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Hurst Dental Practice

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 31 May 2018 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

Hurst Dental Practice is in the village of Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex and provides NHS and private treatment to adults and children.

The practice is situated on the high street and accessed via a stair case. Hand rails are provided. Car parking spaces for blue badge holders are available near the practice which is within a short walk of car parks.

The dental team includes two dentists, two dental hygiene therapists, two dental nurses, one trainee dental nurse and two receptionists. The practice has three treatment rooms.

Summary of findings

The practice is owned by an individual who is the principal dentist there. They have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the practice is run.

On the day of inspection we collected 31 CQC comment cards filled in by patients.

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

The practice is open:

- Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.
- The practice had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.
- 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 practice staff had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.

- The practice 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.
- The practice was providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system met patients' needs.
- The practice had effective leadership and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved and supported; and worked well as a team.
- The practice asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The practice staff dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The practice staff had suitable information governance arrangements.

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

- Review the practice's storage of dental care records to ensure they are stored securely.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

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

The practice had systems and processes 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.

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 that 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 excellent, wonderful and professional. 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 to help them monitor this.

The practice participated in an International Team for Implantology (ITI) study club as part of its approach to providing high quality care.

No action



Are services caring?

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

We received feedback about the practice from 31 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were very caring, extremely helpful and empathetic.

They said that they were given clear explanations about their oral health and treatment needs and had any questions answered. Patients commented that they felt listened to and the whole practice team made them feel at ease, especially when they were anxious about visiting the dentist.

We saw that staff protected patients' privacy and were aware of the importance of confidentiality. Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect.

No action



Summary of findings

Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

The practice's appointment system was efficient. Patients could get an appointment quickly if in pain.

The practice understood the needs of the local population and services were designed to ensure these needs were met.

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

No action



Are services well-led?

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

The practice had thorough and effective arrangements to ensure the smooth running of the service. These included systems for the practice team to discuss the quality and safety of the care and treatment provided. Staff understood their roles and responsibilities and felt supported and appreciated.

The practice team kept complete patient dental care records which were, clearly typed and 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

Safety systems and processes (including staff recruitment, Equipment & premises and Radiography (X-rays))

The practice 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 practice 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.

There was a system to highlight vulnerable patients on records e.g. children with child protection plans, adults where there were safeguarding concerns, people with a learning disability or a mental health condition, or who require other support such as with mobility or communication.

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

The dentists used rubber dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment. In instances where the rubber dam was not used, such as for example refusal by the patient, and where other methods were used to protect the airway, this was suitably documented in the dental care records.

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

The practice had a staff recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. These reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at all staff recruitment records. These showed that the practice followed their recruitment procedure.

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

The practice ensured that facilities and equipment were safe and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions, including electrical and gas appliances.

Records showed that emergency lighting, fire detection and firefighting equipment such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers were regularly tested.

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.

We saw evidence that the dentist justified, graded and reported on the radiographs they took. The practice 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 had current employer's liability insurance. The practice's health and safety policies, procedures and risk assessments were up to date and reviewed regularly to help manage potential risk.

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.

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.

Are services safe?

A dental nurse worked with the dentists and the dental hygiene therapists when they treated patients, in line with GDC Standards for the Dental Team.

The provider had suitable risk assessments to minimise the risk that can be caused from substances that are hazardous to health.

The practice 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 (HTM01-05) published by the Department of Health and Social Care. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

The practice had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in line with HTM01-05. The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments were validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

The practice had in place systems and protocols to ensure that any dental laboratory work was disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before the dental laboratory work was fitted in a patient's mouth.

The practice 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 clean when we inspected and patients confirmed that this was usual.

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

The practice 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 typed and managed in a way that kept patients safe.

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 practice had reliable systems for the appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

The practice stored and kept records of NHS and private prescriptions as described in current guidance.

The dentists were aware of current guidance with regards to prescribing medicines.

Track record on safety

Lessons learned and improvements

There were comprehensive risk assessments in relation to safety issues; these were updated regularly. There were adequate systems for monitoring safety incidents and reviewing when things went wrong. All incidents were investigated and documented. The practice discussed incidents with the rest of the dental practice team and took necessary actions to improve safety and prevent such occurrences happening again. This helped the practice to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture that led to safety improvements.

The practice did not have a system in place for receiving and acting on patient and medicine safety alerts. During the inspection the practice amended its arrangements to ensure that it received patient safety alerts, recalls and rapid response reports issued by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the Central Alerting System and other relevant bodies, such as Public Health England.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

The practice had systems to keep dental professionals up to date with current evidence-based practice. We saw that clinicians assessed needs and delivered care and treatment in line with current legislation, standards and guidance supported by clear clinical pathways and protocols.

The practice offered dental implants. These were placed by the principal dentist who had undergone appropriate post-graduate training in this speciality. The provision of dental implants was in accordance with national guidance.

The principal dentist participated in an International Team for Implantology (ITI) study club as part of the practice's approach to providing high quality care.

The practice utilised technology such as an intra-oral camera, radiograph images and clinical photographs to enhance the delivery of care.

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 dentist told us they prescribed high concentration fluoride toothpaste if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them. They used fluoride varnish for children based on an assessment of the risk of tooth decay.

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

The dentist and dental hygiene therapist described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcome of periodontal treatment. This involved preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and detailed charts of the patient's gum condition.

Patients with more severe gum disease were recalled at more frequent intervals to review their compliance and to reinforce home care preventative advice.

The practice also demonstrated a commitment to health promotion and prevention in children. The practice carried out visits to the local preschool as well as beavers and scouts groups, focussing on children from three to six years of age.

These visits involved educating children about what to expect when you visit the dentist and how to look after teeth. Age appropriate information was provided to the children as well as teachers to promote encouragement with oral health. The practice had devised a 'safe snack' game for young children to easily understand how much sugar is present in various foods.

Children were also given 'goody' bags with a leaflet, tooth paste and timers to encourage uptake of the instructions and activities taught during the sessions.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice 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 dentist told us they gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these so they could make informed decisions. Patients confirmed their dentist listened to them and gave them clear information about their treatment.

The practice's consent policy included information about the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The team 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, by which a child under the age of 16 years of age can consent for themselves. The 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.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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

Effective staffing

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured induction programme. Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles. 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 yearly 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 dentist confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide.

The practice had systems and processes to identify, manage, follow up and where required refer patients for specialist care when presenting with bacterial infections.

The practice also had systems and processes 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.

The practice monitored all referrals on a weekly basis to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

Are services caring?

Our findings

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 attentive and thoughtful. We saw that staff treated patients respectfully and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding. They told us that staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

The practice displayed various information, for example, information on NHS charges, private fees, fire safety and complaints. Magazines and information on the local area were available for patients to read.

Privacy and dignity

The practice respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity. Patients commented that their privacy and dignity were respected at all times.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of reception and the patient lounge provided limited privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. Staff told us that if a patient asked for more privacy they 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.

Involving people in decisions about care and treatment

Staff helped patients to be involved in decisions about their care. Whilst the practice had not come across any situations where patients were unable to access and understand information given by the practice, they were reviewing the requirements of the Accessible Information Standards. Staff told us that they would review the format of information in order to meet patient's specific needs.

Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand. For example, staff at the practice told us how they altered their approach to ensure that patients with learning disabilities could have their needs met. Consideration was given to the ways in which information was communicated in order that this was individualised. The practice spent time getting to know patients to build up rapport prior to performing any dental examinations, and to provide reassurance.

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices. Patients confirmed that staff listened to them, did not rush them and discussed options for treatment with them. The 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 dentist described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included, for example, models, clinical photographs, radiograph images and an intra-oral camera. The intra-oral camera enabled photographs to be taken of the tooth being examined or treated and shown to the patient/relative to help them better understand the diagnosis and treatment.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The practice took account of patients' needs and preferences in organising and delivering services. Patients described high levels of satisfaction with the responsive service provided by the practice.

Staff told us that the practice worked flexibly and made adjustments to enable patients to have their needs accommodated. For example, all patient examinations appointments were extended.

The practice had made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. Hand rails had been placed either side of the stair case and a chair positioned at the top of the stairs for patients to rest if required. An alarm cord was situated at the bottom of the stairs should patients have difficulty using stairs. The practice was unable to install a stair-lift due to building regulations.

A Disability Access audit had been completed and an action plan formulated in order to continually improve access for patients.

Staff were clear on the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care. For example, staff at the practice recognised when nervous patients needed additional emotional support and would spend time talking to patients in the waiting area to provide distraction and reassurance.

Staff told us that patients were telephoned following complex or lengthy treatments to review their wellbeing.

Timely access to services

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

The practice had an efficient appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Staff told us that patients who

requested an urgent appointment were seen the same day. Patients told us they 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 displayed its opening hours in the premises, and included it on their website and in their information leaflet.

Patients needing emergency dental treatment when the practice was not open were seen referred to the local emergency dental service. The practice website, information leaflet and answerphone provided telephone numbers for patients to contact. 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 was responsible for dealing with complaints. Staff told us they would tell the principal dentist about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients received a quick response. The principal dentist told us they aimed to settle complaints in-house and invited patients to speak with them in person to discuss these.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received in the previous 12 months. These showed the practice responded to concerns appropriately and discussed outcomes with staff to share learning and improve the service.

The practice had a complaints policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. The practice displayed its complaints policy which explained how patients could make a complaint in the waiting area. This provided information about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Leadership capacity and capability

The principal dentist had the experience, capacity and skills to lead on the delivery of high-quality, sustainable care and worked together with the whole staff team to deliver the practice strategy.

All staff worked closely to prioritise the quality of future services and address risks to it.

Vision and strategy

There was a clear vision and set of values which were demonstrated by staff. These focused on providing a family friendly general dental practice with a strong focus on preventative care. Additionally, the practice supported the local community, for example, participating in the annual village fayre providing education sessions on oral health and raising money for local charities.

The practice strategy involved refurbishing the patient waiting area and treatment rooms. Patients commented that the changes already made to the practice environment were welcome and had improved the experience for them when attending the practice.

Culture

The culture of the practice focused on the needs of patients and all staff demonstrated behaviours that were consistent with the vision and values. Staff stated that they felt respected, supported and valued. They told us that they were able to raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They had confidence that these would be addressed. The practice was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

Governance and management

The principal dentist had overall responsibility for the management, clinical leadership and day to day running of the service. All staff understood their roles and responsibilities and there were clear systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

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.

There were clear and effective processes for managing risks, issues and performance.

Appropriate and accurate information

The practice had information governance arrangements and staff were aware of the importance of these in protecting patients' personal information.

Systems and processes supported the confidentiality of people using the service.

The practice had implemented systems to ensure its compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, 2018). However, we noticed that the practice needed to review its arrangements for storing patients' dental care records to ensure that these were kept securely and in line with the GDPR (2018) and the Data Protection Act (2018).

Engagement with patients, the public, staff and external partners

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

The practice used patient satisfaction surveys and verbal comments to obtain patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients the practice had acted on. The practice had been taking deposits for hygiene appointments to reduce the likelihood of patients failing to attend. However, following patient feedback the practice stopped asking for a deposit.

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.

The practice gathered feedback from staff through meetings, informal discussions, yearly staff appraisals as well as staff feedback forms. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on. For example, the times and days of staff meetings were moved and lengthened to better accommodate staff needs.

Continuous improvement and innovation

Are services well-led?

There were systems and processes for learning and encouraging improvements within the practice. These included audits of dental care records, radiographs and infection prevention and control. They had clear records of the results of these audits and resulting action plans.

The principal dentist showed a commitment to learning and improvement and strongly valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff.

The whole staff team had annual appraisals. The staff team were motivated to learn and increase their skills. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff told us they completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional standards. This included undertaking medical emergencies and basic life support training annually.

The General Dental Council also requires clinical staff to complete continuing professional development. Staff told us the practice provided support and encouragement for them to do so.