Patients told us staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

The practice's website provided patients with information about the range of treatments available at the practice. These included general dentistry and treatments for gum disease and more complex treatment such as implants.

Each treatment room had a computer screen so the dentists could show patients photographs, videos and X-ray images when they discussed treatment options. Staff also used images to explain treatment options to patients needing more complex treatment.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

Through comments and the practice survey patients described high levels of satisfaction with the responsive service provided by the practice.

The practice had an efficient appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Staff told us that patients who requested an urgent appointment were seen the same day. Appointments ran smoothly on the day of the inspection and patients were not kept waiting.

Staff told us that they currently had some patients for whom they needed to make adjustments to enable them to receive treatment.

Promoting equality

The practice made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. These included step free access, a hearing loop, a magnifying glass and accessible toilet with hand rails and a call bell.

Staff said they could provide information in different formats and languages to meet individual patients' needs. They had access to interpreter/translation services and could arrange British Sign Language and braille if required.

Access to the service

The practice displayed its opening hours in the premises, their information leaflet and on their website.

We confirmed the practice kept waiting times and cancellations to a minimum.

The practice was committed to seeing patients experiencing pain on the same day and kept some appointments free for each dentist on duty for same day appointments. The website, information leaflet and answerphone provided telephone numbers for patients needing emergency dental treatment during the working day and when the practice was not open. We saw that patients could make routine and emergency appointments easily and were rarely kept waiting for their appointment.

Concerns & complaints

The practice had a complaints 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 told us they would tell the practice manager about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients received a quick response.

The practice manager told us they aimed to settle complaints in-house and invited patients to speak with them in person to discuss these. Information was available about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received over 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

Governance arrangements

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

The practice had policies, procedures and risk assessments to support the management of the service and to protect patients and staff. These included arrangements to monitor the quality of the service and make improvements.

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

Leadership, openness and transparency

Staff were aware of the duty of candour requirements to be open, honest and to offer an apology to patients if anything went wrong.

Staff told us the practice manager encouraged them to raise any issues and they felt confident they could do this. They knew who to raise any issues with and told us the practice manager was approachable, would listen to their concerns and act appropriately. The practice manager discussed concerns at staff meetings.

The practice held meetings where staff could raise any concerns and discuss clinical and non-clinical updates. Immediate discussions were arranged to share urgent information. We saw that as a result of our inspection a meeting was held the following day to discuss the issues raised and to discuss how improvements would be made. We received a copy of the meeting minutes to confirm this.

Learning and improvement

The practice had quality assurance processes to encourage improvement. These included audits of dental care records, X-rays and infection prevention and control.

The principal dentist, registered manager and partners showed a commitment to improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff. The whole staff team were in the process of receiving annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of some of the completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff told us they completed mandatory training, including medical emergencies and basic life support, each year. We noted that some of the training required had lapsed, such as radiography and infection control. The General Dental Council requires clinical staff to complete continuous professional development. The practice manager had arranged for infection control training to be completed by all staff and we saw evidence of this. All staff had access to online training and could complete this during their working hours at the practice training station.

Practice seeks and acts on feedback from its patients, the public and staff

The practice used patient surveys, comment cards, verbal comments to obtain staff and 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.