

Cheshire Smile Clinic Limited

Cheshire Smile Clinic Hunts Cross Liverpool

Inspection Report

Hunts Cross Dental Centre
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Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection on 08 July 2015. The practice has one principal dentist and one associate dentist a specialist periodontist. There is one dental nurse assistant, and the practice contracts the services of two dental hygiene therapists. The practice provides dental services to private patients. The practice is open Monday, Thursday and Friday 8.15am – 4.30pm.

The principal dentist is the registered provider. A registered provider is registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Registered providers have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the practice is run.

We viewed 42 CQC comment cards that had been left for patients to complete prior to our visit, about the services provided. All of the comment cards reflected positive comments about the staff and the services provided. Patients commented that the practice was clean and hygienic; they found the staff very friendly, understanding, caring and professional. They had trust and confidence in the dental treatments and said explanations were clear and understandable.

The practice was providing care which was safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Our key findings were:

- The practice recorded and analysed significant events and complaints and lessons learnt were shared with staff.
- Staff had received safeguarding training, demonstrated awareness and knowledge and knew the processes to follow to raise any concerns.
- There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of patients.
- Staff had been trained to deal with medical emergencies and emergency medicines and emergency equipment were readily available.
- Infection control procedures were in place and the practice followed published guidance.
- Patient's care and treatment was planned and delivered in line with evidence based guidelines, best practice and current legislation.
- Patients received clear explanations and written information about their proposed treatment, costs, benefits and risks and were involved in making decisions about it.

Summary of findings

- Patients were treated with dignity and respect and confidentiality was maintained.
- The appointment system met the needs of patients and waiting times were kept to a minimum.
- The practice staff felt involved and worked as a team. Governance systems were in place.
- The practice sought feedback from staff and patients about the services they provided.
- Ensure that national patient safety and other relevant alerts and guidance is followed and actions taken recorded.
- Ensure the procedures for storage of paper records meets health and safety and fire regulations in accordance with the Department of Health's code of Practice for Records Management (NHS Code of Practice 2006) and other relevant guidance about information security and governance.

There were areas where the provider could make improvements and they should:

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 the practice was providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The practice had effective systems and processes in place to ensure all care and treatment was carried out safely. In the event of an incident, accident or complaint occurring, the practice documented, investigated and learnt from it.

Staff had received training in safeguarding and knew who to report concerns to. Staff were safely recruited and generally all the required information was held in respect of persons employed by the practice.

Infection prevention and control procedures were in place and staff had received training. Radiation equipment was suitably sited and used by trained staff only. Local rules were displayed clearly where X-rays were carried out. Emergency medicines in use at the practice were stored safely and checked to ensure they did not go beyond their expiry dates. Sufficient quantities of equipment were available at the practice and were serviced and maintained at regular intervals.

No action



Are services effective?

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

Patients received an assessment of their dental needs including taking a medical history. Explanations were given to patients in a way they understood and risks, benefits, options and costs were fully explained and backed up with written information. The practice kept detailed dental records of oral health assessments, treatment carried out and monitored any changes in the patients' oral health. Records and comments viewed confirmed that patients were given health promotion advice appropriate to their individual needs.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and local and professional clinical guidelines were considered in the delivery of dental care and treatment for patients. The treatment provided for the patients was effective, evidence based and focussed on the needs of the individual. Staff received training appropriate to their roles. Staff were supported through training, appraisals and continuous professional development. Patients were referred to other services in a timely manner.

No action



Are services caring?

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

Patients were treated with dignity and respect and their privacy maintained. Patient information and data was handled confidentially. We saw that treatment was clearly explained and patients were provided with written treatment plans. Patients with urgent dental needs or in pain were responded to in a timely manner and the dentists were easily accessible outside of working hours.

No action



Summary of findings

Are services responsive to people's needs?

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

Patients had good access to appointments at the practice that were convenient to them. There were good dental facilities in the practice and there was sufficient well maintained equipment to meet the dental needs of their patients. Appointment times met the needs of patients and they were seen promptly. Information about emergency treatment and out of hours care was available on the website and business cards given to patients explained how to contact the dentist or dental nurse outside of working hours. The practice accommodated patients with a disability or lack of mobility by being able to use a ground floor treatment room if needed.

There was a clear complaints system in place and evidence that demonstrated the practice had responded appropriately if an issue was raised.

No action



Are services well-led?

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

There was a leadership structure evident and staff felt supported by the principal dentist. Staff were supported to maintain their professional development and skills. The practice staff met regularly to review all aspects of the delivery of dental care and the management of the practice. Patients and staff were able to feedback compliments and concerns regarding the service.

Governance systems were in place. Clinical audits were taking place. Health and safety risks had been identified and risk assessments were in place and reviewed.

No action



Cheshire Smile Clinic Hunts Cross Liverpool

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection took place on 08 July 2015. It was led by a CQC inspector who was accompanied by a specialist advisor.

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. Prior to the inspection we asked the practice to send us some

information which we reviewed. This included the complaints they had received in the last 12 months, their latest statement of purpose, the details of their staff members, their qualifications and proof of registration with their professional bodies.

We also reviewed information we held about the practice and found there were no areas of concern. The practice comprises of one treatment room located within another dental practice. Some facilities such as reception, waiting rooms and the decontamination room are shared. During the inspection we spoke with the dentist and dental nurse assistant. We spoke with members of the dental practice with whom the practice shared facilities. We reviewed policies, procedures and other documents. We reviewed 42 comment cards that we had left prior to the inspection, for patients to complete, about the services provided at the practice.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Reporting, learning and improvement from incidents

The practice had procedures in place to investigate, respond to and learn from significant events and complaints. Staff were aware of how to report incidents and were encouraged to bring safety issues to the attention of the dentists. The practice had a no blame culture and policies were in place to support this. Significant events were reported investigated and lessons learnt were shared. We saw evidence of documented events and outcomes.

There was a policy and procedures in place for responding to complaints. These set out how complaints and concerns would be investigated, responded to and how learning from complaints would be shared with staff.

We were told that national patient safety alerts were received and disseminated to relevant staff. However we did not see any evidence that the recent alert regarding the safe use of window blinds had been actioned. The provider told us this would be rectified straight away.

Reliable safety systems and processes (including safeguarding)

The practice had a local practice policy and procedures in place that were current. However they did not refer to nor did the practice have access to the local safeguarding authority policies and procedures. Staff we spoke with were aware of the policy and who to raise concerns to. They were able to demonstrate that they understood the different forms of abuse and how to raise concerns. Staff were trained in safeguarding adults and children. One of the dentists had a lead role in safeguarding to provide support and advice to staff and to oversee safeguarding procedures within the practice. The practice had a whistleblowing policy in place. Staff spoken with on the day of the inspection told us that they felt confident that they could raise concerns and these would be dealt with appropriately. There had been no safeguarding concerns raised by the practice in the last three years.

During our visit we found that the dental care and treatment of patients was planned and delivered in a way that ensured patients' safety and welfare. We saw dental care records in hard paper format and on the computerised system. They had a medical history that was obtained and updated prior to the commencement of dental treatment

in all cases. The clinical records we saw were all well-structured and contained sufficient detail enabling other dentists to see what treatment had been prescribed or completed, what was due to be carried out next and details of any possible alternatives. We found that records storage conditions did not provide environmentally safe protection for archived and paper records. Paper records were stored in cardboard boxes in the attic of the building. This did not meet health and safety and fire regulations in accordance with the Department of Health's code of Practice for Records Management (NHS Code of Practice 2006) and other relevant guidance about information security and governance.

Medical emergencies

The practice had procedures in place for staff to follow in the event of a medical emergency and all staff had received basic life support training. Staff we spoke with were able to describe how they would deal with medical emergencies.

Emergency medicines, an automated external defibrillator (AED) and oxygen were available. This was in line with the 'Resuscitation Council UK' and 'British National Formulary' guidelines. (An AED is a portable electronic device that analyses life threatening irregularities of the heart including ventricular fibrillation and is able to deliver an electrical shock to attempt to restore a normal heart rhythm). We checked the emergency medicines and found that they were of the recommended type and were all in date. We found that some of the emergency equipment including a needle and plastic airways were outside of their expiry date. The practice told us this would be rectified immediately.

Staff recruitment

The practice had a recruitment policy and procedure in place that generally was in line with current guidance and regulations.

Staff records we reviewed demonstrated that all clinical staff had undertaken a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to employment. Clinical staff had evidence of registration with their professional body the British Dental Association (BDA) and medical insurance. We found that overall staff files contained all the information required relating to workers.

Are services safe?

Newly employed staff had a period of induction to familiarise themselves with the way the practice ran, before being allowed to work unsupervised. There was an induction policy and programme in place.

There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified and skilled staff working at the practice. A system was in place to ensure that where absences occurred staff would cover for their colleagues.

Monitoring health & safety and responding to risks

A health and safety policy and risk assessments were in place. These identified risks to staff and patients who attended the practice. The risks had been identified and control measures were in place to reduce them. There were also other policies and procedures in place to manage risks at the practice. These included infection prevention and control, a Legionella risk assessment, and fire safety risk assessment and procedures. A Legionella risk assessment is a report by a competent person giving details as to how to reduce the risk of the legionella bacterium spreading through water and other systems in the work place.

Processes were in place to monitor and reduce risks so that staff and patients were safe. Staff told us that fire detection and fire fighting equipment such as fire alarms and fire extinguishers were regularly tested, and we saw records to demonstrate this. Fire safety training was undertaken annually by all staff.

The practice had an emergency and business continuity plan and arrangements in place to deal with any emergencies that may occur which could disrupt the safe and smooth running of the service. These covered loss of premises, telephone, loss of essential utilities, arrangements to cover key personnel and mutual aid arrangements for patients in co-operation with another practice.

Infection control

The practice was visibly clean, tidy and uncluttered. There was an overarching infection control policy in place and supporting policies which detailed decontamination and cleaning. There was a cleaning schedule in place and general practice cleaning was undertaken by the practice team. Responsibilities for cleaning the clinical areas during practice hours were identified as part of the dental nurses role and they were able to describe how they undertook this.

Overall the lead dentist had responsibility for infection control in the practice and a dental nurse was the lead for decontamination in the practice. Staff had received training in infection prevention and control as part of their continuous professional development and by regular training updates. We saw evidence the practice had undertaken an Infection Prevention Society (IPS) audit in 2014 and demonstrated compliance with current Department of Health's guidance, Health Technical Memorandum 01-05 (HTM 01-05): Decontamination in primary care dental practices (HTM01-05).

We found that there were adequate supplies of liquid soaps and hand towels throughout the premises. Posters describing proper hand washing techniques were displayed in the dental surgeries, the decontamination room and the toilet facilities. There was a policy and procedure for dealing with inoculation /sharps injuries. Sharps bins were properly located, signed, dated and not overfilled. A clinical waste contract was in place and waste was stored securely until collection.

We looked at the procedures in place for the decontamination of used dental instruments. The practice had a dedicated decontamination room that was in line with published guidance. (HTM01-05) The decontamination room had defined dirty and clean zones in operation to reduce the risk of cross contamination. Staff wore appropriate personal protective equipment during the process and these included disposable gloves, aprons and protective eye/face wear.

We found that instruments were being cleaned and sterilised in line with published guidance (HTM 1-05). On the day of our inspection, the dental nurse demonstrated the decontamination process to us and used the correct procedures. The practice cleaned their instruments manually and with an automatic washer. Instruments were then rinsed and examined visually with an illuminated magnifying glass and sterilised in an autoclave. At the end of the sterilising procedure the instruments were correctly packaged, sealed, stored and dated with an expiry date. We looked at the sealed instruments in the surgeries and found that they all had an expiry date that met the recommendations from the Department of Health.

The equipment used for cleaning and sterilising was checked, maintained and serviced in line with the manufacturer's instructions. Daily, weekly and monthly

Are services safe?

records were kept of decontamination cycles to ensure that equipment was functioning properly. Records showed that the equipment was in good working order and being effectively maintained.

Staff were well presented and wore clean uniforms. We saw and were told by patients that they wore personal protective equipment when treating patients. We saw evidence that clinical staff had received inoculations against Hepatitis B and received regular blood tests to check the effectiveness of that inoculation. People who are likely to come into contact with blood products, or are at increased risk of needle-stick injuries should receive these vaccinations to minimise risks of blood borne infections.

The practice had a legionella risk assessment in place and conducted regular tests on the water supply. This included maintaining records and checking on the hot and cold water temperatures achieved.

Equipment and medicines

We found that all of the equipment used in the practice was maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. This included the equipment used to clean and sterilise the instruments and the X-ray sets. There were processes in place to ensure tests of equipment were carried out appropriately and there were records of service histories for each of the units and equipment tested.

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

Medicines in use at the practice were stored and disposed of in line with published guidance. There were sufficient

stocks available for use and these were rotated regularly. Emergency medical equipment was monitored regularly to ensure it was in working order and in sufficient quantities. Records of checks carried out were recorded for evidential and audit purposes.

Radiography (X-rays)

X-ray equipment was used and X-rays were carried out safely and in line with local rules that were relevant to the practice and equipment. We noted that local rules were displayed in areas where X-rays were carried out. A radiation protection advisor and a radiation protection supervisor (the lead dentist) had been appointed to ensure that the equipment was operated safely and by qualified staff only. Those authorised to carry out X-ray procedures were clearly named in the documentation. This protected people who required X-rays to be taken as part of their treatment. The practice's radiation protection file contained the necessary documentation demonstrating the maintenance of the X-ray equipment at the recommended intervals. Records we viewed demonstrated that the X-ray equipment was regularly tested serviced and repairs undertaken when necessary.

The dentist monitored the quality of the X-ray images on a regular basis and records were maintained. This ensured that they were of the required standard and reduced the risk of patients being subjected to further unnecessary X-rays. Patients were required to complete medical history forms and the dentist considered each person's circumstance to ensure it was safe for them to receive X-rays.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

Monitoring and improving outcomes for patients

The clinical staff were familiar with, and used current best practice. Patients attending the practice for a consultation received an assessment of their dental health after providing a medical history covering health conditions, current medicines being taken and whether they had any allergies.

The staff we spoke with and evidence we reviewed confirmed that care and treatment was aimed at ensuring each patient was given support to achieve the best health outcomes for them. We found from our discussions that staff completed, in line with The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and national dental guidelines, assessments and treatment plans and these were reviewed appropriately.

The dentist we spoke with and comments we reviewed told us that each person's treatment was discussed with them and treatment options were explained. Where relevant, preventative dental information was given in order to improve the outcome for the patient. This included dietary advice and general dental hygiene procedures. The patient notes were updated with the proposed treatment after discussing options with the patient. Patients were monitored through follow-up appointments and these were scheduled in line with NICE recommendations where appropriate.

We reviewed 42 comment cards. Feedback we received reflected that patients were very satisfied with the assessments, explanations, and the quality of the treatment and the skills of the staff.

Health promotion & prevention

The waiting room/reception area at the practice contained literature that explained the services offered at the practice in addition to information about effective dental hygiene and how to reduce the risk of poor dental health. Patients were advised of the importance of having regular dental check-ups as part of maintaining good oral health. We saw such information recorded in the dental records we looked at.

Staffing

The practice had one principal dentist and one associate periodontist supported by a dental nurse assistant. The practice was located within another dental practice and staff were supportive of each other and worked well together. Dental staff were appropriately trained and registered with their professional body. Staff were encouraged to maintain their continuing professional development (CPD) to maintain their skill levels. CPD is a compulsory requirement of registration as a general dental professional and its activity contributes to their professional development.

Staff were expected to maintain their own training records and CPD requirements. The practice provided access to update training and training courses via electronic learning and face to face training. The practice had identified some training that was mandatory and this included basic life support, fire training and safeguarding. Records we viewed showed that staff were up to date with this training. Staff we spoke with told us that they were supported in their learning and development and to maintain their professional registration.

The practice had procedures in place for appraising staff performance and we saw that appraisals had taken place. Staff spoken with said they felt supported and involved in discussions about their personal development. They told us that the dentists were supportive and always available for advice and guidance.

Working with other services

There was proactive engagement with other dental and healthcare providers to coordinate care and meet patient's needs. The practice had systems in place to refer patients to other practices or specialists. This included for intravenous sedation, dental hygiene and for suspected cancers in accordance with cancer referral guidelines.

Consent to care and treatment

Patient comments reviewed told us they were given appropriate information and support regarding their dental care and treatment and to support treatment choice decisions. They told us they were given clear explanations and treatment options were discussed. We saw that consent was documented in patient dental care records and treatment plans.

We discussed the practice's policy on consent to care and treatment with staff. The policy referred to the Mental

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Capacity Act 2005 and supporting guidance from the British Dental Association (BDA) was available. We saw evidence that patients were presented with treatment options, costs and consent forms and treatment plans were signed by the

patient. Clinical staff were aware of the implications of obtaining consent and of gaining consent in children and vulnerable adults. They had also received training in the Mental Capacity Act.

Are services caring?

Our findings

Respect, dignity, compassion & empathy

We found that staff at the practice treated patients with dignity and respect and maintained their privacy. The reception area was open plan but we were told by staff that they considered conversations held at the reception area when other patients were present. They also confirmed that should a confidential matter arise, a private area was available for use.

A data protection and confidentiality policy was in place. This policy covered disclosure of, and the secure handling of patient information.

The patients who completed comment cards reported that they felt that practice staff were kind, helpful and caring and that they were treated with dignity and respect at all times. Comments also told us that staff always listened to concerns and provided them with good advice to make appropriate choices in their treatment.

Staff were clear about the importance of emotional support needed when delivering care to patients who were very nervous or phobic of dental treatment. This was supported by patients' comments on comment cards reviewed which said that they were well cared for when they were nervous and this helped make the experience better for them.

Involvement in decisions about care and treatment

Comment cards we reviewed told us that the staff were professional and care and treatments were always explained in a language they could understand. Information was given to them enabling them to make informed decisions about care and treatment options. Staff confirmed that treatment options, risks and benefits were discussed with each patient to ensure the patient understood what treatment was available so they were able to make an informed choice. We saw that written treatment plans included information about costs, options and risks. During appointments the dentist and hygienists would discuss patient's oral health with them and gave suggestions how this could be improved.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

Responding to and meeting patient's needs

The practice information leaflet and information displayed in the waiting area described the range of services offered to patients. The practice offered only private treatment and the costs were clearly displayed. The practice website also included information for patients about dental care and treatments, opening times and costs.

Each patient contact was recorded in the patient's dental record. New patients completed a medical history and dental questionnaire. This enabled the practice to gather important information about their previous dental, medical and relevant social/lifestyles history. They also aimed to capture the patient's expectations in relation to their needs and concerns which helped direct dentists to provide the most effective form of care and treatment.

Tackling inequity and promoting equality

The practice had an equality and diversity policy. Staff we spoke with were aware of these policies. They had also considered the needs of patients who may have difficulty accessing services due to mobility or physical issues. The practice was accessible to wheelchairs in some areas. The practice had the use of a ground floor treatment room if needed.

Access to the service

Appointment times and availability were convenient and met the needs of patients. The arrangements for obtaining emergency care and advice outside of normal working hours, including weekends and public holidays were available for patients on the business cards given to them by the practice.

Staff we spoke with told us that patients could access appointments when they wanted them. Patients who completed comment cards confirmed that they were very happy with the availability and flexibility of appointments.

Concerns & complaints

The practice had a complaint policy and procedure that explained to patients the process to follow, the timescales involved. It also included the details of other external organisations that a complainant could contact should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint or feel that their concerns were not treated fairly. However we noted that details of how to raise concerns to the Care Quality Commission were not included in the complaint policy. Staff we spoke with were aware of the procedure to follow if they received a complaint.

From information received prior to the inspection we saw that there had been one complaint received in the last 12 months this had been responded to appropriately.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

Governance arrangements

The practice had arrangements in place for monitoring and improving the services provided for patients. There were governance arrangements in place. Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities within the practice.

The practice carried out and participated in a number of clinical audits. These included for example, record keeping, referrals and assessing the quality of X-ray films. An infection prevention and control audit was also undertaken annually. Audits seen were complete with evidence of action planning and re-audit to ensure improvements made were continuous and re-evaluated. Health and safety risk assessments were in place to help ensure that patients received safe and appropriate treatments.

There was a range of policies and procedures in use at the practice. These policies were local to the practice within which Cheshire Smile Clinic operated and which the practice staff were familiar with and used. They included, for example, health and safety, infection prevention control, patient confidentiality and recruitment. Staff were aware of the policies and they were readily available for them to access. Staff were able to discuss many of the policies and this indicated to us that they had read and understood them. The policies were well organised, dated and reviewed on a regular basis.

Leadership, openness and transparency

The culture of the practice encouraged candour, openness and honesty. Staff told us that they could speak with the practice dentist or the other practice staff if they had any concerns. We saw that there were clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the practice and that they were encouraged to report any safety concerns. Staff had lead roles for example, safeguarding, infection control and decontamination.

All staff were aware of whom to raise any issue with and told us that the dentists and other staff would listen to their concerns and act appropriately. We were told that there was a no blame culture at the practice and that the delivery of high quality care was part of the practice ethos.

The practice had a statement of purpose and staff could articulate the ethos of the practice to provide high quality dental care.

Management lead through learning and improvement

Staff told us the practice supported them to maintain and develop through training, development and mentoring. We saw that appraisals took place and there was a training program in place.

All dentists and nurses who worked at the practice were registered with the General Dental Council (GDC). The GDC registers all dental care professionals to make sure they are appropriately qualified and competent to work in the UK. Staff were encouraged and supported to maintain their continuous professional development (CPD) as required by the GDC.

Staff we spoke with told us the practice was supportive of training and development and provided them with access to relevant training and development.

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

The practice staff told us that patients could give feedback at any time they visited. They had a comments box situated in reception to allow patients to pass feedback to the practice. The practice carried out patient surveys regularly and actioned any concerns appropriately. The practice had systems in place to review the feedback from patients who had cause to complain.

The practice held regular staff meetings. Staff we spoke with told us that information was shared and that their views and comments were sought informally and generally listened to and their ideas adopted. Staff told us that they felt part of a team.