

Dart Vale Dental Care Limited

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Inspection report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced comprehensive inspection on 20 December 2022 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 practice was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations. The inspection was led by a Care Quality Commission, (CQC), inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser and a second CQC inspector.

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:

- Staff knew how to deal with medical emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The practice had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff.
- Safeguarding processes were in place and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- The practice had staff recruitment procedures which reflected current legislation.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Patients were treated with dignity and respect and staff took care to protect their privacy and personal information.

Summary of findings

- Staff provided preventive care and supported patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system took account of patients' needs.
- There was effective leadership and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved and supported and worked as a team.
- Staff and patients were asked for feedback about the services provided.
- Complaints were dealt with positively and efficiently.
- The dental clinic had information governance arrangements.
- Where improvements which could be made were identified during the inspection visit, these were acted upon with immediate effect.

Background

The provider has a large portfolio of practices, and this report is about Dart Vale Dental Care Limited.

Dart Vale Dental Care Limited is in Totnes and provides NHS and private dental care and treatment for adults and children.

There is level access to the practice for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. Car parking spaces are available near the practice. Patients with mobility difficulties can be dropped off at the practice, although there is no parking on-site.

The dental team includes 5 dentists, 2 dental hygiene therapists, 5 dental nurses, 2 trainee dental nurses, 4 receptionists and a practice manager/dental nurse. The practice has 6 treatment rooms. The practice is currently actively recruiting for 1.5 full time equivalent dentist vacancies.

During the inspection we spoke with 2 dentists, 1 dental hygiene therapist, 2 dental nurses, 3 receptionists, the practice manager and the quality lead for Portman Dental Care (the provider). We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open: Monday to Friday 8:30am – 5:30pm.

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

- Improve the practice's infection control procedures and protocols taking into account the guidelines issued by the Department of Health in the Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices, and having regard to The Health and Social Care Act 2008: 'Code of Practice about the prevention and control of infections and related guidance.' In particular, by completion of daily logbooks for all autoclaves.
- Take action to ensure the service takes into account the needs of patients with disabilities and to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. In particular, by development of an action plan to improve access, informed by an audit of the premises.

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?	No action ✓
Are services effective?	No action ✓
Are services caring?	No action ✓
Are services responsive to people's needs?	No action ✓
Are services well-led?	No action ✓

Are services safe?

Our findings

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

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

The practice had safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.

The practice had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance. The practice had introduced additional procedures in relation to COVID-19 in accordance with published guidance. Improvements could be made with the maintenance of robust records, in order to demonstrate all autoclaves used in the sterilisation of dental instruments perform acceptably. During the inspection we were unable to see full records for one of the autoclaves. This information was forwarded to CQC immediately after the inspection and the practice manager told us they held a meeting with relevant staff to ensure processes remain robust.

We noticed wear and tear damage to 2 dental chairs, one dentists' chair and flooring in one dental treatment room. We saw these issues had been reported through the provider defects reporting system for action and the practice manager was monitoring responses.

We also noticed dust and cobwebs in 1 clinical area. This issue was addressed during the inspection.

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

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

The practice had a recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. These reflected the relevant legislation.

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

The practice ensured equipment was safe to use and maintained and serviced according to manufacturers' instructions. The practice ensured the facilities were maintained in accordance with regulations.

A fire risk assessment was carried out in line with the legal requirements and the management of fire safety was effective.

The practice had arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment and we saw the required radiation protection information was available.

Risks to patients

The practice had implemented systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient and staff safety. This included sepsis awareness and lone working. We noted the sharps safety risk assessment lacked detail of risks specific to the practice. We brought this to the attention of the practice manager, who took immediate action to revise the risk assessment and share this with the dental team.

Emergency equipment and medicines were available and checked in accordance with national guidance.

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and had completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support every year.

Are services safe?

The practice had risk assessments to minimise the risk that could be caused from substances that are hazardous to health.

Information to deliver safe care and treatment

Dental care records we saw were complete, legible, were kept securely and complied with General Data Protection Regulation requirements.

The practice had systems for referring patients with suspected oral cancer under the national two-week wait arrangements.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

The practice had systems for appropriate prescribing of medicines. Antimicrobial prescribing audits were carried out.

Track record on safety, and lessons learned and improvements

The practice had implemented systems for reviewing and investigating incidents and accidents.

The practice had a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

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

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

The practice had systems to keep dental professionals up to date with current evidence-based practice.

We saw the provision of dental implants was in accordance with national guidance.

Helping patients to live healthier lives

The practice provided preventive care and supported patients to ensure better oral health.

Consent to care and treatment

Staff obtained patients' consent to care and treatment in line with legislation and guidance.

Staff understood their responsibilities under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

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 in line with recognised guidance.

Staff conveyed an understanding of supporting more vulnerable members of society such as patients with dementia, and adults and children with a learning difficulty.

We saw evidence the dentists justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The practice carried out radiography audits at least six-monthly, following current guidance and legislation.

Effective staffing

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

Newly appointed staff had a structured induction and clinical staff completed continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

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 for treatment the practice did not provide.

Are services caring?

Our findings

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

Kindness, respect and compassion

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

Patient feedback indicated patients felt staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

Privacy and dignity

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality.

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.

Staff gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices about their treatment.

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

Are services responsive to people's needs?

Our findings

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

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 about the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care.

Improvements could be made to improve access for patients. There was a practice management scheduled task to re-assess the practice disability access audit in the New Year. However, the practice did not have a current action plan in place which they were working toward. Staff were able to provide anecdotal examples of how they met existing access needs of individual patients with a range of physical, sensory or learning disability needs.

Timely access to services

Patients could access care and treatment from the practice within an acceptable timescale for their needs. The practice had dentist vacancies and were advertising to fill these posts. This meant the practice was unable to accept new NHS patients.

The practice had an appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Urgent slots were available each day for patients in dental pain. This also included one slot per day managed through which an NHS service provider could directly refer patients to be seen.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

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

Are services well-led?

Our findings

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

Leadership capacity and capability

The provider demonstrated a transparent and open culture in relation to people's safety.

We saw the practice had effective processes to support and develop staff with additional roles and responsibilities.

Culture

Staff stated they felt respected, supported and valued.

Staff discussed their training needs during annual appraisals, and one-to-one meetings or during clinical supervision. They also discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development.

The practice had arrangements to ensure staff training was up-to-date and reviewed at the required intervals.

Governance and management

Staff had clear responsibilities roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

The practice 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.

We saw there were clear processes for managing risks, issues and performance.

Appropriate and accurate information

Staff acted on appropriate and accurate information.

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

Staff gathered feedback from patients and demonstrated a commitment to acting on feedback.

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.

The practice was also a member of a good practice certification scheme.

Continuous improvement and innovation

The practice had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement.

These included audits of dental care records, radiographs and infection prevention and control.

Staff kept records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.