

Titley, Darby & Associates

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Inspection Report

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Date of inspection visit: 21 October 2019

Date of publication: 03/12/2019

Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 21st October 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

Titley, Darby & Associates is located in Penn Fields, Wolverhampton and provides NHS and private treatment to adults and children.

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. There is a private car park within the grounds of the surgery. There is also parking available in a nearby residential estate.

The dental team includes eight dentists, ten dental nurses, three dental hygienists, one locum dental nurse who held a long term contract, two receptionists and one practice manager. The practice has six treatment rooms.

Summary of findings

The practice is owned by a partnership 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 Titley, Darby & Associates is the senior partner.

We sent 50 comment cards in advance of our visit to the practice for patients to complete. On the day of inspection, we collected 34 CQC comment cards filled in by patients which equated to a 64% response rate. On the day of inspection, we spoke with two other patients.

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

The practice is open: Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.30pm, and Friday 8.45am to 4.30pm

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 support to 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 had suitable information governance arrangements.

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

- Take action to ensure that all the staff have received training, to an appropriate level, in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. .
- Take action to ensure that all clinical staff have adequate immunity for vaccine preventable infectious diseases.
- Review practice protocols regarding the prescribing of antibiotic medicines taking into account the guidance provided by the Faculty of General Dental Practice.

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.

No action



Are services effective?

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

No action



Are services caring?

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

No action



Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

No action



Are services well-led?

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

No action



Are services safe?

Our findings

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

Staff had 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. All the staff we spoke with knew about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns, including notification to the CQC. We noted external contact information for local safeguarding services was not included in the policy or safeguarding flowcharts; however this information was then added on the day of inspection. On the day of inspection we saw that only five members of staff had fully completed safeguarding training.

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. Improvements could be made to include the contact information of external organisations such as CQC and the General Dental Council (GDC) within the whistleblowing policy. This was added on the day of inspection.

The dentists 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. This plan included a 'buddy' agreement with another local practice to enable the continuation of patient care. Internally, the practice had a contact tree to ensure all staff were notified of any disruption to services.

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 all 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 dentists 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.

The practice had a laser for the use in dental surgical procedures. We noted that there was no nominated Laser Protection Advisor. However, it was agreed on the day of inspection that the senior partner would be appointed this role as he was the sole user of the equipment. Within 48 hours of inspection, the practice provided evidence to us that the Laser Protection Advisor Information had been downloaded and that local rules were available for the safe use of the equipment.

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.

Are services safe?

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. We saw on the day of inspection that the effectiveness of the vaccination had not been checked for two staff members. Occupational health appointments were booked for these staff members within the week following on from inspection. We saw that two other staff members were identified as having low Hepatitis B immunity however risk assessments had not been carried out for these members of staff. We received completed risk assessments for these two staff members within 48 hours of inspection.

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

Emergency equipment and medicines were available as described in recognised guidance with one exception being there was no spacer device as recommended by national guidelines. This was ordered on the day of inspection. We found staff kept records of their checks of the emergency medicines and equipment to make sure they were available, within their expiry date, and in working order.

A dental nurse always worked with the dentists and the dental hygienists when they treated patients in line with General Dental Council (GDC) Standards for the Dental Team.

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.

The practice had a contracted locum member of staff. We noted that this staff member had received an induction to ensure that they were familiar with the practice's procedures.

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 infection control lead 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.

Are services safe?

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.

We saw staff stored and kept records of NHS prescriptions as described in current guidance.

Antimicrobial prescribing audits were carried out annually. We saw however, the most recent audit indicated the dosage of one antibiotic was not in line with current guidance.

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.

There were systems in place for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong. The practice used time within staff meetings to learn by sharing identified themes to improve safety in the practice.

There was a clear system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. Staff learned from external safety events such as conferences, 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

We saw that clinicians assessed patients' needs and delivered care and treatment in line with current legislation, standards and guidance supported by clear clinical pathways and protocols.

The provider had a small domiciliary care contract. We saw that the provider took into account guidelines as set out by the British Society for Disability and Oral Health when providing dental care in domiciliary settings such as care homes or in people's residence.

The practice did not offer dental implant placement however did offer dental implant restoration. The provision of dental implant restoration was in accordance with national guidance.

Helping patients to live healthier lives

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

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

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

Staff were aware of national oral health campaigns and local schemes in supporting patients to live healthier lives for example, local stop smoking services. They directed patients to these schemes when necessary.

The dentists and dental hygienists 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.

The practice carried out detailed oral health assessments which identified patient's individual risks. Patients were provided with detailed self-care treatment plans with dates for ongoing oral health reviews based upon their individual need and in line with recognised guidance.

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 dentists 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.

Monitoring care and treatment

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

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

Effective staffing

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

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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

Staff discussed their training needs at annual appraisals, one to one meetings and during clinical supervision. 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 polite, helpful and caring. We saw that staff treated patients in a kind manner, respectfully and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

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

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

Information folders, patient survey results and thank you cards were visible and available for patients to read.

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

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

Involving people in decisions about care and treatment

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

Accessible Information Standards. We saw:

- Telephone interpretation services were available for patients who did speak or understand English. Patients were also told about multi-lingual staff that might be able to support them. Languages spoken by staff were English, Gujarati and Punjabi.
- Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand.
- There was no hearing loop in place to support patients with a hearing impairment.

Staff helped patients and their carers find further information and access community and advocacy services for example for those patients with dementia, the practice had information about local initiatives such as tea and cake mornings. They helped them ask questions about their care and treatment.

We saw a large number of information leaflets and posters informing patients of local schemes to promote health and well-being for example pre-natal groups, 'yoga 4 living', fibromyalgia support and mental health drop in services.

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

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

The dentists described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included for example photographs, models, videos and X-ray images to help patients better understand the diagnosis and treatment.

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. Patients with dental phobia were given longer appointment times. A patient with autism had been allocated a time to attend when the practice was quieter, which helped the patient feel more comfortable..

The practice also had a small domiciliary contract to meet the needs of more vulnerable members of society by seeing them in their own home and those residing in care homes.

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

The practice currently had some patients for whom they needed to make adjustments to enable them to receive treatment. The practice would contact these patients prior to their appointment to confirm what adjustments would be needed.

The practice had made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. These included steps free access and an accessible toilet with hand rails and a call bell. Staff would assist wheelchair users from the car park and into the building.

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

Staff described an example of a patient who found it unsettling to wait in the waiting room before an appointment. The team kept this in mind to make sure the dentist could see them as soon as possible after they arrived. If appropriate, patients were offered to sit in the upstairs waiting room which was smaller and less busy than the main waiting room.

Staff telephoned some patients on the morning of their appointment to make sure they could get to the practice. All patients who had opted in, received a text message appointment reminder 48 hours prior to their appointment.

Timely access to services

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

The practice displayed its opening hours in the premises and included it in their information leaflet 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, information leaflet and answerphone provided telephone numbers for patients needing emergency dental treatment both during the working day and when the practice was not open. The staff took part in an emergency on-call arrangement with two other local practices. Patients were clearly signposted to the relevant service on the practice's answer phone out of hours. The practice also referred patients to the NHS 111 service. Patients confirmed they could make routine and emergency appointments easily and were rarely kept waiting for their appointment.

Listening and learning from concerns and complaints

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

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

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

The practice manager aimed to settle complaints in-house 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 manager had dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received over the twelve months preceding the inspection.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

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

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

Leadership capacity and capability

We found practice manager and principal dentist had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care. The practice manager and principal dentist demonstrated they had the experience, capacity and skills to deliver the practice strategy and address risks to it.

The practice manager and principal dentist were knowledgeable about issues and priorities relating to the quality and future of services. They understood the challenges and were addressing them.

Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. Staff told us they worked closely with them and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership. Staff told us that leaders were extremely approachable and quick to deal with any issues.

We saw the provider had effective processes to develop leadership capacity and skills, including planning for the future leadership of the practice.

Culture

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

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

The staff focused on the needs of patients.

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

Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints. The practice manager dealt quickly with issues if they arose. The provider was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

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

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

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

Appropriate and accurate information

Staff acted on appropriate and accurate information.

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

The 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

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

The provider used patient surveys, comment cards and verbal comments to obtain staff and patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients and staff the practice had acted on for example more car parking spaces for patients and a larger kitchen space for staff.

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. We viewed these results and they were all extremely positive.

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

Are services well-led?

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.

Both the principal dentist and registered manager showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued

the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff for example members of staff were responsible for different policies according to their individual interests and areas of knowledge.

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 CPD and staff were given time within their working day to complete this.