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Urchfont Dental Care

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 5 December 2018 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. We planned the inspection to check whether the registered provider was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations. The inspection was led by a CQC inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

To get to the heart of patients' experiences of care and treatment, we always ask the following five questions:

- Is it safe?
- Is it effective?
- Is it caring?
- Is it responsive to people's needs?
- Is it well-led?

These questions form the framework for the areas we look at during the inspection.

Our findings were:

Are services safe?

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

Are services effective?

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

Are services caring?

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

Are services responsive?

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

Are services well-led?

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

Background

Urchfont Dental Care is located in Devizes, Wiltshire and provides NHS and private treatment to adults and children.

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. The practice has onsite parking.

The dental team includes the principal dentist, two associate dentists, a visiting dentist with a special interest in implants, two dental hygienists, three dental nurses and a practice manager. The practice has two treatment rooms.

Summary of findings

The practice is owned by an individual who is the principal dentist there. They have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the practice is run.

On the day of inspection, we collected 36 CQC comment cards filled in by patients and obtained the views of 10 patients.

During the inspection we spoke with the principal dentist, two dental nurses and the practice manager. We looked at practice policies and procedures and other records about how the service is managed.

The practice is open:

- Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 8:30-17:00
- Tuesday 8:30-18:00
- Friday 8:30-13:00/16:15

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.
- The practice had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.

- The practice had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff.
- The provider had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- The practice had thorough staff recruitment procedures.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- Staff were providing preventive care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health.
- The appointment system took account of patients' needs.
- The practice had effective leadership and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff felt involved and supported; and worked well as a team.
- The practice asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The practice staff dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The practice staff had suitable information governance arrangements.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

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

The practice had systems and processes to provide safe care and treatment. They used learning from incidents and complaints to help them improve.

Staff received training in safeguarding and knew how to recognise the signs of abuse and how to report concerns.

Staff were qualified for their roles and the practice completed essential recruitment checks.

Premises and equipment were clean and properly maintained. The practice followed national guidance for cleaning, sterilising and storing dental instruments.

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

No action



Are services effective?

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

The dentists and hygienists assessed patients' needs and provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance. Patients described the treatment they received as excellent, gentle and thoroughly recommended. The dentist discussed treatment with patients so they could give informed consent and recorded this in their records.

The practice had clear arrangements when patients needed to be referred to other dental or health care professionals.

The practice supported staff to complete training relevant to their roles and had systems to help them monitor this.

The staff were involved in quality improvement initiatives such as peer review as part of its approach in providing high quality care. They were also a member of a "good practice" certification scheme.

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 46 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were very helpful, professional, kind and efficient.

They said that they were well informed about all possible treatment options. Patients commented that they felt listened to and the whole practice team made them feel at ease, especially when they were anxious about visiting the dentist.

We saw that staff protected patients' privacy and were aware of the importance of confidentiality. Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect.

No action



Summary of findings

Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

The practice's appointment system was efficient and took account of patients' needs. Patients could get an appointment quickly if in pain.

Staff considered patients' different needs. This included providing facilities for patients with a disability and families with children. The practice had access to interpreter services and had arrangements to help patients with sight or hearing loss.

The practice took patients views seriously. They valued compliments and feedback from patients and responded to concerns and complaints quickly and constructively.

No action



Are services well-led?

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

The practice had thorough and effective arrangements to ensure the smooth running of the service. These included systems for the practice team to discuss the quality and safety of the care and treatment provided. Staff understood their roles and responsibilities and felt supported and appreciated.

The practice team kept complete patient dental care records which were, clearly 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 & premises and radiography (X-rays)

The practice had clear systems to keep patients safe.

Staff knew their responsibilities if they had concerns about the safety of children, young people and adults who were vulnerable due to their circumstances. The practice had safeguarding policies and procedures to provide staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. We saw evidence that staff received safeguarding training. Staff knew about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns, including notification to the CQC.

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

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

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

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

The practice had a staff recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. These reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at six staff recruitment records. These showed that the practice followed their recruitment procedure.

We noted that clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) and had professional indemnity cover.

The practice ensured that facilities and equipment were safe and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions, including electrical 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 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 reported on the radiographs they took. The practice carried out radiography audits every year following current guidance and legislation.

Clinical staff completed continuing professional development (CPD) in respect of dental radiography.

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 looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. The staff followed relevant safety regulation when using needles and other sharp dental items. A sharps risk assessment had been undertaken and was updated annually.

The provider had a system in place to ensure clinical staff had received appropriate vaccinations, including the vaccination to protect them against the Hepatitis B virus, and that the effectiveness of the vaccination was checked.

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support (BLS) 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.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists when they treated patients, in line with GDC Standards for the Dental Team. A risk assessment was in place for when the dental hygienist worked without chairside support.

Are services safe?

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

The practice occasionally used agency staff. We noted that these staff received an induction to ensure that they were familiar with the practice's procedures.

The practice had an infection prevention and control policy and procedures. They followed guidance in The Health Technical Memorandum 01-05: Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM01-05) published by the Department of Health and Social Care. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

The practice had suitable arrangements for transporting, cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments in line with HTM01-05. The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments were validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance, with the exception that one of the machines used to sterilise dental instruments had not been serviced. The practice immediately arranged for the relevant company to service the equipment and made the undertaking not to use that machine in the meantime.

The practice had in place systems and protocols to ensure that any dental laboratory work was disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before 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. Records of water testing and dental unit water line management were in place.

We saw cleaning schedules for the premises. The practice was visibly clean when we inspected.

The practice had policies and procedures in place to ensure clinical waste was segregated and stored appropriately in line with guidance.

The practice carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. The latest audit showed the practice was meeting the required standards.

Information to deliver safe care and treatment

Staff had the information they needed to deliver safe care and treatment to patients.

We discussed with the dentist how information to deliver safe care and treatment was handled and recorded. We looked at a sample of dental care records to confirm our findings and noted that individual records were clearly written and managed in a way that kept patients safe. Dental care records we saw were accurate, complete, and legible and were kept securely and complied with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) protection 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 practice had reliable systems for the appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

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

The dentists were aware of current guidance with regards to prescribing medicines.

An antimicrobial prescribing audit was carried out following the inspection. This audit demonstrated the dentists were following current guidelines.

Track record on safety and lessons learned and improvements

There were comprehensive risk assessments in relation to safety issues; these were updated regularly. The practice monitored and reviewed incidents. This helped it to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture that led to safety improvements.

The practice thoroughly recorded and discussed all near misses and safety incidents and viewed every incident as an opportunity to learn and improve.

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

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

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

The staff were involved in quality improvement initiatives including peer review as part of their approach in providing high quality care. They were also a member of a 'good practice' certification scheme.

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 principal dentist told us they prescribed high concentration fluoride toothpaste if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them. They used fluoride varnish for children and adults based on an assessment of the risk of tooth decay.

The practice demonstrated a commitment to health promotion and prevention in children and adults. They offered plaque disclosing and oral hygiene sessions at no cost. They also offered free sessions to local health centres with the oral health educator and hygienist to improve oral health of the local community. Families and local schools could attend the practice for sessions to acclimatise children to the dental practice and for diet and oral hygiene advice. Children were given 'goody' bags with healthy snacks and information about sugar to encourage compliance with the instructions and activities carried out during the day. Additionally, the practice regularly visited local schools and nurseries in the area. These visits provided a light-hearted way to reduce potential fear associated with visiting the dentist. Puppets, models of the teeth and role-play were used to educate children on their oral health and to help them understand what happens when you visit the dentist.

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

The principal dentist described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcome of periodontal treatment. This involved preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and detailed charts of the patient's gum condition. In addition, the dental team had undertaken additional training on periodontal disease and its treatment; the practice had developed a questionnaire for periodontal patients to help them gain confidence about how to best manage their periodontal disease.

Patients with more severe gum disease 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 dentist 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's consent policy included information about the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The team understood their responsibilities under the act when treating adults who may not be able to make informed decisions. The policy also referred to Gillick competence, by which a child under the age of 16 years of age can consent for themselves. The staff were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people under 16 years of age.

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.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

We saw the practice audited patients' dental care records to check that clinicians recorded the necessary information.

Effective staffing

Staff new to the practice had a period of induction based on a structured and comprehensive induction programme. Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles. We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

Staff discussed their training needs at annual appraisals, one to one meetings and during clinical supervision. We saw evidence of completed appraisals and how the practice addressed the training requirements of staff.

Co-ordinating care and treatment

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

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

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

The practice also had systems and processes for referring patients with suspected oral cancer under the national two week wait arrangements. This was initiated by NICE in 2005 to help make sure patients were seen quickly by a specialist.

The practice monitored all referrals on a weekly basis 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. In particular, they were keen to ensure that patients received a warm welcome, particularly children, where the ethos was to create a positive environment where they felt confident in visiting the dentist.

Staff were aware of their responsibility to respect people's diversity and human rights. Patients commented positively that staff were patient, friendly and caring. Patients said staff were compassionate and understanding. We saw that staff treated patients respectfully and were kind towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

The practice displayed various information, for example, information on fees and complaints. Magazines and information leaflets on oral health, as well as books for children were available for patients to read.

Privacy and dignity

The practice respected and promoted patients' privacy and dignity. Patients commented that their privacy and dignity were respected at all times.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of reception and the patient waiting area provided some privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. Staff told us that if a patient asked for more privacy they would ensure that this was provided. The reception computer screens were not visible to patients and staff did not leave patients' personal information where other patients might see it.

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

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.

Staff communicated with patients in a way that they could understand and told us that they would review the format of information in order to meet patients' specific needs. The principal dentist had completed a course on British Sign Language and had some knowledge of Makaton.

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices. The principal dentist described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included, for example, models and radiograph images.

Patients confirmed that staff listened to them and discussed options for treatment 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.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting people's needs

The practice organised and delivered services to meet patients' needs. It took account of patient needs and preferences.

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

A disability access audit had been completed. The practice had made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. This included step free access, wide doors and accessible toilet with hand rails.

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

Staff felt strongly that patients visiting the practice felt comfortable, respected and received a personalised service. Staff knew their patients well and were clear on the importance of emotional support needed by patients when delivering care. For example, staff at the practice recognised when nervous patients needed additional emotional support and would spend time talking to patients in the waiting area to provide distraction and reassurance. Several patients commented that their previous history of nervousness associated with visiting the dentist had been resolved since attending the practice.

Staff told us that some patients were telephoned prior to their appointments to make sure they could get to the practice.

Timely access to services

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

Staff told us that patients who requested an urgent appointment were always seen the same day. Patients told us they had enough time during their appointment and did not feel rushed. Appointments ran smoothly on the day of the inspection and patients were not kept waiting.

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

The practice's website, information leaflet 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.

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 principal dentist was responsible for dealing with complaints and told us that they would aim to settle complaints in-house and invite patients to speak with them in person to discuss these. Staff told us they would tell the principal dentist about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients received a quick response.

The practice displayed its complaints policy in the patient waiting area. This explained how patients could make a complaint and contained information about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns.

We saw that complaints within the last 12 months had been dealt with appropriately and outcomes were discussed to share learning and improve the service. We also saw many examples of compliments the practice had received, these included compliments on the level of clinical care offered as well as the whole staff team.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Leadership capacity and capability

We found the principal dentist had the experience, capacity and skills to lead on the delivery of high-quality, sustainable care and worked together with the whole staff team to deliver the practice strategy.

All staff worked closely to prioritise the quality of future services and address risks to it.

Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. They worked closely with staff and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership.

The practice had effective processes to develop leadership capacity and skills, including planning for the future leadership of the practice.

Vision and strategy

The practice vision was to become a 'Centre of Excellence', providing high quality clinical care. Additionally, the practice strategy was to increase its work with the local community as a commitment to preventative care.

Culture

The culture of the practice focused on the needs of patients. Staff shared and demonstrated a common set of values to ensure that dental services provided by the practice focused on providing a caring, family orientated and personalised approach. Staff knew their patients well and had a positive influence on ensuring that the practice environment was warm and welcoming.

Staff stated that they felt respected, supported and valued. They told us that they were able to raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They had confidence that these would be addressed. The practice was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

Governance and management

The principal dentist had overall responsibility for the management and day to day running of the service and worked effectively with the team to provide effective clinical leadership. All staff understood their roles and responsibilities and there were clear systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

The practice had an effective and organised 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 and staff to support high-quality sustainable services.

The practice used a comments book, feedback forms and verbal comments to obtain patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients that the practice had acted on. For example, the practice introduced a water dispenser machine and chairs with armrests in the waiting room.

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. Results consistently showed that 100% of the patients who responded were satisfied and would recommend the practice.

The practice had effective systems to support open and transparent communication within the practice. Staff felt involved in the running of the practice.

The practice gathered feedback from staff through meetings, informal discussions and staff surveys. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on.

Continuous improvement and innovation

There were systems and processes for learning and encouraging improvements within the practice. These

Are services well-led?

included audits of infection prevention and control, radiographs, records and hand washing. They had clear records of the results of these audits and the resulting action plans and improvements.

The principal dentist showed a commitment to learning and improvement and strongly valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff.

The whole staff team had annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff told us they completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional standards. This included undertaking medical emergencies and basic life support training annually.

The General Dental Council also requires clinical staff to complete continuing professional development. Staff told us the practice provided support and encouragement for them to do so.

Additionally, the company also provided clinical and managerial training courses and encouraged staff to expand their skills which would in turn enhance the services offered by the practice.