

Ferring Dental Practice Limited

Ferring Dental Practice

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 10 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

Ferring Dental Practice is in Ferring, West Sussex and provides NHS and private treatment to adults and children.

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. Car parking spaces for blue badge holders are available outside of the practice along with ample free parking.

The dental team includes three dentists, one dental hygienist, five dental nurses, an operations manager, a business development manager, a company secretary and two receptionists. The practice has three treatment rooms.

Summary of findings

The practice is owned by a company and as a condition of registration must have a person registered with the Care Quality Commission as the registered manager. Registered managers have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the practice is run. The registered manager at Ferring Dental Practice was the principal dentist.

On the day of inspection we collected 94 CQC comment cards filled in by patients.

During the inspection we spoke with three dentists, one dental nurse, one dental hygienist, one receptionist, the operations manager and business development manager. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open:

- Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 5.30pm
- Friday from 8.30am to 5pm
- Saturday 9am to 4.30pm by appointment only

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.

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 exceptional, outstanding and a pleasant experience. 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 staff were involved in quality improvement initiatives such as peer review as part of its approach in 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 94 people. Patients were extremely positive about the service the practice provided. They told us staff were professional, attentive, made them feel safe and go above and beyond.

They said that they were given clear and detailed information about their oral health as well as alternative treatment options to consider, and said their dentist listened to them. Patients commented that 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 and met patients' needs. Patients could get 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 interpreter services and had arrangements to help patients with hearing loss, such as, for example a staff member trained in British Sign Language.

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. There was a clearly defined management structure and staff 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. The practice shared with us two examples of safeguarding concerns, ; both were handled appropriately.

There was a system to highlight vulnerable patients on records, for example, patients 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 record.

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 and also had checks in place for agency and locum 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.

The practice also had a laser for the use of dental surgical procedures. A Laser Protection Advisor had been appointed and local rules were available for the safe use for the equipment. Evidence of staff training was also available.

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. The practice also kept a Risk Register, - a tool for documenting all risks identified and actions taken to respond to the 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.

Are services safe?

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support (BLS) every year. Immediate Life Support (ILS) training for conscious sedation had not yet been taken by practice staff.

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.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists and the dental hygienist 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 occasionally used locum staff. We noted that they received an induction to ensure that they were familiar with the practice's procedures.

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. We noted that due to restrictions in the size of the decontamination room there was no separate wash-hand basin. The practice was due to commence a refit of the decontamination room which would address this. The practice displayed checklists in the decontamination and treatment rooms to act as visible reminders to reinforce the use of safe decontamination processes. 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 dentists 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 appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

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

The 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

Are services safe?

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.

There was a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. The practice learned from external safety events as well as patient and medicine safety alerts.

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 a visiting specialist who had undergone appropriate post-graduate training in this speciality. The provision of dental implants was in accordance with national guidance.

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

The staff were involved in quality improvement initiatives including peer review as part of their approach in providing high quality 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 dentists 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. Following routine appointments for check-ups the practice sent out emails to patients containing information on preventative oral advice and links to further information. This was implemented as a means of enhancing the uptake of preventative oral health techniques.

The dentist and dental hygienist 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.

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 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 as well as alternatives.

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 and visual reminders were displayed in the staff room.

Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly. The practice told us, and patients confirmed that for more complex treatments time was given to considering the various options available and a second consultation appointment given if required.

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

The practice carried out conscious sedation for patients who would benefit. This included people who were very nervous of dental treatment and those who needed

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

complex or lengthy treatment. The practice told us that this service was used infrequently as the focus was on developing relationships with patients to negate the need for sedation.

We reviewed the records for sedation at the practice. Patients were assessed appropriately before and during sedation. Patients had an assessment of health using the American Society of Anaesthesiologists classification system in accordance with current guidelines. The practice included patient checks and monitoring during treatment, for example, pulse, blood pressure, breathing rates and the oxygen saturation of the blood.

The practice confirmed to us in writing that sedation at the practice would be suspended pending a review of its need and a review of the systems in place; to ensure that these were in accordance with guidelines published by the Royal College of Surgeons and Royal College of Anaesthetists in 2015. For example, a review of the emergency equipment requirements, sedation equipment checks, staff training and patient information was to be undertaken.

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.

Additionally, the practice organised educational presentations on topics such as medical emergencies and infection prevention and control as a means of updating staff and identifying areas for learning and improvement within the practice.

Co-ordinating 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 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 welcoming, very caring and efficient. 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, understanding and made them feel valued. They told us that staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

The practice had developed a patient information folder with information on staff profiles, fees, access, data protection and complaints. Information leaflets on oral health, magazines and books were available for patients to read. The practice provided free samples of a range of toothpastes.

Patients also commented on the calming environment the practice had worked hard to create following refurbishments; in order to foster an atmosphere of relaxation rather than nervousness.

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 and were aware of the requirements under the Equality Act and the Accessible Information Standards. Information on the latter was available for patients in the patient lounge.

Interpretation services were available for patients who did not have English as a first language. A member of staff was also qualified in British Sign Language.

Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand and told us that they would review the format of information to improve access in order to meet patient's specific needs.

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 thoroughly. 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, microscopes, photographs, models, radiograph images and an intra-oral camera. For example, a specialised operating microscope was used to take clinical photographs or provide live video feed of a patient's mouth which was then displayed on a ceiling mounted screen. This was seen by the patient/relative to help them better understand the diagnosis and treatment. Similarly, all treatment rooms contained a whiteboard for dentists to use to draw diagrams and explain treatments in a way to enhance patient/relative understanding.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

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

The practice understood the needs of its local patient population. They were working closely with the local District Dementia Action Alliance to become a 'Dementia-Friendly' dental practice. This involved attending workshops, receiving training and reviewing processes such as communication within the practice to identify barriers and develop ways of overcoming these for patients with dementia. The practice had also developed an information folder on equity of access for patients with dementia.

Staff told us that the practice worked flexibly and made adjustments to enable patients to have their needs accommodated. For example, patients with complex needs were given additional time in appointments.

The practice had made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. These included step free access and a wheelchair accessible toilet with grab rails fitted.

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. Staff at the practice recognised when patients needed additional emotional support, for example, nervous patients.

Staff told us that they telephoned some older patients on the morning of their appointment to make sure they could get to the practice. Patients commented on the efficient booking system which included online booking and email reminders which patients found helpful.

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 in their practice information leaflet and on their website.

Patients needing emergency dental treatment when the practice was not open could access the local Emergency Dental Service. The practice website, information leaflet and answerphone provided telephone numbers for this 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 took complaints and concerns seriously and responded to them appropriately to improve the quality of care. The business development manager was responsible for dealing with these. Staff told us they would share any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so that patients received a quick response. The practice aimed to settle complaints in-house and invited patients to speak with them in person to discuss these.

The practice had a complaints policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. The practice information leaflet provided information for patients on how to make a complaint and information was available about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received within the previous twelve months.

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

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. The practice had processes to develop staff leadership capacity and skills for succession planning.

Vision and strategy

There was a clear vision and set of values which were clearly demonstrated by staff. The practice had a realistic strategy to achieve its aims of expanding the practice and enhancing the delivery of care for patients with dementia.

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. Patients commented on the transparency of the staff team.

Governance and management

The principal dentist had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice. The operations and business development managers were responsible for the 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 practice displayed its management structure and all staff held lead roles to encourage development in a specific area.

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) which will come into effect as of 25 May 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 surveys, online reviews 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 refurbished its patient lounge to improve the ambience and reduce the potential for anxiety. The practice had also developed patient information on dental emergencies to provide clarification and support.

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 and yearly staff satisfaction surveys. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on. For example, clinicians had requested new materials and the dental nurses had been instrumental in the planning of the decontamination room refurbishments.

Continuous improvement and innovation

There were systems and processes for learning and encouraging improvements within the practice. The practice had monthly quality assurance meetings to review risks and monitor its performance as part of its service delivery plan. For example, this included processes such as audits of dental care records, radiographs, infection prevention and control and patient waiting times. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans.

Are services well-led?

The principal dentist and management team 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.