

Smile Cliniq Limited

Smile Cliniq Limited

Inspection Report

102 Boundary Road
St John's Wood
London
NW8 0RH
Tel: 020 7328 1200
Website: www.smilecliniq.com

Date of inspection visit: 15/02/2019
Date of publication: 11/03/2019

Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 15 February 2019 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 Care Quality Commission (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

Smile Cliniq Limited is in St Johns Wood, North London. The practice provides private treatment to adults and children.

Limited car parking spaces, including those for blue badge holders, are available near the practice.

The dental team includes a practice manager, seven dentists (two of whom are the practice's directors), three trainee dental nurses and two receptionists.

The practice has two treatment rooms.

The practice is owned by company, and as a condition of registration must have a person registered with the CQC

Summary of findings

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 Smile Cliniq Limited is one of the practice directors who is also a dentist at the practice.

On the day of inspection, we obtained feedback from 28 patients. This included speaking with patients during the inspection and reviewing CQC comment cards filled in by patients.

During the inspection we spoke with two dentists (including one of the practice's directors), a trainee dental nurse, a receptionist and the practice manager. We checked practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open at the following times:

Monday and Thursday: 9am to 8pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 9am to 6pm

Saturday: 9am to 5pm

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The provider had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- 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.

- Staff were providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system took account of patients' needs.
- The provider had effective leadership and culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved and supported and worked well as a team.
- The provider asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The provider dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The provider had suitable information governance arrangements.
- The provider had infection control procedures; they implemented improvements immediately after the inspection to ensure all of these reflected published guidance.
- The practice had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff.
- The provider had staff recruitment procedures; improvements were required to ensure all key checks as required were undertaken and documented suitably.

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

- Review practice's recruitment procedures to ensure that appropriate background checks are completed prior to new staff commencing employment at the practice.
- Review the practice's protocols for ensuring that all clinical staff have adequate immunity for vaccine preventable infectious diseases.

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 people and knew how to recognise the signs of abuse and how to report concerns.

The premises and equipment were clean and properly maintained. The practice followed national guidance for cleaning and storing dental instruments. They implemented additional systems immediately after the inspection in relation to the validation of their sterilising processes.

The practice had suitable arrangements for dealing with medical and other emergencies.

Staff were qualified for their roles and the practice completed essential recruitment checks for most staff. However, they had not carried out Disclosure and Barring Service checks for some staff, and they had not checked the effectiveness of vaccination against Hepatitis B for some clinical staff. The practice began to address this soon after the inspection.

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 marvellous, professional and pleasant.

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 provider 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 28 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were cheerful, helpful and friendly, and told us they would recommend the practice to others.

Patients said that they were given clear explanations about their dental care, 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.

No action



Summary of findings

We saw that staff protected patients' privacy and were aware of the importance of confidentiality.

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 took account of patients' needs. Patients could get an appointment quickly if they were experiencing dental pain.

Staff spoke a variety of languages to help support patients who did not speak or understand English. They described arrangements to help patients with sight or hearing loss.

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 and typed and stored securely.

The provider 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 and 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 Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The practice had a system to highlight vulnerable patients on records e.g. people where there were safeguarding concerns, people with enhanced learning needs or a mental health condition, or those who required other support such as with mobility or communication.

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

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

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

The practice had a recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff and had checks in place for agency and locum staff. The procedure reflected the relevant legislation. We checked recruitment records for all staff. These showed the practice followed their recruitment procedure for most staff, but they had not carried out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for some staff. Immediately after the inspection the provider assessed the associated risks and put in place declarations signed by staff members regarding their backgrounds. They told us they had submitted the outstanding DBS applications for the relevant staff.

We noted that clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council 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 appliances.

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

The practice had suitable arrangements to ensure the safety of the radiography equipment and had the required information in their radiation protection file.

We saw evidence that the dentists 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 in respect of dental radiography.

Risks to patients

There were systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety.

The practice's health and safety policies, procedures and risk assessments were reviewed regularly to help manage potential risk. The practice had current employer's liability insurance.

We checked 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. They had checked the effectiveness of the vaccination for all but three members of clinical staff. Shortly after the inspection they told us they had arranged for the effectiveness of the vaccine to be checked.

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

Are services safe?

Emergency equipment and medicines were available. The practice ordered additional equipment shortly during the inspection to ensure their stock was as described in recognised guidance. Staff kept records of their checks of these to make sure these were available, within their expiry date, and in working order.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists when they treated patients in line with General Dental Council's Standards for the Dental Team.

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

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures. They followed guidance in The Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM 01-05) 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 HTM 01-05. The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments was validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance.

The practice had systems in place to ensure that any work was disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before treatment was completed.

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 appeared visibly clean when we inspected it.

The provider 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 one of the practice's directors how information to deliver safe care and treatment was handled and recorded. We checked a sample of dental care records to confirm our findings and noted that individual records were written and managed in a way that kept patients safe. Dental care records we saw were legible, kept securely, and complied with General Data Protection Regulation requirements.

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 provider 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 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.

The practice had processes in place to enable them to document, investigate and review incidents to help them understand risks.

There was a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. The practice learned from external safety events as well as patient, equipment and medicine safety alerts. We found they were shared with the team and acted upon if required.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

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

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 dentists prescribed high concentration fluoride toothpaste if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them.

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

A dentist described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcomes for patients with gum disease. This involved providing patients preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and recording detailed charts of the patient's gum condition

Patients with more severe gum disease could be referred to a periodontist and were recalled at more frequent intervals for review, 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 gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these so they could make informed decisions. Patients confirmed their dentist listened to them and gave them clear information about their treatment.

The practice's consent policy included information about the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The team understood their responsibilities under the act when treating adults who may not be able to make informed decisions. The policy

also referred to Gillick competence, by which a child under the age of 16 years of age may give consent for themselves. The staff were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people under 16 years of age.

Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Monitoring care and treatment

The practice kept detailed dental care records containing information about the patients' current dental needs, past treatment and medical histories. The dentists assessed patients' treatment needs in line with recognised guidance.

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

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles.

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured programme. We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

Employed staff had regular performance reviews and appraisals during which they discussed learning needs and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff discussed their training needs during informal discussions, annual appraisals and clinical supervision. Staff completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional's standards. This included undertaking medical emergencies and basic life support training annually. The provider supported and encouraged staff to complete their Continuing Professional Development.

Co-ordinating care and treatment

Staff worked together and with other health and social care professionals to deliver effective care and treatment.

The dentists confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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

The practice also had systems for referring patients with suspected oral cancer under the national two week wait arrangements. This was initiated by the National Institute for health and Care Excellence (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. They were aware of their responsibility to respect people's diversity and human rights. They treated patients with kindness and respect, and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

We received feedback from 28 patients. They commented positively that staff were kind, caring, friendly, attentive and professional. They described the service as being excellent, pleasant and professional. Patients said they enjoyed visiting the practice and that the environment was comfortable.

Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding. They told us the dentists listened to their concerns and explained their treatments thoroughly to them. Patients who shared with us their anxieties about visiting the dentist told us staff made them feel reassured and at ease.

Information leaflets were available for patients to read.

Privacy and dignity

The practice respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of the reception and waiting areas provided privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. If a patient asked for more privacy, staff told us they would take them into another room. The computer screens at the reception desk 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.

- Interpretation services could be made available for patients who did not use English as a first language. Staff spoke a variety of languages. Patients were told about multi-lingual staff that might be able to support them.
- Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand, and communication aids were available.

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices about their treatment. Patients confirmed that staff listened to them, did not rush them and discussed options for treatment in detail with them. The dentists 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 dentists described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included for photographs, models, and radiograph images.

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.

Staff were clear on the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care.

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

Staff told us the layout and design of the building restricted them from being able to make adjustments for patients with limited mobility. They had carried out a Disability Access audit to establish how they could continually improve access for patients.

Timely access to services

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

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

The practice had an appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Patients who requested an urgent appointment were seen the same day. Patients 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 staff took part in an emergency on-call arrangement with their local sister practice.

The practice's website and answerphone provided a telephone number for patients needing emergency dental treatment during the working day and when the practice was not open.

Patients confirmed they could make appointments easily.

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 practice had a policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. There was also information available to patients about how to make a complaint.

The practice manager was responsible for dealing with complaints; they aimed to settle complaints in-house. Information was available about organisations patients could contact if they were not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We checked two complaints the practice received in the last 12 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

We found senior staff had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality care. They demonstrated they had the experience, capacity and skills to lead the practice and address risks to it. They prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.

Culture

The practice had an open, inclusive culture that was focused on excellent team working, well-being, communication, and high-quality patient-focused care. They had processes in place to manage behaviour that was not in line with their culture and values.

Staff stated that they felt respected, supported and valued. They appeared proud to work in the practice. They showed openness, honesty and transparency when responding to incidents and complaints. They were aware of, and had systems to ensure compliance with, the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

Staff we spoke with told us that they could raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They had confidence that these would be addressed.

Governance and management

There were clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

The practice's directors were responsible for the clinical leadership of the practice. The practice manager was responsible for the management and day-to-day running of the service. Staff knew the management arrangements and their roles and responsibilities.

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 acted on appropriate and accurate information.

Quality and operational information was used to ensure and improve performance. Performance information was combined with the views of patients.

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

Engagement with patients, the public, staff and external partners

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

The practice used patient surveys and verbal comments to obtain patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients the practice had acted on. For example, they had extended their opening hours to make appointments more accessible for working patients.

The practice gathered feedback from staff through meetings and informal discussions. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on. For example, in response to feedback from staff the practice had made improvements in relation to staff uniforms, implementing scents for the patient waiting area and heatable neck scarves for the patients' comfort and relaxation.

Continuous improvement and innovation

There were systems and processes for learning, continuous improvement and innovation.

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

The practice manager and practice director we spoke with showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff.