

Aesthetic Dental Care Limited

Mydentist - Orthodontic Centre - Malvern

Inspection Report

Imperial Road
Malvern
Worcestershire
WR14 3AT
Tel: 01684 568086
Website: worcester-pm@mydentist.co.uk

Date of inspection visit: 30 April 2019
Date of publication: 20/05/2019

Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 30 April 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 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

Mydentist - Orthodontic Centre - Malvern provides NHS and private treatment to adults and children. Orthodontics is a specialist dental service concerned with the alignment of the teeth and jaws to improve the appearance of the face, the teeth and their function. Orthodontic treatment is provided under NHS referral for

Summary of findings

children except when the problem falls below the accepted eligibility criteria for NHS treatment. Private treatment is available for these patients as well as adults who require orthodontic treatment.

There is access into the practice for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs using a portable ramp. Car parking spaces, including some for blue badge holders, are available near the practice.

The dental team includes three dentists, four dental nurses, two trainee dental nurses, two orthodontic therapists, two receptionists and the practice manager. The practice has three treatment rooms.

The practice is owned by a company and as a condition of registration must have a person registered with the Care Quality Commission as the registered manager. Registered managers have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the practice is run. The registered manager at Mydentist - Orthodontic Centre - Malvern is the practice manager.

On the day of inspection, we collected 13 CQC comment cards filled in by patients and spoke with two patients.

During the inspection we spoke with one dentist, three dental nurses, two receptionists, the area development manager, the regulatory officer 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 from 8.30am to 6pm.

Tuesday from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

Wednesday from 8.30am to 5pm.

Thursday from 8.30am to 5pm.

Friday from 8.30am to 4.30pm.

Our key findings were:

- The practice was part of a large corporate group which had a support centre located in Manchester where support teams including human resources, IT, finance, health and safety, learning and development, clinical support and patient support services were based. These teams supported and offered expert advice and updates to the practice when required.

- The practice appeared clean and well maintained.
- The provider 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 vulnerable adults and children.
- The provider had staff recruitment procedures and had access to support from a dedicated human resources and recruitment team based within the company's support centre. We found that not all recruitment documents were retained.
- 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. There was an effective staffing structure which extended to senior management who were visible and supported the practice manager on the day of our visit by basing themselves at the practice.
- The provider asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided. Appraisals had not been completed annually in accordance with the company policy, these had been scheduled for completion in 2019.
- The provider dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The provider had suitable information governance arrangements.

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

- Review the practice's recruitment policy and procedures to ensure accurate, complete and detailed records are maintained for all staff.

Summary of findings

- Review the training, learning and development needs of individual staff members at appropriate intervals and ensure an effective process is established for the on-going assessment, supervision and appraisal of all staff.

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. This included support from a lead regulatory officer who completed regular audits to ensure safety and compliance processes were kept up to date.

They used learning from incidents and complaints to help them improve. The practice had management tools to log all complaints and incidents so that they could be tracked and monitored by support staff within their support centre. An incident reporting poster with contact details was on display in the staff room.

Staff received training in safeguarding people 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. We found that references and disclosure and barring checks were not held on file for all staff members in accordance with Schedule 3 of the Health and Social Care Act.

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

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

No action



Are services effective?

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

The dentists assessed patients' needs and provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance. Patients described the treatment they received as very good, amazing and first class. The dentists discussed treatment with patients, so they could give informed consent and recorded this in their records.

The orthodontic care provided was evidence based and focused on the needs of the patients. The practice used current national professional guidance in relation to orthodontics including that from the British Orthodontic Society to guide their practice. Oral hygiene education was prescriptive and could include tooth brushing techniques and dietary advice using models, visual displays and following the 'show, tell, do' technique to enhance patient understanding.

The practice had clear arrangements when patients needed to be referred to other dental or health care professionals. An online referral system was used to monitor and track outgoing referrals.

The provider supported staff to complete training relevant to their roles and had systems to help them monitor this. Appraisals had not been completed annually in accordance with the company policy, these had been scheduled for completion in 2019. The company funded online

No action



Summary of findings

training for all employed staff and had a learning management system in place to facilitate core training. External training such as basic life support was provided in house for all staff. The dental nurses had extended duties which included radiography and orthodontic nursing to enhance patient support.

Staff understood the importance of obtaining informed consent and of working in accordance with relevant legislation when treating patients who might lack capacity to make decisions.

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 15 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were caring, helpful and professional.

Several patients said that they were really pleased with their treatment results and the team have always been helpful and accommodating. Patients consistently commented that the dentist listened to them and they enjoyed talking with them.

Many patients told us that they were happy with the care and treatment received and that they would highly recommend this practice.

We saw that staff protected patients' privacy and were aware of the importance of confidentiality. Patients said staff treated them with dignity and respect. During the inspection we observed team members talking with patients in a friendly and helpful manner.

No action



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 in pain or in the event of a broken appliance or problem with a brace.

The practice was aware of the needs of the local population and took those into account in how it ran. This included providing facilities for patients with a disability and families with children. The practice had access to telephone and face to face interpreter services and had 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. The practice logged all complaints on an online tracker which was monitored by patient support services within the support centre to support further if required. The practice displayed their complaints procedure in the reception area, in the patient information leaflet and on their website.

No action



Are services well-led?

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

No action



Summary of findings

The practice was part of a large corporate group which had a support centre located in Manchester where support teams including human resources, IT, finance, health and safety, learning and development, clinical support and patient support services were based. These teams supported and offered expert advice and updates to the practice when required.

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 all the staff we met said that they felt supported and the practice was a good place to work. This extended to senior management who were visible and supported the practice manager on the day of our visit by basing themselves at the practice.

The practice team kept complete patient dental care records which were, clearly written or 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.

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. Safeguarding contact details were displayed in the reception area. The contact numbers were regularly checked by the practice manager. 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. children with child protection plans, 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 also had a system and supporting policy to identify adults that were in other vulnerable situations e.g. those who were known to have experienced modern-day slavery or female genital mutilation.

The practice had a whistleblowing policy and supporting poster which was displayed in the staff room. Staff felt confident they could raise concerns without fear of reprimand.

The provider had a business continuity plan describing how they would deal with events that could disrupt the normal running of the practice. Electronic copies of this were held off site so they could be accessed easily in the event of an incident.

The practice had a recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff and had checks in place for agency and locum staff. These reflected the relevant legislation. The practice had access to support from a dedicated human resources and recruitment team based within the company's support centre. We looked at seven staff recruitment records. These showed the practice did not fully follow their recruitment procedure. References

were not on file for two staff members and disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks had not been requested at the point of recruitment for three staff members. The missing DBS checks had been submitted prior to our inspection, but had not been received by the practice manager.

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

The practice ensured that facilities and equipment were safe and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions, including electrical and gas appliances.

Records showed that 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 and had the required information in their radiation protection file. The practice used digital X-rays fitted with rectangular collimators which reduced the dose of radiation.

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. The latest audit completed in April 2019 required no actions to be completed.

Clinical staff completed continuing professional development in respect of dental radiography. At the time of our inspection the company was supporting and funding three dental nurses to complete radiography qualifications.

Risks to patients

There were systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety. An online compliance desktop management tool was utilised to ensure all risk-based tasks and processes were completed within correct timeframes. This was overseen by the lead regulatory officer and the area development manager to ensure all risks were appropriately mitigated.

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.

Are services safe?

We looked at the practice's arrangements for safe dental care and treatment. The staff followed relevant safety regulation when using sharp dental instruments and 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. We noted that one staff member had received the vaccine, however there were no results available to show whether the staff member was immune to the virus. We were advised that the staff member would contact occupational health to rectify this.

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 of these to make sure these were available, within their expiry date, and in working order.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists and the orthodontic therapists when they treated patients in line with GDC Standards for the Dental Team.

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

The practice occasionally used locum and 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 (HTM 01-05) published by the Department of Health and Social Care. Staff completed infection prevention and control training and received updates as required.

There was a dedicated decontamination room which served all three dental treatment rooms and was used for cleaning, sterilising and packing instruments. There was clear separation of clean and dirty areas in all treatment rooms and the decontamination room with signage to

reinforce this. 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 which had been completed in December 2017. All recommendations had been actioned and records of water testing and dental unit water line management were in place.

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

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 completed in April 2019 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 written and managed in a way that kept patients safe. Dental care records we saw were complete, legible, were kept securely and complied with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 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.

Are services safe?

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

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

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

Antimicrobial prescribing audits were carried out annually. The most recent audit completed in April 2019 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.

There was a dedicated incident line that the practice manager or staff members would use to log any incidents directly with the health safety team based within the support centre. An online management tool was in place to

log all incidents so that they could be tracked and monitored. This helped the team to understand risks and gave a clear, accurate and current picture that led to safety improvements.

In the previous 12 months there had been 12 significant events recorded. The events were investigated, documented and discussed with the rest of the dental practice team to prevent such occurrences happening again in the future.

There were adequate systems for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong. The practice learned and shared lessons identified themes and acted to improve safety in the practice. Quarterly incident learning updates were uploaded by staff at the support centre for the practice manager to share with practice staff at team meetings.

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. We saw 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 dental practitioners 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.

The practice was a referral clinic for orthodontic treatments. Orthodontics is a specialist dental service concerned with the alignment of the teeth and jaws to improve the appearance of the face, the teeth and their function. Orthodontic treatment was provided under NHS referral for children, except when the problem fell below the accepted eligibility criteria for NHS treatment. Private treatment was available for these patients as well as adults who required orthodontic treatment.

The dentists provided orthodontic treatment and assessed patients' treatment needs in line with recognised guidance provided by the British Orthodontic Society. We saw several examples of detailed orthodontic treatment plans. Dental care records shown to us demonstrated that the findings of the assessment and details of the treatment carried out were recorded appropriately. The records were comprehensive, detailed and well maintained.

Orthodontic treatment plans were completed and given to each patient, these included the cost involved if private orthodontic treatment had been proposed. Patients' dental treatment was monitored through follow-up appointments and these typically lasted between eighteen months to two years for a course of orthodontic treatment.

The practice had access to digital cameras to record before and after photos of treatment to enhance the delivery of care.

Helping patients to live healthier lives

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

The dentists gave oral hygiene education which included tooth brushing techniques and dietary advice using models, visual displays and following the 'show, tell, do' technique to enhance patient understanding.

The dentists provided patients with specific details on how to look after the orthodontic braces to prevent problems during treatment. Patients were given details of dental hygiene products suitable for maintaining their orthodontic braces; these were available for sale in reception. These included disclosing tablets that could be used to help patients improve cleaning the areas of their teeth that are hard to reach due the fitted braces.

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.

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

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles. For example, three nurses were completing radiography qualifications, two trainee nurses were being supported to complete dental nursing qualifications and the dentists were supported by two orthodontic therapists.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

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.

Staff discussed their training needs at one to one meetings. Appraisals had not been completed annually in accordance with the company policy, these had been scheduled for completion by the end of June 2019.

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.

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 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.

The practice was a specialist referral practice for orthodontics across the Worcestershire area. Practices referring patients for NHS treatment were required to complete a referral form to enable patients to access services. The practice monitored referrals and ensured the clinicians were aware of all incoming referrals on a daily basis.

The dentists worked with other services if patients required other specialist input such as that from consultant restorative and maxillo-facial services as part of the patient's orthodontic treatment.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Kindness, respect and compassion

Staff treated patients with kindness, respect and compassion.

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

Patients commented positively that staff were caring, helpful and professional.

Several patients said that they were really pleased with their treatment results and the team had always been helpful and accommodating. Patients consistently commented that the dentist listened to them and they enjoyed talking with them.

Many patients told us that they were happy with the care and treatment received and that they would highly recommend this practice.

We saw that staff treated patients respectfully and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

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

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 reception and waiting areas provided some privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. If a patient asked for more privacy, staff would take them into another room. The reception computer screens were not visible to patients and staff did not leave patients' personal information where other patients might see it.

Staff password protected patients' electronic care records and backed these up to secure storage. 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 Accessible Information Standard (a requirement to make sure that patients and their carers can access and understand the information they are given):

- Interpretation services were available for patients who did not use English as a first language. Patients were also 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 and easy read materials were available.
- Large print documents and braille could be made available upon patient request.

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

The practice's website and information leaflet provided patients with information about the range of orthodontic treatment available at the practice.

The dentist described to us the methods they used to help patients understand treatment options discussed. These included for example photographs, models, X-ray images and the 'Tell, show, do' technique.

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.

The practice manager shared details of how the practice met the needs of a patient with a learning disability by ensuring that they were always treated by the same dentist and dental nurse. We were told that the dental nurse had altered their annual leave to ensure they could assist the dentist and support this patient.

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

The practice currently had some patients for whom they needed to make adjustments to enable them to receive treatment.

The practice had made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. This included step free access using a portable ramp, a hearing loop, braille and large print documents upon request.

A disability access audit had been completed and an action plan formulated to continually improve access for patients.

All patients that had opted to receive appointment reminders by text message were sent these two days before their appointment.

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 outside the premises, and included it in their information leaflet and on their website. The practice offered extended hours appointments opening late every Monday until 6pm and early Monday to Friday from 8.30am.

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 practice was committed to seeing patients experiencing discomfort or problems with their braces on the same day. The practice information leaflet, website, signage on the outside of the practice and the 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 practice had management tools to log all complaints so that they could be tracked and monitored by the patient support team based within their support centre.

The practice had a policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. The practice information leaflet explained how to make a complaint. A copy of the complaints procedure was available for patients to read in the waiting room.

The practice manager was responsible for dealing with complaints. Staff would tell the practice manager about any formal or informal comments or concerns straight away so patients received a quick response.

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

We looked at comments, compliments and complaints the practice received within the past 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

The practice was part of a large corporate group which had a support centre located in Manchester where support teams including human resources, IT, finance, health and safety, learning and development, clinical support and patient support services were based. These teams supported and offered expert advice and updates to the practice when required.

Leaders had the capacity and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care. Leaders demonstrated they had the experience, capacity and skills to deliver the practice strategy and address risks to it. They were knowledgeable about issues and priorities relating to the quality and future of services. They understood the challenges and were addressing them.

Leaders at all levels were visible and approachable. They worked closely with staff and others to make sure they prioritised compassionate and inclusive leadership. There was an effective staffing structure which extended to senior management who were visible and supported the practice manager on the day of our visit by basing themselves at the practice.

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

Vision and strategy If applicable

There was a clear vision and set of values. The values focussed on the organisations strengths which included: putting patients first, community matters, being a place to grow, working together as a team and being surprisingly brilliant.

The strategy was in line with health and social priorities across the region. The practice planned its services to meet the needs of the practice population.

Culture

The practice had a culture of high-quality sustainable care.

Staff stated they felt respected, supported and valued. They were proud to work in the practice.

The practice focused on the needs of patients.

We saw the provider took effective action to deal with poor performance.

Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints. The provider was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour.

Staff could raise concerns and were encouraged to do so. They told us 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 manager had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice. This was further supported by a clinical support manager. The practice manager was responsible for the day to day running of the service and was supported by an area development manager. 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.

Are services well-led?

The practice used patient surveys, testimonials, complaints and verbal comments to obtain patients' views about the service. We saw examples of improvements made following patient feedback that the practice had acted on. For example, following a complaint regarding a patient being unaware of the NHS charge for a replacement retainer. The practice implemented an information sheet that was signed by and given to all patients to ensure that they were made aware of replacement charges.

The practice gathered feedback from staff through meetings, surveys, and informal discussions. 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, 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 showed a commitment to learning and improvement and valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff.

The annual appraisals had lapsed and had not been completed for employed staff members every 12 months in line with company policy. The practice manager told us that these had all been scheduled for completion by the of June 2019.

Staff completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional standards. This included undertaking medical emergencies and basic life support training annually. The provider supported and encouraged staff to complete CPD.