

The Corner Dental Surgery Ltd

Corner Dental Surgery

Inspection Report

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Date of inspection visit: 24/08/2017
Date of publication: 27/09/2017

Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 24 August 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 Cheshire and Merseyside area team and Healthwatch that we were inspecting the practice. We did not receive any information of concern from them.

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

Corner Dental surgery is close to the centre of St Helens and provides dental care and treatment to adults and children on an NHS and privately funded basis.

There is level access to facilitate entrance to the practice for people who use wheelchairs and for pushchairs. The practice has eight treatment rooms. Car parking is available in the practice's own car park.

The dental team includes six dentists, two dental hygienists, nine dental nurses, one of whom is a trainee and three receptionists. The team is supported by a practice manager.

Summary of findings

The practice is owned by a company and as a condition of registration must have in place a person registered with the Care Quality Commission as the registered manager. Registered managers have a 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 Corner Dental practice is the principal dentist.

We received feedback from 48 people during the inspection about the services provided. The feedback provided was positive about the practice.

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

The practice is open:

Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 6.00pm

Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm.

Our key findings were:

- The practice was clean and well maintained.

- The practice had infection control procedures in place which reflected published guidance.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medical emergency medicines and equipment were available.
- The practice had systems in place to help them manage risk.
- The practice had safeguarding processes in place and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- The practice had staff recruitment procedures in place.
- Staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- The practice had a procedure in place for dealing with complaints.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- The appointment system took patients' needs into account. Dedicated emergency appointments were available.
- The practice had a leadership structure. Staff felt involved and supported and worked well as a team.
- The practice asked patients and staff for feedback about the services they provided.

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 in place to provide safe care and treatment. They used learning from incidents to help them improve.

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

Staff were qualified and skilled for their roles. The practice completed essential recruitment checks before employing staff.

The premises and equipment were clean and properly maintained. The practice followed national guidance for cleaning, sterilising and storing dental instruments.

The practice had suitable arrangements for dealing with medical and other emergencies and staff regularly practiced managing simulated medical emergencies.

No action



Are services effective?

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

Staff were aware of the specific needs of their patients. The dentists assessed patients' needs and provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance and with the aim of improving patient's health outcomes.

Patients described the treatment they received as excellent. 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 practice had a strong focus on training and supported staff to complete training relevant to their roles and had systems in place to monitor this.

No action



Are services caring?

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

Patients were positive about all aspects of the service. They told us staff were welcoming, helpful and encouraging. They said that the practice was well-organised and managed. Patients commented that they were treated as individuals and that care and treatment was always discussed thoroughly with them. They said their dentist listened to them and welcomed their views and questions. Patients commented that staff 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.

No action



Summary of findings

Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect.

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 obtain an appointment quickly in an emergency.

The practice had access to interpreter services.

Staff considered patients' individual needs and made reasonable adjustments to meet these. This included providing facilities for patients with disabilities

Staff responded to concerns and complaints quickly.

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 robust arrangements in place to ensure the smooth running of the service. These included systems for the practice team to review the quality and safety of the care and treatment provided.

There was a clearly defined management structure. Staff had specific responsibilities and felt involved, supported and appreciated.

Staff were aware of the importance of confidentiality and protecting patients' personal information. The practice team kept accurate patient dental care records which were stored securely.

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 to 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 medicines and equipment safety alerts, for example, from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. Relevant alerts were discussed with staff, acted on and stored for future reference.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

The practice had safeguarding policies and procedures in place to provide staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. Staff knew their responsibilities should they have concerns about the safety of children, young people or adults who are at risk due to their circumstances. Staff received safeguarding training and knew the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns. We noted that the principal dentist was trained to a higher level in safeguarding. We saw evidence of case conferences which had been held to discuss concerns. Detailed notes were maintained and the case files included evidence of communication with other appropriate health and social care professionals.

The practice had a whistleblowing policy in place. Staff told us they were confident to raise concerns without fear of recrimination.

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. The practice followed relevant safety laws when using needles and other sharp dental items. We reviewed the procedures the dentists followed when providing dental implants root canal treatment and found these were in accordance with recognised guidance.

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 medical emergencies and life support every year. Regular refresher training was provided at staff meetings and staff carried out practical training together as a team in between their annual training.

Emergency equipment and medicines were available as recommended in recognised guidance. Staff carried out, and kept records of, checks to make sure the medicines and equipment were within their expiry dates and in working order.

Staff recruitment

The practice had staff recruitment procedures to help them employ suitable staff. We looked at several staff recruitment records. These showed that the practice carried out essential pre-employment checks and had most of the required documentation available.

Clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council, where necessary.

Monitoring health and safety and responding to risks

The practice had an overarching health and safety policy in place, underpinned by several specific policies and risk assessments to help manage potential risk. These covered general workplace and specific dental practice risks. We saw that the practice had put in place numerous measures to reduce the risks identified in the assessments.

The provider had a system in place to ensure clinical staff had received appropriate vaccinations, including the vaccination to protect them against the Hepatitis B virus, and that the effectiveness of the vaccination was identified. People who are likely to come into contact with blood products, and are at increased risk of injuries from sharp instruments, should receive the Hepatitis B vaccination to minimise the risks of acquiring blood borne infections.

Dental nurses worked with all the clinicians when they treated patients. Clinical staff had professional indemnity cover.

Infection control

One of the dental nurses undertook the lead role for infection prevention and control and had undertaken extensive further training specific to this role. Staff completed infection prevention and control training regularly.

Are services safe?

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and associated procedures in place 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.

The practice had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in accordance with HTM 01-05. The records showed equipment staff used for cleaning and sterilising instruments was maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

Staff carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. We saw that the latest audit showed the practice was meeting the required standards.

The practice had procedures in place, in accordance with current guidance, to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems.

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 in the practice. Staff carried out checks in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations.

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

The practice stored and kept records of NHS prescriptions in accordance with current guidance.

Radiography (X-rays)

The practice had arrangements in place to ensure X-ray procedures were carried out safely. They complied with current radiation regulations and had the required information available.

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.

Where appropriate, staff completed continuing professional development in respect of dental radiography.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

Staff were aware of the specific needs of their patient population and were proactive in monitoring and acting on these needs. The practice kept detailed dental care records containing information about patients' current dental needs, past treatment and medical history. The dentists provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance and kept up to date with changes in guidance.

Health promotion and prevention

The practice had a strong focus on preventative care and supported patients to achieve better oral health in accordance with the Department of Health publication 'Delivering better oral health: an evidence-based toolkit for prevention'. The dentists told us they prescribed high concentration fluoride products if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them. The clinicians 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. The practice had an oral health educator who provided oral hygiene advice and education for patients in a twice weekly clinic at the practice.

Staffing

Staff new to the practice completed a period of induction based on a structured and comprehensive induction programme.

The practice had a strong focus on training and development and we saw training was provided from the initial appointment of staff, for example, information governance training, and as part of their on-going professional development, for example, on a rolling programme of topics delivered by different staff in staff meetings.

Several staff had further qualifications or had undertaken further study, for example, one of the dental nurses had an

oral health education qualification, the practice manager had enhanced radiology skills, and the principal dentist and one of the hygienists had undertaken further clinical study.

The General Dental Council requires dental professionals to complete continuing professional development as a requirement of their registration. Staff told us the practice provided support, training opportunities and encouragement to assist them in meeting the requirements of their registration, and with their professional development. The practice had a system in place to monitor staff training to ensure essential training was completed each year.

Staff told us they had annual appraisals. These were used to discuss learning needs, general wellbeing and future professional development.

Working with other services

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. This included referring patients with suspected oral cancer in accordance with the current guidelines. The practice monitored urgent referrals to ensure 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's consent policy included information about the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Staff 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. 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 were aware of their responsibility to respect people's diversity and human rights.

Patients commented positively that staff were friendly, calm and accommodating. We saw that staff treated patients kindly and with respect and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Staff understood the importance of providing emotional support for patients who were nervous of dental treatment. Patients told us staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

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 the waiting areas provided limited privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients but staff were aware of the

importance of privacy and confidentiality. Staff described how they avoided discussing confidential information in front of other patients. Staff told us that if a patient requested further privacy facilities were available. The reception computer screens were not visible to patients and staff did not leave patient information where people might see it.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

The dentists provided patients with information to help them make informed choices. Patients confirmed that staff listened to them, discussed options for treatment with them, and gave them time to think. The dentists described to us the conversations they had with patients to help them understand their treatment options.

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 dental implants.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

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

The practice was maintained to a high standard and aimed to provide a comfortable, relaxing environment.

The practice had an appointment system in place which took account of patients' needs. Staff told us that patients requiring urgent appointments were seen the same day.

We saw that the dentists tailored appointment lengths to patients' individual needs and patients could choose from morning and afternoon appointments. Patients told us they had enough time during their appointment and did not feel rushed.

Tackling inequity and promoting equality

The practice had taken into consideration the needs of different groups of people, for example, people with disabilities, and put in place reasonable adjustments, for example, handrails to assist with mobility.

The entire practice was located at ground floor level and was accessible to wheelchair users.

Staff had access to interpreter and translation services for people who required them. The practice had a hearing induction loop available.

Access to the service

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

Staff made every effort to keep waiting times and cancellations to a minimum.

The practice made every effort to see patients experiencing pain or other dental emergencies on the same day and had appointments available for this. The practice's website, information leaflet and answerphone provided contact details for patients requiring 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.

Concerns and 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 complaints and aimed to resolve these in-house where possible. Staff told us they raised any formal or informal comments or concerns with the practice manager to ensure the patient received a quick response.

Information was available about organisations patients could contact should they not wish to complain to the practice directly or if they were not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received in the previous 12 months. We saw that 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 was responsible for the day to day running of the service. Several staff had specific roles and responsibilities. We saw staff had access to suitable supervision and support for their roles and responsibilities.

The practice had policies, procedures and risk assessments in place to support the management of the service and to guide staff. We saw that policies, procedures and risk assessments were regularly reviewed to ensure they were up to date with regulations and guidance. The practice had an electronic shared information area which staff could log in to read staff information and to refresh their knowledge of policies and procedures.

We saw the practice had arrangements in place to monitor the quality of the service and make improvements where required, for example, an annual full spot check was carried out around the practice by the manager and compliance lead to identify any non-compliances. We saw records of actions taken to address non-compliances.

The practice had information security arrangements in place 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 should anything go wrong.

Staff told us there was an open, transparent culture in the practice. They said they were encouraged to raise issues and they felt confident to do this. They told us the managers were approachable, would listen to their concerns and act appropriately.

The practice held monthly meetings where staff could communicate information, exchange ideas and discuss updates. Staff meetings included a training element with different topics each month. Where appropriate meetings were arranged to share urgent information.

Learning and improvement

The practice had quality assurance processes in place to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included, for example, audits. We reviewed audits of dental care records, waiting times, X-rays and infection prevention and control. Staff kept records of the results of these and produced action plans where necessary. We saw the auditing process resulted in improvements.

The principal dentist showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by all staff. We saw evidence of learning from complaints, incidents audits and feedback.

Staff had annual appraisals, which helped identify individual learning needs. Staff told us the practice provided support and training opportunities for their on-going learning, for example, the dental nurses carried out audits which were then reviewed together with the practice manager.

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

The practice had a system in place to seek the views of patients about all areas of service delivery through the use of regular patient surveys and the NHS Friends and Family Test. A summary of patient survey results were available for patients to read. We saw that the provider reviewed and acted on patient feedback.

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