

Oasis Dental Care Limited

Oasis Dental Care - Lincoln 1

Inspection Report

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Date of inspection visit: 16 March 2016

Date of publication: 25/04/2016

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection on 16 March 2016 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

Oasis Dental Care - Lincoln 1 is a dental practice situated in the heart of Lincoln city centre. The practice is part of Oasis Dental Care Limited. The practice is in a building that has been adapted for the purpose of dentistry and is situated over two floors. Part of the practice is a Grade two listed building and the upstairs waiting area retains many of the buildings original features. On the ground floor there is a treatment room, reception desk with a waiting area, a small office area at the back of the reception and two patient toilets, one of which has been adapted for the needs of disabled or patients with limited mobility. The first floor has three treatment rooms, a waiting area, a decontamination room, a small staff kitchen area, staff changing room and staff toilet. Both waiting areas have high back chairs and chairs with arm rests to enable ease of use for those with limited mobility. The entrance to the practice is from the street and can be easily accessed by those patients with limited mobility, wheelchair access, or pushchairs. There is an intercom at the front door so that patients can alert staff of their arrival if they are unable to open the door.

There are seven dentists working in the practice alongside two hygienists, four dental nurses and four trainee dental nurses. There are also two reception staff and a practice manager. One of the dental nurses also works covering reception duties and the practice manager is also a qualified dental nurse.

Summary of findings

The practice manager is the registered manager of the practice. A registered manager is a person who is registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered dentists, 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.

The practice provides NHS and some private dental treatment to adults and children. The practice is open Monday to Thursday from 7am to 7pm, Friday 7am to 5.30pm and Saturday morning from 8.30am to 12pm.

Before the inspection we sent Care Quality Commission comment cards to the practice for patients to complete to tell us about their experience of the practice. We received feedback from 42 patients about the services provided. The feedback reflected mainly positive comments about the staff and the services provided. Patients commented that the practice was clean and tidy and that it was caring and friendly. They said that they found the staff offered a welcoming and professional service and had high confidence in the team. They said that staff were polite, helpful and kind. Patients said that explanations about their treatment were clear. Feedback in relation to patients who were nervous commented how the staff were understanding and patient; they were made to feel at ease and that any questions were answered.

Our key findings were:

- There was appropriate equipment for staff to undertake their duties, and equipment was well maintained.
- There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of patients.
- Infection control procedures were in place and staff had access to personal protective equipment.
- The practice had the necessary equipment to deal with medical emergencies, and staff had been trained how to use that equipment. This included oxygen and emergency medicines.
- The practice followed the relevant guidance from the Department of Health's: 'Health Technical Memorandum 01-05 (HTM 01-05) for infection control.
- Policies and procedures at the practice were kept under review.
- Dentists involved patients in discussions about the care and treatment on offer at the practice. Patient recall intervals were in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance.
- Patients' care and treatment was planned and delivered in line with evidence based guidelines and current legislation.
- Patients received clear explanations about their proposed treatment, costs, benefits and risks.
- Patients were treated with dignity, respect and confidentiality was maintained.
- The appointment system met the needs of patients and waiting times were kept to a minimum where possible.
- The practice was well-led; staff felt involved and worked as a team.
- Governance systems were effective and policies and procedures were in place to provide and manage the service.
- Staff had received safeguarding training and knew the processes to follow to raise any concerns.
- All staff were clear of their roles and responsibilities.
- There was a process in place for reporting and learning from significant events and accidents, however this did not include near misses and incidents.

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

- Review its responsibilities to the needs of people with a disability and the requirements of the equality Act 2010 and ensure a Disability Discrimination Act audit is undertaken for the premises.
- Review the practice's system for the recording, investigating and reviewing incidents with a view to preventing further occurrences and, ensuring that improvements are made as a result.
- Review the practice whistleblowing policy to give staff the option of contacts outside of the organisation and practice such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC) or General Dental Council (GDC).

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 care which was safe in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice had effective systems and processes in place to ensure all care and treatment was carried out safely. The practice had procedures in place for reporting and learning from accidents, and incidents.

Staff had received training in safeguarding vulnerable adults and children and staff were able to describe the signs of abuse and were aware of the external reporting process and who was the safeguarding lead for the practice.

Infection control procedures were in place; followed published national guidance and staff had been trained to use the equipment in the decontamination process. The practice was operating an effective decontamination pathway, with robust checks in place to ensure sterilisation of the instruments. The practice had carried out infection control audits six monthly in line with national guidance.

Are services effective?

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

Explanations were given to patients in a way they understood. Risks, benefits and options available to them were discussed.

There were clear procedures for referring patients to secondary care (hospital or other dental professionals). Referrals were made in a timely way to ensure patients' oral health did not suffer. A log of referrals was maintained to ensure referrals were completed and could be monitored.

Staff had received training in the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 and were able to explain to us how the MCA principles applied to their roles. The dentists and staff were aware of the assessment of Gillick competency in young patients and there was a policy in place for this. The Gillick competency is used to help assess whether a child has the maturity to make their own decisions and to understand the implications of those decisions.

Are services caring?

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

Patients were treated with dignity and respect and their privacy maintained. Patient information and data was handled confidentially. Patients provided positive feedback about the dental care they received, and had confidence in the staff to meet their needs.

Patients said they felt involved in their care. Patient's feedback told us that explanations and advice relating to treatments were clearly explained, options were given and that they were able to ask any questions that they had. Nervous patients said that they were made to feel at ease.

Patients with urgent dental needs or pain would be responded to in a timely manner with patients of this practice been seen within 24 hours were necessary.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

Summary of findings

The practice was well equipped. The waiting areas had music playing to help maintain confidentiality and provide a relaxed atmosphere. The practice was accessible for people that used a wheelchair or those patients with limited mobility. Appointments would be held for these patients in the ground floor treatment room. This was noted on the dental care record.

The practice had two toilets one of which was fully accessible for those in a wheelchair or with limited mobility.

The practice surveyed patients monthly and there was a suggestion box so that patients could easily feedback any comments or suggestions.

Are services well-led?

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

Staff were involved in leading the practice to deliver effective care.

Staff were supported to maintain their professional development and skills. Appraisals had taken place on an annual basis and there were personal development plans in place for staff which identified areas for development and training needs. The practice manager met with all dentists on a monthly one to one basis.

We saw that practice meetings were regular and that these were minuted.

Oasis Dental Care - Lincoln 1

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 16 March 2016 and was led by a CQC inspector and supported by a specialist dental advisor. Prior to the inspection, we asked the practice to send us some information that we reviewed. This included the complaints they had received in the last 12 months, their latest statement of purpose, and the details of their staff members including proof of registration with their professional bodies.

During the inspection, we spoke with the practice manager, dentists, dental nurses and reception staff and reviewed policies, procedures and other documents. We reviewed 42 comment cards that we had left prior to the inspection for patients to complete; about the services provided at the practice.

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 procedures in place to investigate, respond to and learn from accidents and complaints. There was a process in place for reporting and learning from significant events and accidents. There were forms available for staff to complete which included actions to prevent reoccurrence and learning.

There was an accident book where staff would record accidents such as needle stick injuries. There had been accidents reported, the last in 2014 which was a needlestick injury. The incident had been investigated and appropriate steps had been taken. Staff were encouraged to bring safety issues to the attention of the management and staff that we spoke with said that they would inform the practice manager if anything did occur. The practice had a no blame culture and policies were in place to support this.

Staff also told us of incidents that had occurred such as the compressor failing and that learning points and discussions had come from this which was evidenced in the practice meetings. However these incidents and near misses were not recorded and documented and therefore it would be difficult to identify themes or trends. We spoke with the practice manager about this who said that they would adapt the existing significant event form to be used for these types of incidents. This would be implemented and discussed at a future practice meeting.

The practice had received nine complaints in the last 12 months. There was a practice policy for dealing with complaints and the staff were aware of this. The practice had a process in place which included complaints being investigated and outcomes were shared at a practice meeting with all staff. We saw a record of the complaints received, four of which were verbal which included the response and outcome of the complaints. The practice had not looked at lessons learned in relation to complaints as they were sent to the head office for collation and would then look at trends and themes identified for the organisation. We spoke with the practice manager about this who said that they would also look to incorporating lessons learned at a practice level. The complaints that were of a clinical nature were discussed with the clinician involved.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

The practice had policies and procedures in place for recognising and responding to concerns about the safety and welfare of patients. Staff we spoke with were aware of these policies and were able to explain who they would contact and how to refer to agencies outside of the practice should they need to raise concerns. They were able to demonstrate that they understood the different forms of abuse. The practice had a flow chart for any concerns in relation to safeguarding of children or adults including telephone numbers. This was kept at reception, in the patient folder in the waiting areas and there was also one in each treatment room. From records viewed we saw that staff at the practice had completed training in safeguarding adults and children applicable to their roles. The practice manager was the lead for safeguarding to provide support and advice to staff and to oversee safeguarding procedures within the practice. No safeguarding concerns had been raised by the practice.

The practice had a whistleblowing policy which gave information on how to raise concerns. The details in the policy and also on a poster in the staff area gave details of an advice line within the provider company called 'safecall'. Staff we spoke with were clear on different organisations they could raise concerns with for example, the General Dental Council or the Care Quality Commission if they were not able to go directly to the provider however these were not mentioned in the whistleblowing policy. Staff that we spoke with on the day of the inspection told us that they felt confident that they could raise concerns without fear of recriminations.

We spoke to the dentists about root canal treatment and we were told that it was carried out where practically possible using a rubber dam. (A rubber dam is a thin sheet of rubber used by dentists to isolate the tooth being treated and to protect patients from inhaling or swallowing debris or small instruments used during root canal work).

The practice had an up to date employer's liability insurance certificate which was due for renewal March 2016. Employers' liability insurance is a requirement under the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969.

Medical emergencies

There were suitable arrangements in place to deal with medical emergencies at the practice. The practice had an

Are services safe?

automated external defibrillator (AED), which is a portable electronic device that analyses life threatening irregularities of the heart including ventricular fibrillation and is able to deliver an electrical shock to attempt to restore a normal heart rhythm. The practice had in place emergency medicines as set out in the British National Formulary guidance for dealing with common medical emergencies in a dental practice. We saw that the expiry dates were monitored by the practice using a monthly check sheet. We were told that the equipment including the oxygen and AED were also checked weekly and there were records to confirm this. The practice had access to oxygen along with other related items such as manual breathing aids in line with the Resuscitation Council UK guidelines. The emergency medicines and oxygen we saw were all in date and stored in a central location known to all staff. Staff had been trained annually in basic life support and there were practice training scenarios for staff twice yearly.

Staff recruitment

The clinical staff had current registration with the General Dental Council, the dental professionals' regulatory body. The practice had a recruitment policy which described the process when employing new staff. This included obtaining proof of identity, checking skills, and qualifications, registration with professional bodies where relevant, references and whether a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check was necessary. DBS checks identify whether a person has a criminal record or is on an official list of people barred from working in roles where they may have contact with children or adults who may be vulnerable.

We saw that all staff members had a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in place and that the practice renewed these on a three yearly basis.

There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified and skilled staff working at the practice.

The practice had an induction system for new staff which was documented within the staff files of staff that we reviewed.

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

The practice had arrangements in place to monitor health and safety and deal with foreseeable emergencies

including a well-maintained Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) file. The practice had carried out risk assessments including fire safety, health and safety and legionella.

Dental water lines were maintained in accordance with current guidelines to prevent the growth and spread of Legionella bacteria. (Legionella is a particular bacterium which can contaminate water systems in buildings.) Flushing of the water lines was carried out in accordance with current guidelines and supported by a practice protocol. Water tests were being carried out on a monthly basis. This helped to ensure that patients and staff were protected from the risk of infection due to the growth of the Legionella bacteria in any of the water systems.

Staff told us that fire detection and firefighting equipment such as fire alarms and emergency lighting were regularly tested. Records showed that this was completed weekly. Fire equipment was checked by an external company and last checked in July 2015. The practice had six monthly fire drills with the last one taking place in March 2016.

Systems, policies and procedures were in place to manage risks at the practice. The practice had a business continuity plan to deal with any emergencies that may occur which could disrupt the safe and smooth running of the service. This included contact details of staff, other local practices, gas, electricity and water companies and also a list of suppliers and their contact numbers. The business continuity plan was held in paper form in the practice and electronically on the 'hub' which the practice manager could access from home if required.

Infection control

The practice was visibly clean, tidy and uncluttered. An infection control policy was in place, which clearly described how cleaning was to be undertaken at the premises including the treatment rooms and the general areas of the practice. The practice employed a contract cleaner who came in each day and was responsible for the general cleaning of the practice. The dental nurses were responsible for cleaning and infection control in the treatment rooms. There were schedules in place for what should be done and the frequency. The practice had systems for testing and auditing the infection control procedures with the last audit having taken place in December 2015 which included an action plan which showed actions that had been completed.

Are services safe?

We found that there were adequate supplies of liquid soaps and paper hand towels in dispensers throughout the premises. Posters describing proper hand washing techniques were displayed in the dental treatment rooms, decontamination room and toilets.

The practice had a sharps management policy which was clearly displayed and understood by all staff. The dentists were responsible for the removal of needles to reduce the risk of needle stick injury. The practice used sharps bins (secure bins for the disposal of needles, blades or any other instruments that posed a risk of injury through cutting or pricking.) The bins were located out of reach of small children. The practice had a clinical waste contract in place and waste matter was stored securely prior to collection by an approved clinical waste contractor.

We looked at the procedures in place for the decontamination of used dental instruments. The practice had a dedicated decontamination room that was set out according to the Department of Health's guidance, Health Technical Memorandum 01-05 (HTM 01-05):

Decontamination in primary care dental practices. The decontamination room had dirty and clean zones in operation to reduce the risk of cross contamination. There was a clear flow of instruments through the dirty to the clean area. Staff wore personal protective equipment during the process to protect themselves from injury which included heavy duty gloves, aprons and protective eye wear.

We found that instruments were being cleaned and sterilised in line with the published guidance (HTM 01-05). A dental nurse demonstrated the decontamination process, and we saw the procedures used followed the practice's policy. Dirty instruments were transported in purpose made containers that were clearly marked. The dental nurses were knowledgeable about the decontamination process and demonstrated they followed the correct procedures. All the equipment had been regularly serviced and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. There were daily, weekly and monthly records to demonstrate the decontamination processes to ensure that equipment was functioning correctly.

Files reflected staff Hepatitis B status. 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.

Equipment and medicines

Records we viewed reflected that equipment in use at the practice was regularly maintained and serviced in line with manufacturer's guidelines. Portable appliance testing took place on all electrical equipment in October 2015 by a qualified electrician. This was completed every two years with visual checks by staff monthly.

Medicines in use at the practice were in date, stored and disposed of in line with published guidance. We saw detailed logs of checks carried out.

There were sufficient stocks of equipment available for use and these were rotated regularly to ensure equipment remained in date for use.

Radiography (X-rays)

X-ray equipment was situated in suitable areas and X-rays were carried out safely and in line with local rules that were relevant to the practice and equipment. These documents were located in the rooms where X-rays were carried out.

A radiation protection advisor and a radiation protection supervisor had been appointed to ensure that the equipment was operated safely and by qualified staff only. Those authorised to carry out X-ray procedures were clearly named in all documentation. This protected patients who required X-rays to be taken as part of their treatment. We saw certificates that showed maintenance for this equipment was completed at the recommended intervals. Risk assessments and radiation surveys had been conducted and we saw that recommendations that had resulted from these had been carried out.

We saw an X-ray audit had been carried out. This included assessing the quality of the X-rays which had been taken. The results of the most recent audit confirmed they were compliant with the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2000 (IRMER).

We saw training records that showed the qualified staff had received training for core radiological knowledge under IRMER 2000.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

The practice kept up to date electronic dental care records. The practice had policies and procedures in place for assessing and treating patients. The provider carried out an assessment in line with recognised guidance from the Faculty of General Dental Practice (FGDP). Radiographs were taken at appropriate intervals and in accordance with the patient's risk of oral disease.

The provider used National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance to determine a suitable recall interval for the patients. This took into account the likelihood of the patient experiencing dental disease.

During the course of our inspection we discussed general patient care with the provider and hygienist and checked dental care records to confirm the findings. Clinical records were comprehensive and included details of the condition of the teeth, soft tissue lining the mouth and gums and any signs of mouth cancer.

Records showed patients were made aware of the condition of their oral health and whether it had changed since the last appointment. Medical history checks were updated by each patient every time they attended for treatment and entered in to their electronic dental care record. This included an update on their health conditions, current medicines being taken and whether they had any allergies.

Health promotion & prevention

The waiting room and reception area at the practice contained literature that explained the services offered at the practice. Staff told us that they advised patients on how to maintain good oral hygiene both for children and adults and the impact of diet, tobacco and alcohol consumption on oral health. Patients were advised of the importance of having regular dental check-ups as part of maintaining good oral health. This was in line with the Department of Health guidelines on prevention known as 'Delivering Better Oral Health'. Dental care records we observed demonstrated that clinical staff had given oral health advice to patients. The practice also sold a range of dental hygiene products to maintain healthy teeth and gums; these were available in the reception area.

Staffing

The practice consisted of seven dentists and two hygienists, four dental nurses and four trainee dental nurses. There were also two reception staff and a practice manager. One of the dental nurses also covered reception and the practice manager was also a qualified dental nurse. The Care Quality Commission comment cards that we viewed showed that patients had confidence and trust in the dental staff.

Dental staff were appropriately trained and registered with their professional body. Staff were encouraged to undertake their continuing professional development (CPD) to maintain their skill levels. CPD is a compulsory requirement of registration as a general dental professional and its activity contributes to their professional development. Files we looked at showed details of the number of CPD hour's staff had undertaken and training certificates were also in place.

Staff had accessed training face to face and online in the form of e-learning. Staff we spoke with told us that they were supported in their learning and development and to maintain their professional registration.

The practice had procedures for appraising staff performance and we saw that this was done annually. Learning needs were identified and objectives were discussed. We observed a friendly atmosphere at the practice. Staff told us that the practice manager was supportive and approachable and always available for advice and guidance.

Working with other services

The practice had systems in place to refer patients to other practices or specialists if the treatment required was not provided by the practice. The records at the practice showed that referrals were made in a timely way. Letters would be sent and for urgent referrals. The letters were attached to the patient record.

Consent to care and treatment

We discussed the practice's policy on consent to care and treatment with staff. We saw evidence that patients were presented with treatment options, and verbal consent was received and recorded. The provider was also aware of Gillick competency in young patients. The Gillick competency is used to help assess whether a child has the maturity to make their own decisions and to understand the implications of those decisions.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Staff were aware of the need to obtain consent from patients and this included information regarding those who lacked capacity to make decisions. Staff had received Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) training and were fully

conversant with the relevance to the dental practice. The MCA provides a legal framework for acting and making decisions on behalf of adults who lack the capacity to make particular decisions for them.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion & empathy

The practice had procedures in place for respecting patients' privacy, dignity and providing compassionate care and treatment. We observed that staff at the practice treated patients with dignity and respect, and maintained their privacy. The reception area had some seats nearby for the downstairs treatment room but the main waiting room was upstairs which helped to maintain confidentiality. There was music playing to also assist with this. Practice computer screens were not overlooked which ensured patients' confidential information could not be viewed at reception. Staff we spoke with were aware of the importance of providing patients with privacy and maintaining confidentiality. Treatment was discussed in the treatment room. Staff members told us that they never asked patients questions related to personal information at reception if there were other patients nearby, and to maintain confidentiality a separate area could be used for personal discussions. .

A data protection and confidentiality policy was in place. This policy covered disclosure of, and the secure handling of, patient information. We observed the interaction between staff and patients and found that confidentiality was being maintained. Staff were aware of the need to lock computers, store patient records securely, and the importance of not disclosing information to anyone other than the patient.

Before the inspection, we sent Care Quality Commission (CQC) comment cards to the practice for patients to use to tell us about their experience of the practice. We collected 42 comment cards completed by patients about the services provided. The feedback reflected mainly positive comments about the staff and the services provided. Patients commented that the practice was clean and tidy and that it was caring and friendly. They said that they found the staff offered a welcoming and professional service and had high confidence in the team. They said that staff were polite, helpful and caring. Patients said that explanations about their treatment were clear. Feedback in relation to patients who were nervous commented how the staff were understanding and patient; they were made to feel at ease and that any questions were answered. Patients also commented on the lack of a patient car park and that they felt that they did not like to complete their medical history at each visit.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

The practice provided clear treatment plans to their patients that detailed possible treatment options and indicative costs. A poster detailing costs of private plans was displayed in the waiting area. We saw evidence in the records we looked at that the dentists recorded the information they had provided to patients about their treatment and the options open to them.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patient's needs

During our inspection we looked at examples of information available to people. We saw that the practice waiting area displayed a variety of information including the practice patient information leaflets and complaints procedure. The practice had a patient information folder in the waiting room which gave details of safeguarding, staff members that were qualified first aiders and other information.

The practice had an appointment system which patients said met their needs. Where treatment was urgent, we were told that patients would be seen within 24 hours. Emergency slots were kept open each day for patients that were in need of urgent care.

Tackling inequity and promoting equality

The practice had a range of policies around anti-discrimination and promoting equality and diversity. Staff we spoke with were aware of these policies. They had also considered the needs of patients who might have difficulty accessing services due to limited mobility or other physical issues. However a disability audit had not taken place looking at the access to the practice and assessing if any improvements could be made.

The practice had access to a translation service if necessary. There was level access into the building via a ramp at the main entrance and the toilet facilities were suitable for those patients that used a wheelchair or had limited mobility.

Access to the service

Patients could access care and treatment in a timely way and the appointment system met the needs of patients. We were shown that emergency slots were kept each day for those patients that were in pain and that patients would be seen within 24 hours if necessary.

Staff we spoke with told us that patients could access appointments when they wanted them. Patients' feedback confirmed that they were happy with the availability of routine and emergency appointments.

The practice opened Monday to Thursday from 7am to 7pm, Friday 7am to 5.30pm and Saturday morning from 8.30am to 12pm.

Concerns & complaints

The practice had a complaints policy and a procedure that set out how complaints would be addressed, who by, and the timeframes for responding. The practice had received nine complaints four of which were verbal and these were recorded with the details of the complaint and the outcome in relation to each one. We did not see any learning from complaints or themes identified although we were told that the complaints were sent through to head office so that they could look at trends for the organisation. The practice manager said that they would also look at trends and learning from their practice complaints in future. Information for patients about how to make a complaint was seen in the practice leaflet and a poster in reception.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Governance arrangements

The practice had arrangements in place for monitoring and improving the services provided for patients. There were governance arrangements in place. Staff we spoke with were aware of their roles and responsibilities within the practice. The practice manager had organised folders which included a sheet to say that staff had read and understood the policies and also that the policies had been reviewed annually. Staff were aware of where policies and procedures were held and we saw these were easily accessible. The practice also had an intranet where staff could access information electronically.

Leadership, openness and transparency

The staff we spoke with described a close team and a transparent culture which encouraged candour, openness and honesty. Staff said they felt comfortable about raising concerns with the provider. They felt they were listened to and responded to if they did raise a concern. Staff told us they enjoyed their work and were well supported.

The practice manager was the lead for the practice and the clinical staff had a clinical lead to refer to in the practice and also at head office. We found staff to be hard working, caring and committed to the work they did. Staff were motivated and enjoyed working at the practice and were proud of the service they provided to patients.

Learning and improvement

Practice meetings were held and were minuted. We saw that discussions were held in relation to infection control, training, significant events and patient surveys. The practice had a plan for the year ahead with different topics for discussion each month. For example, safeguarding, mental capacity, freedom of information.

Staff working at the practice were supported to maintain their continuing professional development as required by the General Dental Council. Training was completed

through a variety of resources including e-learning. The practice manager had a record of all training with the dates completed for each staff member. The system highlighted at a glance when training was due for renewal or overdue. The reception manager sent letters out to staff with log in details for the e-learning to inform staff when they were due for renewal.

We found that clinical and non-clinical audits were taking place at the practice including infection control, record keeping and X-ray quality. Results from clinical audits were discussed with clinicians on a one to one basis with the practice manager to review. A reflective log was completed and these would then be included for discussion in the practice meeting. We saw that results from audits were looked at and commented on and if necessary actions would be implemented. We saw that these were also discussed at the practice meetings.

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

Staff told us that patients could give feedback at any time they visited. The practice had a suggestion box and the practice completed surveys monthly where they would aim to have 40 surveys completed. The practice had a sign in the waiting room informing the patients of the results of the latest survey completed in February 2016 which said that 100% of the patients that completed the survey would recommend the practice.

The practice had systems in place to review the feedback from patients including those who had cause to complain. Any complaints or feedback received would be discussed at the practice meeting.

Improvements to the toilet facilities at the practice had been implemented following patient feedback as initially there had only been one toilet downstairs and it had not been suitable for disabled patients.

Staff told us they felt valued and were proud to be part of the team.