

Mr. Vincent Malachy Barnes

Elm House Dental Surgery

Inspection Report

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Date of inspection visit: 14 July 2016
Date of publication: 07/09/2016

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection on 14 July 2016 to ask the practice the following key questions; Are services safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led?

Our findings were:

Are services safe?

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

Are services effective?

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

Are services caring?

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

Are services responsive?

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

Are services well-led?

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

Elm House Dental Surgery is located in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The practice is on the

ground, first and second floor and comprises of four surgeries and a decontamination room. There was also a reception and waiting area. Toilet facilities for patients were also available on the ground and first floor.

The practice provides NHS dental services and treats adults and children.

The staff structure of the practice comprises of a principal dentist, two associate dentists, two hygienists, five dental nurses and two receptionists. The practice was open Monday from 9am-1pm and 2pm-7pm, Tuesday to Thursday from 9am-1pm and 2pm-5.30pm and Friday from 8.30am to 3.30pm.

The principal dentist is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as an individual registered person. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the practice is run.

The inspection took place over one day and was carried out by a CQC inspector and a dental specialist advisor.

We received feedback from 28 patients. The feedback from the patients was positive in relation to the care they received from the practice. They were complimentary about the friendly and caring attitude of the staff.

Our key findings were:

- The practice had a system for managing adverse incidents and accidents

Summary of findings

- The practice had policies and procedures in place for child protection and safeguarding adults.
- There were arrangements in place to deal with foreseeable emergencies
- There was a complaints procedure available for patients.
- Patients' needs were assessed and care was planned.
- Patients indicated that they felt they were listened to and that they received good care from the practice staff.
- There was a system for testing and servicing equipment.
- There was a system in place for obtaining feedback from patients.

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

- Review the system for sharing alerts from relevant external organisations such as Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).
- Review the practice's protocols for monitoring and recording the fridge temperature to ensure that medicines and dental care products are being stored in line with the manufacturer's guidance.
- Review stocks of medicines and equipment and the system for identifying, disposing and replenishing of out-of-date stock.

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 in place to minimise the risks associated with providing dental services. The practice had policies and protocols related to the safe running of the service. Staff were aware of how to access these. There was a safeguarding lead and staff understood their responsibilities in terms of identifying and reporting any potential abuse. There was evidence that electrical equipment had received a portable appliance test (PAT) and that the compressor and ultra-sonic bath had been serviced.

Recruitment checks had been undertaken suitably and all staff, where relevant had a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The practice had systems in place for waste disposal, the management of medical emergencies and dental radiography. There was also a system in place for receiving alerts from relevant external agencies; however we found that the information was not shared amongst the wider dental team.

No action



Are services effective?

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

The practice monitored patients' oral health and gave appropriate health promotion advice. Staff explained treatment options to ensure that patients could make informed decisions about any treatment. There were systems in place for recording written consent for treatments. The practice worked well with other providers and made referrals where appropriate.

Staff records were incomplete in relation to continuous professional development (CPD); therefore, the practice was unable to fully demonstrate staff, where applicable, were meeting all the training requirements of the General Dental Council (GDC).

No action



Are services caring?

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

We received feedback from patients on the day of inspection. Patients said they were treated with dignity and respect. They noted a positive and caring attitude amongst the staff. We found that dental care records were stored securely and patient confidentiality was well maintained.

No action



Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

Patients had access to appointments. The practice had a complaints policy and procedure in place. The practice also had a system in place to routinely collect feedback from patients.

No action



Summary of findings

Are services well-led?

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

The practice had up to date policies and procedures such as infection control policy evidence that equipment had been serviced, that portable appliance testing had been carried out, however staff records did not contain all their continuing professional development certificates.

Staff described an open and transparent culture where they were comfortable raising and discussing concerns with the practice manager. We were told staff meetings took place regularly and we saw evidence of this.

The practice had a programme of clinical audit in place for reviewing radiographs, infection control, health and safety, use of fluoride and oral health instruction and dental care records.

No action



Elm House Dental Surgery

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the practice was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

We carried out an announced, comprehensive inspection on 14 July 2016. The inspection took place over one day. The inspection was led by a CQC inspector. They were accompanied by a dental specialist advisor.

During our inspection visit, we reviewed policy documents. We spoke with two members of staff, including the practice manager. We conducted a tour of the practice and looked at the storage arrangements for emergency medicines and equipment. We observed the dental nurse carrying out decontamination of dental instruments.

We received feedback from 28 patients. Patients were positive about the care they received from the practice. They were complimentary about the friendly and caring attitude of the dental staff.

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

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

These questions therefore formed the framework for the areas we looked at during the inspection.



Are services safe?

Our findings

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

There was a system in place for reporting and learning from incidents. We were told that there had been three incidents in the past year. There was a policy in place which described the actions that staff needed to take in the event that something went wrong or there was a 'near miss'. A dentist confirmed that if patients were affected by something that went wrong, they would be given an apology and informed of any actions taken as a result.

Staff understood the process for the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). There was a system in place for recording such injuries. We were told that there had not been any such incidents in the past year.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

The practice had policies and procedures in place for child protection and safeguarding adults. This included contact details for the local authority safeguarding team and social services. The principal dentist was the lead in managing safeguarding issues. We looked at three staff records selected at random. They did include evidence that the staff members had completed safeguarding training in the past 12 months. The staff we spoke with were able to describe what might be signs of abuse or neglect and how they would raise concerns with the safeguarding lead. There had not been any safeguarding issues that had required to be reported to the local safeguarding team.

Staff were aware of the procedures for whistleblowing if they had concerns about another member of staff's performance. Staff told us they were confident about raising such issues with the principal dentist.

The practice had carried out risk assessments and the practice had implemented policies and protocols with a view to keeping staff and patients safe. For example, they had a health and safety policy and had carried out risk assessments relating to fire safety and Legionella. We found that the risk assessment were being reviewed periodically.

Medical emergencies

The practice had arrangements in place to deal with medical emergencies. There was a practice protocol for responding to an emergency.

The practice had the emergency equipment and medicines in accordance with guidance issued by the Resuscitation Council UK and the British National Formulary. This included emergency medicines, oxygen and an automated external defibrillator (AED). (An AED is a portable electronic device that analyses life threatening irregularities of the heart and delivers an electrical shock to attempt to restore a normal heart rhythm). We were told that the emergency equipment was checked regularly and we saw evidence of this.

We checked three staff records and found that there was no evidence that staff had received training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support. The principal dentist told us that proof would be obtained from staff and records retained in future.

The practice used a rubber dam kit for procedures such as root canal treatment. (A rubber dam is a thin, rectangular sheet, usually latex rubber, used in dentistry to isolate the operative site from the rest of the mouth and protect the airway. Rubber dams should be used when endodontic treatment is being provided. On the rare occasions when it is not possible to use rubber dam the reasons should be recorded in the patient's dental care records giving details as to how the patient's safety was assured).

Staff recruitment

There was a recruitment policy in place. We reviewed the recruitment records of three staff members employed at the practice and saw that the practice carried out checks to ensure that the person being recruited was suitable and competent for the role. This included obtaining proof of identification and history of past employment as well as checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). (The DBS checks identify whether a person has a criminal record or is on an official list of people barred from working in roles where they may have contact with children or adults who may be vulnerable). We saw that references had been obtained for staff and that the practice had checked that staff (where relevant) were registered with the General Dental Council. There was a copy of staff immunisation status for Hepatitis B in the staff records looked at.



Are services safe?

The staff records we looked at did not contain curriculum vitae (CVs). CVs provide details of past employment. We were provided with the CVs following the inspection.

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

There were arrangements in place to deal with foreseeable emergencies. We saw that there was a health and safety policy in place. There was firefighting equipment and a procedure in place for evacuating the practice in the event of a fire.

There were arrangements in place to meet the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 (COSHH) Regulations. There were assessments where risks to patients, staff and visitors that were associated with hazardous substances had been identified, and actions were described to minimise these risks. The practice had systems in place to receive alerts from relevant external organisations such as Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). However, the staff we spoke with were unaware of the alerts received by the practice.

Infection control

There were systems in place to reduce the risk and spread of infection including an up to date infection control policy, which included decontamination of dental instruments, hand hygiene, use of protective equipment, and the segregation and disposal of clinical waste. However, there was no evidence that staff members had attended a training course in infection control in the past year.

The practice had followed guidance on decontamination and infection control issued by the Department of Health, namely 'Health Technical Memorandum 01-05 - Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM 01-05)'. In accordance with HTM 01-05 guidance, an instrument transportation system had been implemented to ensure the safe movement of instruments between the treatment rooms and the decontamination rooms which ensured the risk of infection spread was minimised.

There was a dedicated decontamination room. The dental nurse showed us how they used the room, and we noted that they wore appropriate protective equipment, such as heavy duty gloves and eye protection. Machines such as an ultra-sonic bath and thermal washer disinfectors were used to clean instruments. We noted that although the practice did not manually clean instruments, some of the equipment required such as a bowl for rinsing instruments

and a thermometer to check the water temperature at the beginning of the procedure for cleaning instruments manually were not available in the room. The principal dentist assured us that the items were elsewhere within the practice and would be placed in the decontamination room for use as necessary.

A magnifier was used to check for any debris during the cleaning stages. An appropriate instrument cleaning detergent and instrument cleaning brush was in use in accordance with HTM 01-05 guidance and the practice's own infection control policy.

The autoclave was checked daily for its performance in accordance with HTM 01-05 guidance; for example, temperature and pressure check was documented and a daily steam penetration test was being carried out.

We were told regular infection control audits were carried out by the practice; we noted that the last one was carried out in June 2016.

The practice had an on-going contract with a clinical waste contractor. Waste was being segregated prior to disposal; Staff demonstrated they understood how to dispose of single-use items appropriately.

Records showed that a Legionella risk assessment had been carried out in May 2014. (Legionella is a bacterium found in the environment which can contaminate water systems in buildings). The practice had reviewed the risk assessment in the past year.

There were good supplies of personal protective equipment including gloves, masks, eye protection and aprons for patients and staff members. There were hand washing facilities in the decontamination room, treatment rooms and the toilets.

All of the staff were required to produce evidence to show that they had been effectively vaccinated against Hepatitis B to prevent the spread of infection between staff and patients. We saw evidence of this in the staff records looked at.

Equipment and medicines

We found that the ultra-sonic bath, thermal washer disinfectors, autoclave, X-ray and firefighting equipment had all been inspected and serviced in the past year. There was



Are services safe?

also evidence that portable appliance testing (PAT) was completed in accordance with good practice guidance. PAT is the name of a process during which electrical appliances are routinely checked for safety.

We found that there was no evidence that the fridge temperature was being checked daily. We also found out of date materials in the fridge, that the items in the first aid kit and eye wash kit had expired.

The provider ensured that the out of date materials in the fridge were disposed of immediately. Following the inspection, we were provided with evidence that the other expired items had been replaced.

Radiography (X-rays)

The practice kept a radiation protection file in relation to the use and maintenance of X-ray equipment. The local rules relating to the equipment were held.

There were suitable arrangements in place to ensure the safety of the equipment. The procedures and equipment had been assessed by an external radiation protection adviser (RPA) in the past year. There was also an inventory of X-ray equipment.

The principal dentist was the radiation protection supervisor (RPS). There was evidence that they had completed the necessary radiation training. An X-ray audit had been carried out in September 2015.



Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

During the course of our inspection we checked dental care records to confirm the findings and discussed patient care with the practice manager. We found that the dentists regularly assessed patients' gum health and soft tissues (including lips, tongue and palate). The dentists took X-rays at appropriate intervals, as informed by guidance issued by the Faculty of General Dental Practice (FGDP).

The records showed that an assessment of periodontal tissues was periodically undertaken using the basic periodontal examination (BPE) screening tool. (The BPE is a simple and rapid screening tool used by dentist to indicate the level of treatment need in relation to a patient's gums.) Different BPE scores triggered further clinical action. The dentists always checked people's medical history and medicines they were on prior to initiating treatment.

Health promotion & prevention

The practice promoted the maintenance of good oral health through the use of health promotion and disease prevention strategies. Staff told us they discussed oral health with their patients, for example, effective tooth brushing or dietary advice. We were provided with a patient information leaflet devised by the practice which advised patients about the effect of nutrition on dental health.

The dentist identified patients' smoking status and recorded this in their notes. This prompted them to provide advice or consider how smoking status might be impacting on their oral health. The periodontist also carried out examinations to check for the early signs of oral cancer.

Staffing

Staff told us they received professional development and training. We reviewed three staff training records and found that there was evidence that staff had completed

continuing professional development (CPD) in some of the subjects recommended by the General Dental Council such as safeguarding children and adults at risk and first aid. However, there was no evidence that staff had completed training in infection control and basic life support. The principal dentist undertook to obtain this.

There was a system in place to cover staff absenteeism and we saw that staff were engaged in an appraisal process whereby their training needs were identified and performance evaluated.

Working with other services

We were told that patients were referred internally to the hygienist as necessary and externally for specialist dental treatment such as orthodontics. Patients were discharged back to the practice for follow-up care.

Consent to care and treatment

The practice ensured valid consent was obtained for all care and treatment. Staff told us they discussed treatment options, including risks and benefits, as well as costs, with each patient. Patients confirmed that treatment options, and their risks and benefits were discussed with them. Our check of the dental care records found that these discussions were recorded. Formal written consent was obtained using standard treatment plan forms. Patients were asked to read and sign these before starting a course of treatment.

Staff members were aware of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005. They could accurately explain the meaning of the term mental capacity and described to us their responsibilities to act in patients' best interests, if patients lacked some decision-making abilities. (The MCA 2005 provides a legal framework for health and care professionals to act and make decisions on behalf of adults who lack the capacity to make particular decisions for themselves).



Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion & empathy

Feedback received from patients who completed the CQC comment cards was positive. They mentioned staff's caring and helpful attitude.

We were told doors were always closed when patients were in the treatment room. Patients indicated to us in their feedback that they were treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Dental care records were stored in paper format securely. Staff understood the importance of data protection and confidentiality. They described systems in place to ensure that confidentiality was maintained.

The computer screen at reception was positioned in such a way that patient confidentiality was well maintained and

confidential patient information could not be seen by others across the reception desk. Staff also told us that people could request to have confidential discussions in the treatment room, if necessary.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Details of NHS dental charges and fees were displayed in the waiting area. Staff told us that they took time to explain the treatment options available. They spent time answering patients' questions and gave patients a copy of their treatment plan. Patient's confirmed that they felt appropriately involved in the planning of their treatment and were satisfied with the descriptions given by staff. They told us that treatment options were well explained; the dentists listened and understood their concerns, and respected their choices regarding treatment.



Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patients' needs

The practice had a system in place to schedule enough time to assess and meet patients' needs. The dentists specified the timings for some patients when they considered that the patient would need an appointment that was longer than the typical time.

Staff told us they had enough time to treat patients and that patients could generally book an appointment in good time to see them.

Tackling inequity and promoting equality

The practice had recognised the needs of different groups in the planning of its service. The practice was on the ground, first and second floor; patients in wheelchairs could gain access to the surgeries on the ground floor. Staff told us they treated everybody equally and welcomed patients from a range of different backgrounds, cultures and religions.

Access to the service

The practice was open Monday from 9am-1pm and 2pm-7pm, Tuesday to Thursday from 9am-1pm and 2pm-5.30pm and Friday from 8.30am to 3.30pm.

Patients could book an appointment in advance. Patients told us that they were able to get an appointment in good time.

We asked reception staff about access to the service in an emergency or outside of normal opening hours. They told us that patients were normally seen on the same day if in pain and that information was left on the answer machine to direct patients to emergency services out of hours. We also saw information on display in the patient waiting area about out of hours care.

Concerns & complaints

The practice had a complaints policy describing how the practice would handle complaints from patients and there was information for patients about how to make a complaint in the waiting area. We were told that there had been no complaints in the past year.



Are services well-led?

Our findings

Governance arrangements

The practice had a clear management structure and relevant policies and procedures were in place.

We were told practice meetings took place regularly and we saw evidence of this.

There were governance arrangements in place, however, improvements were required to ensure information was readily available to evidence that staff were being supported to meet their professional standards and complete continuing professional development (CPD) standards set by the General Dental Council. Staff records we looked at did not contain complete records of CPD. The principal undertook to obtain this information.

Leadership, openness and transparency

The staff we spoke with told us that they enjoyed their work and had enough time to do their job.

We found staff to be caring and committed and overall there was a sense that staff worked together as a team. Staff had a good, open working relationship with the principal dentist. Staff had been appraised in the past year.

Learning and improvement

The practice had a programme of clinical audit in place for reviewing radiographs and dental care records. An infection control audit had been completed in the past six months.

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

Staff said they could approach the principal dentist with feedback at any time, and we found the principal dentist was open to feedback on improving the quality of the service.

We also found the practice regularly obtained feedback from patients and results from the patient satisfaction survey on display in the waiting area.