

Dentalcare (Southern) Ltd

Dentalcare Brackley

Inspection Report

2 Bridge Street
Brackley
Northamptonshire
NN13 7EP

Tel: 01280 730 888

Website: www.dentalcare.ltd.uk/brackley

Date of inspection visit: 24 July 2017

Date of publication: 19/09/2017

Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 24 July 2017 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. We planned the inspection to check whether the registered provider was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations. The inspection was led by a CQC 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

Dentalcare Brackley is in Northamptonshire and provides NHS and private treatment to patients of all ages.

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and pushchairs and there are two treatment rooms accessible on the ground floor. Car parking spaces are available near the practice.

The dental team includes five dentists, six dental nurses, one dental hygienist and two receptionists. The practice manager left the practice a few days prior to our inspection. The practice has four treatment rooms.

Summary of findings

The practice is owned by an organisation 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. At the time of the inspection the practice did not have a registered manager in post; although the head nurse expressed her intention to apply for the role.

On the day of inspection we collected 18 CQC comment cards filled in by patients. This information gave us a positive view of the practice.

During the inspection we spoke with one dentist, 2 dental nurses, one receptionist and the group compliance manager. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8 am to 6.30 pm. On Wednesday from 8 am to 8 pm and on Saturday from 9 am to 4 pm.

Our key findings were:

- The practice was 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. Risks associated with use of medical sharps had not been assessed.
- The practice had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- The practice had thorough staff recruitment procedures. References were not always recorded.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- The appointment system met patients' needs.
- The practice had effective leadership. 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 dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.

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

- Review the protocols and procedures to ensure staff are up to date with their mandatory training and their Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Review the practice protocols for use of medical sharps with reference to the Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013.

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. References were not always recorded.

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 efficient, helpful and informative. 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.

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 18 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were welcoming and pleasant. They said that they were given great information about all treatments and said their dentist listened to them. Patients commented that they made them feel at ease, especially when they were anxious about visiting the dentist. Patients commented that they saw a different dentist or hygienist frequently.

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 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 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 written or 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

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

The practice had policies and procedures to report, investigate, respond and learn from accidents, incidents and significant events. Staff knew about these and understood their role in the process.

The practice recorded, responded to and discussed all incidents to reduce risk and support future learning. A compliance company provided a monthly report which included any significant incidents. There had been two incidents reported since January 2017 which had been managed appropriately.

The practice received national patient safety and medicines alerts from the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority (MHRA). Relevant alerts were discussed with staff, acted on and stored for future reference.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

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

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. The practice did not have a risk assessment pertaining to the use of sharps on the premises. They were not using 'safer sharps' in line with the Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013. They were employing some techniques to mitigate the risk of injury from a contaminated needle.

The dentists used rubber dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment.

The practice had a business continuity plan describing how the practice would deal with events which could disrupt the normal running of the practice. This was undated. A copy was kept off the premises so that the relevant information could be accessed even if the premises could not.

Medical emergencies

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

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

Staff recruitment

The practice had a staff recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. This reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at six staff recruitment files. These showed the practice followed their recruitment procedure; references were not consistently recorded.

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

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

The practice's health and safety policies and risk assessments were up to date and reviewed to help manage potential risk. These covered general workplace and specific dental topics. The practice had current employer's liability insurance and checked each year that the clinicians' professional indemnity insurance was up to date.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists and dental hygienist when they treated patients.

Infection control

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures to keep patients safe. They followed guidance in The Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM01-05) published by the Department of Health. Staff completed infection prevention and control training every year.

The practice had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in

Are services safe?

line with HTM01-05. The records showed equipment staff used for cleaning and sterilising instruments was maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

The clinical waste bin in the staff car park was locked, but not secured to prevent it being wheeled away. We received word from the practice following the inspection that arrangements had been made to secure it.

The practice carried out an infection prevention and control audits. The latest audit was completed in March 2017 and showed the practice was meeting the required standards. Staff we spoke with were aware that infection control audits were recommended to be completed every six months; although the current audit stating its review date as March 2018.

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

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

Equipment and medicines

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

The practice had suitable systems for prescribing, dispensing and storing medicines.

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

Radiography (X-rays)

The practice had suitable arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment. They met current radiation regulations and had the required information in their radiation protection file.

We saw evidence that the dentists justified, graded and mostly reported on the X-rays they took. The practice carried out X-ray audits every year following current guidance and legislation. Audit results were collated individually by the compliance company and an analysis returned to the practice by way of an overall score and comment on any individual concerns. Individual dentists did not always receive their own results which would aid them in their personal improvement.

Clinical staff completed continuous professional development in respect of dental radiography.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

The practice kept detailed dental care records containing information about 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.

Health promotion & prevention

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

The dentists 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 for each child.

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

Staffing

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured induction programme. We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuous professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council. The practice did not have an

effective method of tracking training and maintaining oversight of training carried out. We were shown a planned spreadsheet, which, once implemented would go some way to addressing this.

Staff told us they discussed training needs at annual appraisals. We saw evidence of completed appraisals.

Working with other services

Dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide. This included referring patients with suspected oral cancer 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 urgent and non-urgent referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice team understood the importance of obtaining and recording patients' consent to treatment. The dentists told us they gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these so they could make informed decisions. Patients confirmed their dentist listened to them and gave them clear information about their treatment.

The practice had a policy regarding the Mental Capacity Act dated July 2017. The team understood their responsibilities under the act when treating adults who may not be able to make informed decisions. Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion and empathy

Staff we spoke with were aware of their responsibility to respect people's diversity and human rights.

Patients commented positively that staff were pleasant, efficient and helpful. We saw that staff treated patients respectfully and politely and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

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

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of reception and waiting areas did not provide a large degree of 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 personal information where other patients might see it.

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

There were magazines in the waiting room. The practice provided free wireless internet for use by patients in the waiting room.

The head nurse had arranged to shadow staff at the community dental service in order that they would be better able to reassure children referred to that service of what to expect.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

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

Patients told us staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort. Comments received indicated that patients were seen promptly if the need was urgent.

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

Each treatment room had a screen so the dentists could show patients photographs, videos and X-ray images when they discussed treatment options.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

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

The practice had an efficient appointment system to respond to patients' needs. At the time of the inspection the practice were advertising for clinical staff to ensure they continued to do so. Staff told us that patients who requested an urgent appointment were seen the same day. Appointments ran smoothly on the day of the inspection and patients were not kept waiting.

Staff told us that they currently had some patients for whom they needed to make adjustments to enable them to receive treatment. Ground floor treatment rooms were made available and staff recognised certain patients who may need a further reminder of their appointment.

Promoting equality

The practice made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. These included step free access, a hearing loop, and accessible toilet with hand rails and a call bell.

Staff said they could provide information in different formats and languages to meet individual patients' needs. They had access to interpreter services.

Access to the service

The practice displayed its opening hours in the premises, their information leaflet and on their website.

We confirmed the practice kept waiting times and cancellations to a minimum.

The practice was committed to seeing patients experiencing pain on the same day and kept appointments free for same day appointments. The website and answerphone provided telephone numbers for patients needing emergency dental treatment during the working day and when the practice was not open. Patients confirmed they could make routine and emergency appointments easily and were rarely kept waiting for their appointment.

Concerns & complaints

The practice had a complaints policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. The practice information leaflet explained how to make a complaint. The head nurse and compliance manager were responsible for dealing with these.

The compliance manager told us they aimed to settle complaints in-house and invited patients to speak with them in person to discuss these. Information was available about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received in the last year. 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

Governance arrangements

The company owner had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice. The head nurse was responsible for the day to day running of the service until a new practice manager could be appointed. Staff knew the management arrangements and their roles and responsibilities.

The practice had policies, procedures and risk assessments to support the management of the service and to protect patients and staff. These included arrangements to monitor the quality of the service and make improvements.

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

Leadership, openness and transparency

Staff were aware of the duty of candour requirements to be open, honest and to offer an apology to patients if anything went wrong.

Staff told us there was an open, no blame culture at the practice. They said the management encouraged them to raise any issues and felt confident they could do this. They knew who to raise any issues with and told us the management team both within in practice and within the wider group of practices was approachable, would listen to their concerns and act appropriately. The practice manager discussed concerns at staff meetings and it was clear the practice worked as a team and dealt with issues professionally.

The practice held meetings where staff could raise any concerns and discuss clinical and non-clinical updates. Immediate discussions were arranged to share urgent information.

Learning and improvement

The practice had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, X-rays and infection prevention and control. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.

The head nurse and compliance manager showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff. The whole staff team had annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff told us they completed mandatory training, including medical emergencies and basic life support, each year. The General Dental Council requires clinical staff to complete continuous professional development. Staff told us the practice provided support and encouragement for them to do so. The practice had planned a closure in order to have training during the week of our inspection.

The practice planned to implement a tracker of continuous professional development so that oversight could be maintained of training requirements. This was not yet in place at the time of the inspection.

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

The practice used patient surveys and verbal comments to obtain staff and patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients/staff the practice had acted upon. For example: the practice asked a 'question of the month' recently this pertained to the reminders sent to patients before their appointments. The results of this were analysed and changes made to reflect the requirements of this practice.

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.