

Whitecross Dental Care Limited

Melksham Dental Centre

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 5 June 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 specialist dental advisor.

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

Are services effective?

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

Are services caring?

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

Are services responsive?

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

Are services well-led?

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

Background

Melksham Dental Centre is located in the centre of the busy town of Melksham offering NHS treatment and some private treatments to patients of all ages.

The practice has two surgeries and is located in a row of shops in the centre of the town. There is level access from the street for people who use wheelchairs and pushchairs and facilities are accessible on the ground floor. Car parking spaces are available near the practice. The practice is well located near a main bus route.

Summary of findings

The dental team includes three dentists, a dental hygienist, three dental nurses, two receptionists and a practice manager. The team is supported by a practice manager. The practice has two treatment rooms.

The practice is a Limited 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 Melksham Dental practice was the practice manager.

On the day of inspection we collected nine CQC comment cards filled in by patients and spoke with two other patients. This information gave us a positive view of the practice.

During the inspection we spoke with one dentist, the dental hygienist, two dental nurses and the practice manager. We looked at practice policies, procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open Monday 9am to 1pm - 2pm to 6.30pm; Tuesday 8.30am to 1pm – 2pm to 5pm; Wednesday 8.30am to 1pm – 2pm to 5pm; Thursday 9am to 1pm – 2pm to 5pm; Friday 9am to 1pm – 2pm to 4pm. The practice is closed at weekends but the out of hours emergency arrangements are displayed on their website. Contact information is available from the practice telephone answering service.

Our key findings were:

- The practice was clean and well maintained.
- The practice had infection control procedures in place which reflected published guidance.

- The practice had safeguarding processes in place and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The practice had systems to help them manage risk.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- The appointment system met patients' needs and dedicated emergency appointments were available.
- The practice used digital radiographs to help explain necessary treatment to patients.
- The practice had effective leadership. Staff felt involved and supported and worked well as a team.
- The practice had recruitment procedures in place.
- The practice asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The practice dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.

There were areas where the provider could make improvements and should:

- Review the practice recruitment policy and procedures to ensure accurate, complete and detailed records are maintained for all staff in the practice.
- Review the practice protocols to ensure the training, learning and development needs of individual staff members are reviewed at appropriate intervals and an effective process is established for the on-going assessment and supervision of all staff.
- Review the current performance review systems in place and have an effective process established for the on-going assessment and supervision of all staff.

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 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 and complaints to help them improve.

Staff received training in safeguarding and knew how to recognise the signs of abuse and how to report concerns. The level of training for all staff required review.

Staff were qualified for their roles and the practice completed essential recruitment checks.

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.

No action



Are services effective?

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

The dentists assessed patients' needs and provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance. Patients described the treatment they received as thorough and 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 supported staff to complete training relevant to their roles and had systems in place to monitor this.

No action



Are services caring?

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

We received feedback about the service from 11 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service. They told us staff were friendly, welcoming and go out of their way to help. They said they were given good advice and clear explanations about dental treatment, and said their dentist listened to them.

Patients commented staff made them feel at ease, especially when they were anxious about visiting the dentist.

We saw staff protected patients' privacy and were aware of the importance of confidentiality.

Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect.

No action



Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

No action



Summary of findings

The practice appointment system took account of patients' needs. Patients could obtain an appointment quickly if in pain.

Staff considered patients' different needs. This included providing facilities for disabled patients and families with children. The practice had access to telephone interpreter services and had arrangements to help patients with sight or hearing loss.

The practice took patients views seriously. They valued compliments from patients and responded to concerns and complaints quickly and constructively.

Are services well-led?

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

The practice had 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 and staff felt supported and appreciated.

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.

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 were vulnerable due to their circumstances.

Staff had received safeguarding training and knew the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns. 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 arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. These included risk assessments which staff reviewed every year. The practice followed relevant safety laws when using needles and other sharp dental items. The dentists used rubber dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment.

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

Medical emergencies

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

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

Staff recruitment

The practice had a staff recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. This reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at four staff recruitment files. These showed that some files did not have all the required documentation. During the inspection the area manager accessed these documents from the company head office and copies made for staff files in the practice.

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

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.

Dental nurses worked with all the dentists and hygienist when they treated patients.

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 the effectiveness of the vaccination had been 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.

Infection control

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. Staff completed infection prevention and control training every year.

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.

Are services safe?

Staff carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. The latest audit showed the practice was meeting the required standards. The practice had completed an annual infection control statement.

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

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

Equipment and medicines

We saw servicing documentation for the equipment used in the practice. Staff carried out checks in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations.

The practice had suitable systems for prescribing and storing medicines.

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

Radiography (X-rays)

The practice had suitable arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment. They met current radiation regulations and had the required information in their radiation protection file. X-rays were digital and images were stored within the patient's dental care record.

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

Clinical 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

The practice kept detailed dental care records containing information about patients' current dental needs, past treatment and medical history. The dentists assessed patients' treatment needs in line with recognised guidance. The practice had a dental hygienist who took direct referrals and provided oral health education to patients.

Health promotion and prevention

The practice promoted 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 dentists and hygienist told us they discussed smoking, alcohol consumption and diet with patients during appointments. The practice had a selection of dental products for sale and provided health promotion leaflets to help patients with their oral health.

Staffing

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

Staff told us they discussed training needs at their annual appraisal. We saw evidence of completed appraisal in some staff files. The practice manager told us they did not have a

system for monitoring the continuing professional development and mandatory training for staff. They told us they would implement a system within the next two months.

Working with other services

Dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide. 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 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 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.

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, caring and helpful. We saw 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 waiting areas provided privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. Staff told us 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 other patients might see it.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

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

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

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

The practice was well maintained and provided a comfortable, relaxing environment.

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

We saw the dentists tailored appointment length to patients' individual needs and patients could choose from morning and afternoon appointments.

Staff told us they currently had patients for whom they needed to make adjustments to enable them to receive treatment, for example, staff provided nervous patients with the opportunity to visit the practice and meet the dentists prior to becoming a patient.

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.

A treatment room and patient toilet facilities were at ground floor level.

Staff had access to interpreter and translation services for people who required them.

Access to the service

The practice displayed its opening hours at the premises, in the practice 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 website, information leaflet and answerphone provided contact details for patients requiring emergency dental treatment during the working day and when the practice was closed

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 complaint policy providing guidance to staff about how to handle a complaint. The complaint procedure was displayed in reception. 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. The practice manager told us they aimed to resolve complaints in-house and invited patients to speak with them in person to discuss these.

The practice had not responded to the latest comment/complaint left on the NHS Choices website. During the inspection the practice advised us the company complaint team had responded to the comment.

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

We saw 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 practice manager had overall responsibility for the management and leadership of the practice including the day to day running of the service. We saw staff had limited access to suitable supervision and support for their roles and responsibilities. The practice manager was new to the practice and told us they would be reviewing the system.

The practice had policies, procedures and risk assessments in place to support the management of the service and to guide staff. We saw policies, procedures and risk assessments were regularly reviewed to ensure they were up to date with regulations and guidance.

We saw the practice had arrangements in place to monitor the quality of the service and make improvements where required.

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 manager was approachable, would listen to their concerns and acted appropriately.

The practice held regular meetings where staff could communicate information, exchange ideas and discuss updates. 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 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 had resulted in improvements.

We were shown evidence of learning from complaints, incidents, audits and feedback.

Records seen demonstrated most staff received an annual appraisal which helped identify individual learning needs. Staff told us the practice provided support and training opportunities for their on-going learning.

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 a suggestion box. Patient survey results were available for patients to read. The company patient survey results showed the practice had scored 4.7 out of a total of five. We saw the practice acted upon patient feedback.

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

Patients were encouraged to complete the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT). This is a national programme to allow patients to provide feedback about NHS services they have used. The results indicated 100% of patients would recommend the service.