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Hextable Dental Centre

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection on 8 February 2017 to ask the practice the following key questions; Are services safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led?

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

Hextable Dental Centre is located in Hextable in Kent. The practice is located within a pharmacy and provides private dental services.

The practice is open Monday 9am to 6pm, Tuesday 9am to 1pm, Wednesday from 9am to 6pm. Thursday Closed. Friday 9am to 1pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm. The practice facilities include one consultation/treatment room, reception and waiting area, and a decontamination room.

We received feedback from 16 patients. Patient feedback was very positive about the service. Patients told us that staff were professional and caring and treated them with respect. They described the service as very good and providing an excellent standard of care. Information was given to patients appropriately and that staff were helpful.

The provider is the registered manager. A registered manager is a person who is registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the practice is run.

Summary of findings

Our key findings were:

- The practice investigated significant and safety events and cascaded learning to staff.
- There were systems to reduce the risk and spread of infection. Dental instruments were cleaned and sterilised in line with current guidance.
- There were systems to ensure that all equipment, including the suction compressor, autoclave, fire extinguishers, oxygen cylinder and the X-ray equipment were working appropriately.
- Staff had received safeguarding children and adults training and knew the processes to follow to raise any concerns. The practice had whistleblowing policies and procedure and staff were aware of these and their responsibilities to report any concerns.
- Patients' care and treatment was planned and delivered in line with current legislation and evidence based guidelines such as that from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).
- The practice ensured staff were trained and that they maintained the necessary skills and competence to support the needs of patients.
- There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of patients.
- Staff had been trained to handle medical emergencies, and appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were readily available.
- Patients received clear explanations about their proposed treatment, costs, benefits and risks and were involved in making decisions about it.
- Patients were treated with dignity and respect and confidentiality was maintained.
- The appointment system met the needs of patients and waiting times were kept to a minimum.
- The practice had a procedure for handling and responding to complaints, which were displayed and available to patients.
- The practice was well-led and staff felt valued, involved and worked as a team. Staff meetings were routinely held to help share information and learning.
- Governance systems were effective and there were a range of policies and procedures in place which underpinned the management of the practice. Clinical and non-clinical audits were carried out to monitor the quality of services.
- The practice sought feedback from staff and patients about the services they provided and acted on this to improve its services.

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 for identifying, investigating and learning from incidents relating to the safety of patients. The infection prevention and control practices at the surgery followed current essential quality requirements. All equipment at the practice was regularly maintained, tested and monitored for safety and effectiveness.

Patients were protected against the risks of abuse or harm through the practice policies and procedures. Staff were trained to recognise and report concerns about patients' safety and welfare and had access to contact details for the local safeguarding team.

There were arrangements to deal with medical emergencies and staff had annual training

Patients' medical histories were obtained before any treatment took place. The dentists were aware of any health or medication issues which could affect the planning of treatment.

There were procedures for recruiting new staff and these were followed consistently. All of the appropriate checks including employment references, proof of identification and security checks were carried out when new staff were employed. The staff were suitably trained and skilled to meet patient's needs and there were sufficient numbers of staff available at all times.

No action



Are services effective?

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

Consultations were carried out in line with current guidelines such as those from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Patients received a comprehensive assessment of their dental needs including a review of their medical history. Dental care records were detailed and included details of risks of conditions such as oral cancer and advice about alcohol and tobacco consumption.

The practice ensured that patients were given sufficient information about their proposed treatment to enable them to give informed consent.

The staff kept their training up-to-date and received professional development appropriate to their role and learning needs. Staff who were registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) demonstrated that they were supported by the practice in continuing their professional development (CPD) and were meeting the requirements of their professional registration.

Health education for patients was provided by the dentists. Also information leaflets were available within the practice waiting area. They provided patients with advice to improve and maintain good oral health. We received feedback from patients who told us that they found their treatment successful and effective.

No action



Are services caring?

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

No action



Summary of findings

Patients were complimentary about the practice and how the staff treated them. Patients commented positively on how caring and helpful staff were, describing them as friendly, compassionate and professional.

Patients felt listened to and were given appropriate information and support regarding their care or treatment. They felt their dentist explained the treatment they needed in a way they could understand. They told us they understood the risks and benefits of each treatment option. Staff had a good awareness of how to support patients who may lack capacity to make decisions about their dental care and treatment.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

Appointment times met the needs of patients and waiting time was kept to a minimum. Staff told us all patients who requested an urgent appointment would be seen on the same day or within 24 hours. They would see any patient in dental pain, extending their working day if necessary.

Patients who had difficulty understanding care and treatment options were suitably supported.

The practice had a procedure for dealing with complaints. One of the dentists told us there had been two complaints made in the last 12 months.

No action



Are services well-led?

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

Staff felt supported and empowered to make suggestions for the improvement of the practice. There was a culture of openness and transparency. Staff at the practice were supported to complete training for the benefit of patient care and for their continuous professional development.

There was a pro-active approach to identify safety issues and make improvements in procedures. There was candour, openness, honesty and transparency amongst all staff we spoke with.

Patients' views were regularly sought by way of a patient survey and comments which were acted upon as required.

No action



Hextable Dental Centre

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the practice was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

The inspection took place on the 8 February 2017 and was undertaken by a CQC inspector and a dental specialist advisor. Prior to the inspection we reviewed information submitted by the provider.

The methods used to carry out this inspection included speaking with both dentists, and a dental nurse on the day of the inspection, reviewing documents, completed patient feedback forms and observations.

We received 16 completed Care Quality Commission comment cards from patients and feedback was very positive about the service.

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 therefore formed the framework for the areas we looked at during the inspection.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

The practice had systems to receive safety alerts, such as those from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) by email which were shared with staff working in the practice. This included printing them and leaving them in a central location for all staff to refer to. We saw that a medicine held by the practice had been checked to ensure that it had not been one of the batch numbers recalled.

The practice had an incidents and accidents reporting procedure. All incidents and accidents were reported in the incident log and accident books. There had been no accidents in the past 12 months. We spoke with staff who could explain what appropriate action they would take in the event of an event or accident occurring to they would share information on what had happened and put procedures in place to reduce the risk of it occurring again.

All staff we spoke with were aware of reporting procedures including whom and how to report an incident to. There had not been any recent incidents.

There had been no RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, 2013) incidents, within the past 12 months. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of RIDDOR regulations and had the appropriate paperwork they needed to record information on if they had an incident. Staff had discussed in a meeting what would be reportable to RIDDOR, how to fill the forms in and how this information would be used for shared learning.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

The practice had policies and procedures for safeguarding adults and child protection. All staff had completed child protection and adult safeguarding training. Details of the local authority safeguarding teams were readily available to staff in a central file in reception, as were the relevant safeguarding escalation flowcharts and diagrams for recording incidents. This information was also displayed in the treatment room. Staff we spoke with demonstrated an understanding of safeguarding issues including how to respond to suspected and actual safeguarding incidents.

Dentists in the practice followed guidance from the British Endodontic Society relating to the use of rubber dam for root canal treatment. [A rubber dam is a thin, rectangular sheet, usually latex rubber, used in dentistry to isolate the operative site from the rest of the mouth and protect the airway].

The system for managing medical histories was comprehensive. All patients were requested to complete medical history forms including existing medical conditions, social history and medication they were taking. Medical histories were updated at each subsequent visit. During the course of our inspection we checked dental care records to confirm the findings and saw that medical histories had been updated appropriately.

Medical emergencies

There were emergency medicines in line with the British National Formulary (BNF) guidance for medical emergencies in dental practice. These were stored securely and those requiring refrigeration were also stored appropriately. Staff also had access to emergency equipment on the premises including medical oxygen. They also had access to an automated external defibrillator (AED) which they shared with the pharmacy; this was in line with Resuscitation Council UK guidance and the General Dental Council (GDC) standards for the dental team. [An AED is a portable electronic device that analyses life threatening irregularities of the heart and delivers an electrical shock to attempt to restore a normal heart rhythm]. We saw records of the monthly checks that were carried out to ensure the medicines were not past their expiry dates and there were daily and weekly checks to ensure equipment was in working order.

All staff had completed recent basic life support training which was updated annually. All staff were aware of where medical equipment was kept and knew how to use the AED and medical oxygen.

Staff recruitment

There was a full complement of the dental team. The team consisted of two dentists who also were the practice owners and a dental nurse who was currently working toward gaining the dental nursing diploma.

Staff told us that the current staffing numbers were sufficient to meet the needs of their patients.

The provider had an appropriate policy for the selection and employment of staff. This included requiring

Are services safe?

applicants to provide proof of address, proof of identification, references, and proof of professional qualifications and registrations. All prospective staff completed an application form and were interviewed as part of the recruitment and selection process. All staff had a Disclosure and Barring Services check completed and where relevant had provided proof of immunisation against Hepatitis B (people who are likely to come into contact with blood products, or are at increased risk of needle-stick injuries should receive these vaccinations to minimise risks of blood borne infections). We reviewed staff recruitment files and found that all appropriate checks and documents were present. We saw confirmation of all clinical staffs' registration with the General Dental Council (GDC).

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

The practice had a health and safety policy and appropriate plans to deal with foreseeable emergencies. The health and safety policy covered identifying hazards and matters relating to staff and people who accessed the practice. There was a business continuity plan that outlined the intended purpose to help the practice overcome unexpected incidents and the responsibilities and duties of each member of staff. The plan outlined potential problems such as loss of computer system, loss of telephone and loss of electricity. Procedures were arranged to enable them to respond to each situation. Relevant contact telephone numbers of organisations to contact were listed in the policy.

The practice carried out risk assessments to ensure they were prepared to respond to safety issues. A fire risk assessment had been completed for the whole building in June 2016 by an outsourced company. Fire drills were conducted regularly. Staff explained to us how they would conduct a fire drill and where the muster points were.

Infection control

The practice had an infection control policy that outlined the procedure for all issues relating to minimising the risk and spread of infections. One of the dentists was the infection control lead.

There was a separate decontamination area. There were two sinks in the decontamination room; one for hand washing and one for rinsing dental instruments. One of the dental nurses gave a demonstration of the decontamination process which was in line with guidance issued by the Department of Health, namely 'Health Technical Memorandum 01-05 -Decontamination in

primary care dental practices (HTM 01-05). This included manually cleaning instrument, placing in a ultrasonic bath, rinsing, inspecting under an illuminated magnifying glass to visually check for any remaining contamination (and re-washed if required); placing in the autoclave; pouching and then date stamping, the practice was marking the pouches with the date of processing. We spoke with staff regarding this and they confirmed that they would date stamp the pouches with the expiry date from now on so to make it clear when any instruments would need to be re-processed again before use. Staff wore the correct personal protective equipment, such as apron and gloves during the process.

We saw records of all the checks and tests that were carried out on the autoclave to ensure it was working effectively. The checks and tests were in line with guidance recommendations.

Staff were immunised against blood borne viruses and we saw evidence of when they had received their vaccinations and their levels of immunity. The practice had blood spillage and mercury spillage kits. Clinical waste bins were assembled and labelled correctly in each surgery and waste was stored appropriately until collection by an external company, every two weeks.

The surgeries were visibly clean and tidy. There were appropriate stocks of personal protective equipment such as gloves and disposable aprons for both staff and patients. There were enough cleaning materials for the practice. Wall mounted paper hand towels and hand gel was available.

We were told the dental nurses were responsible for cleaning all surfaces and the dental chair in the surgery in-between patients and at the beginning and end of each session of the practice in the mornings/ evenings. Staff at the practice had been appointed for the domestic cleaning required. Cleaning schedules were available and we saw the completed logs to confirm all tasks identified were carried out as determined by the cleaning schedule. There were appropriate colour coded cleaning equipment and it was stored correctly at the time of our inspection.

The practice was a new build just under three years old and a Legionella risk assessment was almost due [Legionella is a bacterium found in the environment which can contaminate water systems in buildings]. Staff demonstrated that hot and cold water temperature monitoring was being carried out and logged and water

Are services safe?

lines were being cleaned. Water temperature checks were completed every month. Purified water was used in dental lines and managed with a purifying solution. Taps were flushed daily in line with recommendations.

The practice had carried out an infection control audit recently and undertook these audits every six months.

Equipment and medicines

There were appropriate arrangements to ensure equipment was suitably maintained. Service contracts for the maintenance of the autoclave and compressor were available. The compressor and the autoclave had been inspected when it had been installed and serviced in December 2016. The practice had portable appliances and carried out PAT (portable appliance testing) annually. Appliances were last tested in February 2017.

The only medicines stocked at the practice were those found in the medical emergency kit and the local anaesthetic agents used. All medicines were stored safely and appropriately.

Radiography (X-rays)

The practice had a well maintained radiation protection file that was up to date and demonstrated appropriate maintenance of X-ray equipment. Local rules were in place and had been signed and dated by all members of staff. In-house training regarding local rules had been given to all staff. One of the dentists was the radiation protection supervisor (RPS) and the practice had an external radiation protection adviser (RPA). We also saw evidence of staff qualifications for radiation training. An inventory of all equipment being used was present and maintenance records were up to date, with equipment last being serviced in October 2015.

The critical examination test, risk assessment and quality assurance documentation were all present. X-ray audits were being conducted on a daily, monthly and annual basis. We reviewed the records of the last audit conducted in January 2017.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

The dentists used current National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the British National Formulary (BNF) guidelines to assess each patient's individual risks as regards oral health and needs to determine how frequently to recall them.

During the course of our inspection we checked a sample of dental care records from all the dentists to confirm the findings. We saw evidence of comprehensive assessments to establish individual patient needs. The assessment included completing a medical history, outlining medical conditions and allergies (which was reviewed at each visit), a social history recording habits such as eating and activity and an extra- and intra-oral examination. The reason for visit was documented and a full clinical assessment was completed. An assessment of the periodontal tissue was always recorded using the basic periodontal examination (BPE) tool. The BPE tool is a simple and rapid screening tool used by dentists to indicate the level of treatment need in relation to a patient's gums. Dental care records were completed to a high standard.

Health promotion & prevention

Dentists told us that they gave health promotion and prevention advice to patients. Leaflets relating to diet, soft and hard tissues checks, cancer screening and smoking cessation advice where applicable were given to patients. Brushing techniques were demonstrated and diagrams used to help patients understand the benefits of maintaining good oral health.

The dentists told us that health promotion was a priority for the practice and they encouraged staff to actively promote good oral health to patients. For example, we saw leaflets covering all aspects of good dental hygiene available to patients, such as, good brushing techniques and advice on how to maintain good oral hygiene following more invasive periodontic procedures.

Printed information was available to patients in the waiting room and surgeries covering all types of treatments that the practice offered.

Staffing

All clinical staff had current registration with their professional body - the General Dental Council (GDC), and

were all up to date with their continuing professional development requirements, and working through their five year cycle. [The GDC require all dentists to carry out at least 250 hours of CPD every five years and dental nurses must carry out 150 hours every five years]. We saw evidence of the range of training and development opportunities available to staff to ensure they remained effective in their roles. The dentists monitored the training and development of staff to ensure they had the right opportunities and capacity to attend training.

Working with other services

The practice had processes for effective working with other services. All referrals were either sent by post using a standard proforma or electronically when this was required. Information relating to the patient's personal details, reason for referral and medical history was contained in the referral letter. Copies of all referrals made were kept in the patient's dental care records. Fast track referrals were seen within two weeks and details were faxed and followed up with a telephone call to ensure it was received. We reviewed a sample of referrals made by dentists and saw they were made appropriately. The practice held a log of all referrals sent and their status.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice had a consent policy for staff to refer to. The policy outlined how consent could be obtained and how it should be documented. The practice also had a folder with information relating to mental capacity, outlining how to assess if a person lacked capacity and what to do in such circumstances. All clinical staff whom we spoke with demonstrated understanding of the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005, including the best interest principle and Gillick competence. Staff gave us examples of when the MCA could be used and how the role related to them in their role. The MCA provides a legal framework for health and care professionals to act and make decisions on behalf of adults who lack the capacity to make particular decisions for them].

Dental care records we reviewed demonstrated that consent was obtained and recorded appropriately. Patients who provided feedback confirmed that their consent was obtained for treatment.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion & empathy

We received feedback from 16 patients. Feedback was very positive. Patients told us that staff treated them with dignity, respect and empathy. We were given examples of how staff displayed these qualities including being attentive to their needs and ensuring privacy was maintained during treatment.

During our inspection we observed staff being respectful to patients by ensuring that the door to treatment rooms was closed and conversations could not be overheard in the surgery.

Patients' information was held securely electronically and on paper. All computers were password protected with individual login requirements.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

The patient feedback we received confirmed that patients felt involved in their treatment planning. Patients commented that things were explained well and they were provided with treatment options. Information relating to costs was always given and explained. Treatment options were discussed, with the benefits and risks pointed out. Patients also told us that they were given time to think about their options including being given a copy of their treatment plan. This was reflected in the dental care records we examined.

The dentists explained how they involved patients in decisions about their care and treatment. This included using visual aids and models to help them understand the diagnoses and proposed treatment. Discussions with patients and efforts to involve them were clearly documented in dental care records.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

The practice had an appropriate appointments system that responded to the needs of their patients. Emergency and non-routine appointments were available every day the practice was open and patients could be fitted in as add-ons to scheduled appointments when they were particularly busy. If a patient had an emergency they were asked to come, and would be seen as soon as possible. Patients who provided feedback confirmed that when they had suffered discomfort or pain staff had gone out of their way to see them and attend to their needs.

Tackling inequity and promoting equality

Staff had access to a translation services if patients spoke another language that staff did not speak. The dentists spoke Hindi and Punjabi. There was a sign in the reception area making patients aware of the translation service. Staff told us that they had not had need to use this facility to date.

Access to the service

Appointments were booked by calling or attending the practice. In the event of a patient needing an appointment outside of the opening times, patients were directed to call the out of hour's service (via information on their website and recorded message on the practice answer machine).

Patients who provided feedback were aware of how to access appointments both during opening hours and outside of opening hours. They were satisfied with the way information was made available to them. Patients commented on their ease of obtaining an appointment when they needed one.

Concerns & complaints

The practice manager explained their complaints policy and procedure. Any complaints received would be discussed and explanations of how they would be dealt with were in line with their policy. At the time of our visit there had been two complaints over the past 12 months. Staff we spoke with demonstrated knowledge of their complaints procedure, including knowing timescales for responding, and what to do in the event of a patient needing to make a complaint.

Information relating to complaints was readily available to patients. There was a complaints notice in the patient waiting area as well as detailed information on the provider's website. Patients we spoke with were aware of how to complain.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Governance arrangements

The practice had a range of policies and procedures for the smooth running of the service. There was a system for policies to be reviewed periodically. Staff we spoke with confirmed that they knew how to access policies and found them useful to enable them to work effectively. Staff were supported to meet their continuing professional development needs.

The practice had a comprehensive programme of audits in place. Various audits that had been completed over the past 12 months including audits on record cards, and the quality of X-rays taken. We reviewed the audits and saw that the aim of the audit was clearly outlined along with learning outcomes. Findings were summarised with actions identified. The practice had a commitment to governance of the service and could demonstrate a high quality of service it delivered to patients.

Leadership, openness and transparency

Leadership was very clear in the practice and we saw clear examples where both dentists led by example and promoted an atmosphere of openness amongst staff. For example, we saw that staff spoke daily to discuss issues related to patient needs, training, updated policies and complaints. Staff we spoke with told us that the dentists were open and transparent and they felt confident going to them regardless of what the situation was (i.e. if they had to make them aware of a mistake they had made or discuss an issue).

We discussed the duty of candour requirement on providers and dentists could demonstrate understanding of the requirement. They gave us explanations of how they ensured they were open and transparent with patients. The explanations were in line with the expectations under the duty of candour.

Learning and improvement

The practice had processes to ensure staff were supported to develop and continuously improve. Appraisals were planned yearly for all staff, the only member of staff this referred to had not yet worked at the practice for one year. However we saw that there had been an induction period and a three month and six month review to ensure that objectives were being met and that staff were happy in their role. This process included setting objectives and highlighting areas for development. We reviewed staff reviews and saw they supported learning outcomes. Training for the Mental Capacity Act, safeguarding, infection control and life support was arranged centrally for all staff. Other training opportunities were available on-line for staff and this would usually be identified through the appraisal process but staff could request, if they desired, any additional training.

Practice seeks and acts on feedback from its patients, the public and staff

The practice sought patient feedback continuously. Results were analysed to identify themes and trends. We reviewed the results of recently submitted testimonials and they were very positive and also outlined areas of improvements for the practice to consider. Issues such as providing treatment on the NHS. The practice had investigated, and thoroughly researched the possibility of providing some treatment on the NHS, even submitting a petition to demonstrate the large number of patients who had requested it. Unfortunately this had not been successful.

Staff we spoke with confirmed their views were sought about practice developments. They also said that the dentists were approachable and they could go to them if they had suggestions or any ideas for improvement to the service and they would listen.