

Fresh Smiles Limited

Gants Hill Smiles Dental Surgery

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 11 July 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

Gants Hill Smiles Dental Surgery is in Ilford in the London Borough of Redbridge and provides private treatment to adults and children.

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs.

Summary of findings

The dental team includes the principal dentist who owns the practice, one trainee dental nurse and one dental hygienist. The dental team are supported by a receptionist. The practice has three treatment rooms, two of which were in use at the time of our inspection.

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

On the day of inspection, we collected nine CQC comment cards filled in by patients.

During the inspection we spoke with the principal dentist and the trainee dental nurse. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open:

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 8am and 4pm

Thursdays between 12pm and 8pm

Saturdays between 10am and 2pm

Our key findings were:

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

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 that 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)

Staff 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 provider 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 provider had a system to highlight vulnerable patients and patients who required other support such as with mobility or communication within dental care records.

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

The principal dentist used dental dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment. In instances where the dental dam was not used, such as for example refusal by the patient, and where other methods were used to protect the airway, we saw 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 provider 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 four staff recruitment records. These showed the provider followed their recruitment procedure.

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

Staff 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 and firefighting equipment were regularly tested and serviced.

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

We saw evidence that the principal dentist justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The provider 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 provider 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 and other sharp dental items. A sharps risk assessment had been undertaken and was updated annually.

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 checked.

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 with airway management for sedation was also completed by the principal dentist.

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

Are services safe?

A dental nurse worked with the principal dentist when they treated patients in line with General Dental Council (GDC) Standards for the Dental Team. A risk assessment was in place for when the dental hygienist worked without chairside support.

There were suitable numbers of dental instruments available for the clinical staff and measures were in place to ensure they were decontaminated and sterilised appropriately.

The provider had suitable risk assessments to minimise the risk that can be caused from substances that are hazardous to health. There were detailed risk assessments and safety data information available to staff. These were reviewed and updated annually or more frequently as required.

The practice occasionally used locum and/or agency staff. We noted that these staff received an induction to ensure that they were familiar with the practice's procedures including the arrangements for fire safety, infection control and dealing with medical emergencies.

The provider had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures. They followed 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 provider had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in line with HTM 01-05. The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments was validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

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

We saw staff had procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems, in line with a risk assessment. All recommendations had been actioned and records of water testing and dental unit water line management were in place.

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 dental nurse carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. The latest audit showed the practice was meeting the required standards.

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.

There was a suitable stock control system of medicines which were held on site. This ensured that medicines did not pass their expiry date and enough medicines were available if required.

The principal dentist was aware of and following guidance in relation to prescribing medicines.

Track record on safety and Lessons learned and improvements

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

In the previous 12 months there had been no safety incidents.

Are services safe?

There were suitable systems for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong. These included arrangements to learn, share lessons and identified themes to improve safety in the practice.

There was a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. Staff 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

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

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

The principal dentist kept up to date with current evidence-based practice through training regularly reviewing relevant guidance. We saw that they 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 principal dentist 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 principal dentist and the dental hygienist, 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 principal dentist 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.

Records showed 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

Staff 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 principal dentist gave patients information about treatment options

and the risks and benefits of these, so they could make informed decisions and we saw this documented in-patient records. 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 might 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. 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. Patients told us that they received appropriate and clear information to help them make decisions and consent to treatment.

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 dentist and dental hygienist assessed patients' treatment needs in line with recognised guidance.

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

The practice carried out conscious sedation for patients who were nervous. This included people who were very nervous of dental treatment and those who needed complex or lengthy treatment. Inhalation sedation was carried out by the principal dentist and intravenous sedation was carried out by a visiting sedationist. 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

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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.

The records showed that staff recorded important checks at regular intervals. This included pulse, blood pressure, breathing rates and the oxygen saturation of the blood

Where inhalation sedation was used, the records also showed that staff recorded details of the procedure along with the concentrations of nitrous oxide and oxygen used.

The visiting sedationist was supported by a trained second individual. The name of this individual was recorded in the patients' dental care record. When the principal dentist provided inhalation sedation they employed temporary agency staff who had immediate life support training to assist them.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles. Staff undertook training and development in areas relevant to their roles and there were systems in place to review and monitor this.

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured programme. We confirmed that relevant 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.

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

The provider 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.

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

Are services caring?

Our findings

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

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 amazing, friendly, caring and respectful. We saw that staff treated patients with care and kindness and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding.

Patients told us staff were compassionate and empathetic when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

Privacy and dignity

Staff respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of reception and waiting area was open plan in design and staff were mindful of this when dealing with patients in person or on the telephone. 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 requirements under the Equality Act, we saw:

- Interpretation services were available for patients who did not speak or understand English.

Staff 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 principal dentist described the conversations they had with patients to satisfy themselves they understood their treatment options.

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

The principal dentist described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included for example photographs, models, videos

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

We found that 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 on the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care.

Staff understood the needs of more vulnerable members of society such as patients with dental phobia, adults and children with a learning difficulty and people living with dementia, diabetes, autism and long-term conditions.

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

A disability access audit had been completed and an action plan formulated to continually improve access for patients.

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

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 on their website.

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.

The practice's website 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 principal dentist took complaints and concerns seriously and there were arrangements to respond to any concerns raised promptly and appropriately to improve the quality of care.

The provider had policies providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint and information for patients which explained how to make a complaint.

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

The principal dentist 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 their concerns had been dealt with.

The principal dentist told us that they had not received within the previous 12 months.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

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

Leadership capacity and capability

We found the principal dentist had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care. They described their plans to expand the service to provide more complex treatments and increase the services and treatments provided to children.

The principal dentist had plans relating to developing the provision of services, while maintaining standards and quality.

Staff told us the principal dentist worked closely with them to achieve their aims and objectives.

Culture

The practice had a culture of high-quality sustainable care. This was demonstrated through the practice policies, procedures and the day-to-day management of the service.

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

The practice had arrangements to support staff and to ensure that behaviour and performance were consistent with the practice's vision and values.

The provider was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour. Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated in conversations we had with the principal dentist and the procedures in place to respond to incidents and complaints.

Staff could raise concerns and were encouraged to do so, and 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, clinical leadership and 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.

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

Appropriate and accurate information

Staff acted on appropriate and accurate information.

Quality and safety information was used to ensure and improve performance. This information was combined with the views of patients to review and improve quality and safety.

The provider 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 principal dentist involved patients and staff to support high-quality sustainable services.

The provider used patient surveys and verbal comments to obtain staff and patients' views about the service. We saw examples of completed post treatment patient surveys. These showed that patients views were analysed and used to maintain and if needed to make improvements to the service.

The provider 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.

Continuous improvement and innovation

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

The provider had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, radiographs and infection prevention and control. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.

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 whole staff team 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 relevant training, learning and development.