

Dr. Graham Aird

Dr Graham Aird

Inspection Report

52 Sanderstead Hill
Sanderstead
South Croydon
CR2 0AH
Tel:020 8657 2302
Website:n/a

Date of inspection visit: 7 November 2017
Date of publication: 12/12/2017

Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection on 7 November 2017 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. We planned the inspection to check whether the registered provider was meeting the legal requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations. The inspection was led by a CQC inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

We told Healthwatch that we were inspecting the practice. They did not provide any information which we took into account.

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

Dr Graham Aird dental practice is in South Croydon and provides private treatment to patients of all ages.

There is level access for people who use wheelchairs and pushchairs. Car parking spaces, including one space for patients with disabled badges, are available near the practice.

The dental team includes a dentist, a dental nurse and a receptionist. The practice has one treatment room and a reception and waiting area.

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 40 CQC comment cards filled in by patients. This information gave us a positive view of the practice.

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

The practice is open: Monday and Tuesdays from 8.30am to 3.00pm.

Our key findings were:

- The practice was clean and well maintained.
- The practice had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance.
- Staff knew how to deal with emergencies. Appropriate medicines and life-saving equipment were available.
- The practice had systems to help them manage risk.
- The practice had suitable safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.
- The practice had 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.
- The appointment system met patients' needs.
- The practice had effective leadership. Staff felt involved and supported and worked well as a team.
- The practice asked staff and patients for feedback about the services they provided.
- The practice dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.

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 dentist assessed patients' needs and provided care and treatment in line with recognised guidance. Patients described the treatment they received as caring, professional and skillful. 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.

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 40 people. Patients were positive about all aspects of the service the practice provided. They told us staff were caring, respectful and empathetic. They said that they were given helpful, accurate and honest explanations about dental treatment, 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.

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



Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

No action



Summary of findings

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

Staff considered patients' different needs. This included providing facilities for older patients and families with children.

The practice took patients views seriously. They valued compliments from patients and had systems to respond to concerns and complaints quickly and constructively.

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 stored securely.

The practice monitored clinical and non-clinical areas of their work to help them improve and learn. This included asking for and listening to the views of patients and staff.

No action



Are services safe?

Our findings

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

The practice had policies and procedures to report, investigate, respond and learn from accidents, incidents and significant events. There were forms for reporting general accidents as well as major incidents. There had not been any accidents or incidents in the past 12 months. Staff knew about the procedures and understood their role in the process.

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

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

Staff knew their responsibilities if they had concerns about the safety of children, young people and adults who were vulnerable due to their circumstances. The practice had safeguarding policies and procedures to provide staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. The principal dentist was the safeguarding lead. We saw evidence that the dentist and the dental nurse had received safeguarding training. Some training was out of date however we spoke with them and they displayed adequate knowledge. Staff knew about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns.

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

The practice followed relevant safety laws when using needles and other sharp dental items. The dentist used rubber dams in line with guidance from the British Endodontic Society when providing root canal treatment.

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

Medical emergencies

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

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

Staff recruitment

The practice had a staff recruitment policy and procedure to help them employ suitable staff. This reflected the relevant legislation. We looked at all three staff recruitment records. All the staff had worked in the practice for a number of years. The files showed the practice followed their recruitment procedure at the time when staff were employed.

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

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

The practice's health and safety policies and risk assessments were up to date and reviewed to help manage potential risk. These covered general workplace and specific dental topics. The last general health and safety risk assessment was carried out in August 2017.

The practice had current employer's liability insurance and checked each year that the clinicians' professional indemnity insurance was up to date.

A fire risk assessment had been completed on 1st September 2017. No actions were identified. Fire drills were completed every two months. Appropriate signage was displayed around the practice including the fire evacuation sign.

A dental nurse worked with the dentist at all times.

Infection control

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

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

Are services safe?

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

The practice carried out infection prevention and control audits once a year. We discussed this with the nurse and pointed out that guidance suggested audits should be completed twice a year. The practice confirmed they would implement this. The latest audit showed the practice was meeting the required standards.

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

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

Equipment and medicines

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

Radiography (X-rays)

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

We saw evidence that the dentist justified, graded and reported on the radiography they took. The practice carried out radiography audits every year following current guidance and legislation.

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

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

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

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

Health promotion & prevention

The practice promoted preventative care and supporting patients to ensure better oral health in line with published guidance.

The 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 based on an assessment of the risk of tooth decay for each child.

The 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 nurse had completed an oral health promotion course so provided advanced oral health education to patients.

Staffing

We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuous professional development (CPD) required for their registration with the General Dental Council. We saw that staff had completed training in addition to their core CPD. There were lots of opportunities for staff to learn and develop.

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

Working with other services

Dentist confirmed they referred patients to a range of specialists in primary and secondary care if they needed treatment the practice did not provide. Individual letters were produced for each referral and sent with comprehensive details about the patient. This included referring patients with suspected oral cancer under the national two week wait arrangements. This was initiated by NICE in 2005 to help make sure patients were seen quickly by a specialist. The practice monitored urgent referrals to make sure they were dealt with promptly.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice team understood the importance of obtaining and recording patients' consent to treatment. The 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 and the dentist and dental nurse were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people under 16. Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion and empathy

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

Patients commented positively that staff were friendly, caring and professional. We saw that staff treated patients respectfully, appropriately and kindly and were friendly towards patients at the reception desk and over the telephone.

Staff were aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The layout of reception and waiting areas provided privacy when reception staff were dealing with patients. Patient records were stored securely in a locked draw.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

The practice gave patients clear information to help them make informed choices. Patient comment cards confirmed that staff listened to them, did not rush them and discussed options for treatment with them. The dentist described the conversations they had with patients to satisfy themselves they understood their treatment options.

Patients told us staff were kind and helpful when they were in pain, distress or discomfort.

The dentist used pictures, diagrams, models and X-rays to explain treatment to patients.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

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

The practice had an efficient appointment system to respond to patients' needs. Staff told us that patients who requested an urgent appointment were 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 was very small and staff told us they knew all of the patients very well. As a result they were able to respond to patients on a personal level. Staff told us that they currently had some patients for whom they needed to make adjustments to enable them to receive treatment. For example, some patients needed assistance in and out of the practice; longer appointment slots were given to patients who they knew were nervous or had conditions that required them to take their time. They also fitted appointments around patient needs, for example they always booked appointments for patients who had carers or home help services so they didn't clash with these visits.

Staff described examples of a patients who found it unsettling and were nervous before their appointment in the waiting room. The team kept this in mind and spoke with them to keep them calm and made sure the dentist could see them as soon as possible after they arrived.

Staff told us that they often telephoned some older patients on the morning of their appointment to make sure they could get to the practice. They also telephoned some patients to make sure they got home safe, especially after complex treatment.

Promoting equality

The practice made reasonable adjustments for patients with disabilities. There were steps leading up to the practice so there was no level access. Staff told us that they assisted people with mobility problems in and out of the surgery.

Staff said they could provide information in different languages if required, however they had never had to do this for any patient.

Access to the service

The practice displayed its opening hours in the premises.

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

The practice was committed to seeing patients experiencing pain on the same day and always saw patients on the same day if they needed an emergency appointment. The practice was only open two days a week however if a patient had an emergency on days they were not open appointments were made available for them on these days. 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.

Concerns & complaints

The practice had a complaints policy providing guidance to staff on how to handle a complaint. The principal dentist was responsible for dealing with 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 principal dentist told us they aimed to settle complaints in-house and invited patients to speak with them in person to discuss these. Information was available about organisations patients could contact if not satisfied with the way the practice dealt with their concerns. The practice had not received any complaints within the past 12 months.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Governance arrangements

The principal dentist had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice as well as the day to day running of the service. Staff knew the management arrangements and their roles and responsibilities.

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

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

Leadership, openness and transparency

Staff were aware of the Duty of Candour requirements to be open, honest and to offer an apology to patients if anything went wrong. All staff had completed recent training.

Staff told us there was an open, no blame culture at the practice. They said the principal dentist encouraged them to raise any issues and felt confident they could do this. They knew who to raise any issues with and told us the principal dentist was approachable, would listen to their concerns and act appropriately. They described a good working environment and said they all worked well together.

Staff told us that the practice held regular informal meetings where staff could raise any concerns and discuss clinical and non-clinical updates. Immediate discussions were arranged to share urgent information. Staff reported high levels of support from the principal dentist.

Learning and improvement

The practice had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, hand washing, radiograph and infection prevention and control. 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 valued the contributions made to the team by individual members of staff. All staff had annual appraisals. They discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

Staff told us they completed mandatory training, including medical emergencies and basic life support. Some training was not completed regularly but we saw that staff had completed most mandatory training within the past two years. The General Dental Council requires clinical staff to complete continuous professional development. Staff told us the practice provided support and encouragement for them to do so. The dental nurse had completed additional training for oral health promotion as well as an advanced nursing degree. We saw that the learning all staff undertook helped to lead to improvements in the practice.

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

The practice used patient surveys and comment cards to obtain staff and patients' views about the service. Patient feedback was very positive and gave a good view of the practice.

Staff confirmed that they felt confident to give their views of the service.