

Dr. Fiona Smart

Brook House Dental Practice

Inspection report

Brook House
Moreton Morrell
Warwick
CV35 9AR
Tel: 01926651400

Date of inspection visit: 02 August 2021
Date of publication: 17/08/2021

Overall summary

We carried out this announced focused inspection on 2 August 2021 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 Care Quality Commission, (CQC), inspector who was supported by a specialist dental adviser.

As part of this inspection we asked:

- Is it safe?
- Is it effective?
- 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 this practice was providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Are services effective?

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

Are services well-led?

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

Summary of findings

Background

Brook House Dental Practice is in the village of Moreton Morrell approximately seven miles south of Warwick and provides NHS and private dental care and treatment for adults and children.

There is level access to the practice for people who use wheelchairs and those with pushchairs. Car parking spaces, including dedicated parking for people with disabilities, are available near the practice.

The dental team includes four dentists, three dental nurses and one receptionist. The practice has one treatment room.

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.

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

The practice is open:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 5pm.

Wednesday from 9am to 7pm.

Friday from 8.30am to 3pm.

Saturday Private Clinic from 9.30am to 3pm.

Our key findings were:

- The practice appeared to be visibly 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. However, we found three items were not in held in accordance with the resuscitation council guidelines. These were ordered during the inspection.
- The provider had systems to help them manage risk to patients and staff. We found electrical wiring testing and air conditioning unit servicing were overdue. We were shown evidence during the inspection that they were scheduled for completion in August 2021.
- The provider had safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- The provider had staff recruitment procedures which reflected current legislation.
- The clinical staff provided patients' care and treatment in line with current guidelines.

Summary of findings

- Staff provided preventive care and supported patients to ensure better oral health.
- The provider had effective leadership and a culture of continuous improvement. Record keeping audits were last completed in September 2019 and antimicrobial prescribing audits had not been completed. These had been scheduled for completion in the next three months.
- Staff felt involved and supported and worked as a team.
- The provider dealt with complaints positively and efficiently.
- The provider had information governance arrangements.

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

- Review the practice's systems for checking and monitoring premises maintenance taking into account relevant guidance and ensure that all services are well maintained. In particular ensuring that five-year fixed electrical wire testing and air conditioning unit servicing are completed within relevant timeframes.
- Take action to ensure audits of record keeping and antimicrobial prescribing are undertaken at regular intervals to improve the quality of the service. Practice should also ensure that, where appropriate, audits have documented learning points and the resulting improvements can be demonstrated.
- Take action to ensure the availability of equipment in the practice to manage medical emergencies taking into account the guidelines issued by the Resuscitation Council (UK) and the General Dental Council.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We asked the following question(s).

Are services safe?	No action	✓
Are services effective?	No action	✓
Are services well-led?	No action	✓

Are services safe?

Our findings

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

Safety systems and processes, including staff recruitment, equipment and premises and radiography (X-rays)

Staff 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 provider had safeguarding policies and procedures to provide staff with information about identifying, reporting and dealing with suspected abuse. We saw evidence that staff had received safeguarding training. Staff knew about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and how to report concerns, including notification to the CQC.

The provider had a system to highlight vulnerable patients and patients who required other support such as with mobility or communication, within dental care records.

The provider also had a system and supporting policy to identify adults that were in other vulnerable situations for example, those who were known to have experienced modern-day slavery or female genital mutilation.

The provider 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.

The practice had one dental treatment room with an area for the decontamination of dental instruments, this process was carried out when there were no patients in the treatment room. The arrangements for cleaning, checking, sterilising and storing instruments were in line with HTM 01-05. The records showed equipment used by staff for cleaning and sterilising instruments was validated, maintained and used in line with the manufacturers' guidance. The provider had suitable numbers of dental instruments available for the clinical staff and measures were in place to ensure they were decontaminated and sterilised appropriately.

The staff had systems in place to ensure that patient-specific dental appliances were disinfected prior to being sent to a dental laboratory and before treatment was completed. The provider completed regular audits, the latest being undertaken in October 2020, to ensure compliance with processes.

We saw staff had procedures to reduce the possibility of Legionella or other bacteria developing in the water systems, in line with a risk assessment which had last been reviewed in March 2020. All recommendations in the assessment had been actioned and records of water testing and dental unit water line management were maintained.

We saw effective cleaning schedules to ensure the practice was kept clean. When we inspected we saw the practice was visibly clean.

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

The provider carried out infection prevention and control audits twice a year. The latest audit completed in July 2021 showed the practice was meeting the required standards.

The provider had a Speak-Up policy. Staff felt confident they could raise concerns without fear of recrimination.

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

Are services safe?

The provider 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. We looked at four staff recruitment records. These showed the provider followed their recruitment procedure.

We observed that clinical staff were qualified and registered with the General Dental Council and had professional indemnity cover.

Staff ensured facilities and equipment were safe, and that equipment was maintained according to manufacturers' instructions, including electrical appliances. However, we found that the five yearly electrical fixed wire testing and air conditioning unit servicing were overdue. We were shown evidence during the inspection that they were scheduled for completion in August 2021.

A fire risk assessment was carried out in line with the legal requirements. We saw there were fire extinguishers and fire detection systems throughout the building and fire exits were kept clear.

The practice had arrangements to ensure the safety of the X-ray equipment and we saw the required radiation protection information was available.

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

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

Risks to patients

The provider had implemented systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety. We viewed practice risk assessments that covered a wide range of identified hazards and detailed the control measures that had been put in place to reduce the risks to patients and staff. This included specific Covid-19 risk assessments for each member of staff.

The practice's health and safety policies, procedures and risk assessments were reviewed regularly to help manage potential risk. The provider had current employer's liability insurance.

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

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

Staff had completed sepsis awareness training. Sepsis prompts for staff and patient information posters were available for reference in the practice. This helped ensure staff triaged appointments effectively to manage patients who presented with a dental infection and where necessary referred patients for specialist care.

Staff knew how to respond to a medical emergency and had completed training in emergency resuscitation and basic life support every year. Due to government restrictions face to face training had not been possible for all staff in 2020 however this had been mitigated by completing online training. Face to face training had been scheduled for September 2021.

Emergency equipment and medicines were available as described in recognised guidance with the exception of a child self-inflating bag with reservoir, clear face masks for self-inflating bag (sizes 0, 1, 2 and 3), oropharyngeal airways size 0. These missing items were ordered during our inspection. We found staff kept records of their checks of these to make sure they were available, within their expiry date, and in working order. The check logs were updated following our inspection to include the missing items.

A dental nurse worked with the dentists when they treated patients in line with General Dental Council Standards for the Dental Team.

Are services safe?

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

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 dental care records with clinicians to confirm our findings and observed that individual records were typed 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 requirements.

The provider had systems for referring patients with suspected oral cancer under the national two-week wait arrangements. These arrangements were initiated by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to help make sure patients were seen quickly by a specialist.

Safe and appropriate use of medicines

The provider had systems for appropriate and safe handling of medicines.

There was a 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.

We saw staff stored NHS prescriptions as described in current guidance. The practice recorded prescription serial numbers at the point that they were issued to patients. This did not give assurance that individual prescriptions could be tracked and monitored. We were sent details of the new procedure for monitoring NHS prescriptions following our inspection.

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

Antimicrobial prescribing audits had not been undertaken. The provider gave assurance that this audit had been scheduled for completion in November 2021.

Track record on safety, and lessons learned and improvements

The provider had implemented systems for reviewing and investigating when things went wrong. There were comprehensive risk assessments in relation to safety issues. Staff monitored and reviewed incidents. This helped staff to understand risks which led to effective risk management systems in the practice as well as safety improvements.

In the previous 12 months there had been two safety incidents recorded. These safety incidents had been investigated, documented and discussed with the rest of the dental practice team to prevent such occurrences happening again.

The provider had a system for receiving and acting on safety alerts. Staff 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

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

Effective needs assessment, care and treatment

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

Helping patients to live healthier lives

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

The dentists prescribed high concentration fluoride products if a patient's risk of tooth decay indicated this would help them.

The dentists where applicable, discussed smoking, alcohol consumption and diet with patients during appointments. The practice had a selection of dental products for sale and provided leaflets to help patients with their oral health.

Staff were aware of and involved with national oral health campaigns and local schemes which supported patients to live healthier lives, for example, local stop smoking services. They directed patients to these schemes when appropriate.

The dentist described to us the procedures they used to improve the outcomes for patients with gum disease. This involved providing patients with preventative advice, taking plaque and gum bleeding scores and recording detailed charts of the patient's gum condition.

Records showed patients with severe gum disease were recalled at more frequent intervals for review and to reinforce home care preventative advice.

Consent to care and treatment

Staff 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 staff were aware of the need to obtain proof of legal guardianship or Power of Attorney for patients who lacked capacity or for children who are looked after. The dentists gave patients information about treatment options and the risks and benefits of these, so they could make informed decisions. We saw this documented in patients' records. 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 might 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 in certain circumstances. Staff were aware of the need to consider this when treating young people under 16 years of age.

Staff described how they involved patients' relatives or carers when appropriate and made sure they had enough time to explain treatment options clearly.

Monitoring care and treatment

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

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

The provider had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. Staff kept records of the results of these audits, the resulting action plans and improvements. However, we found that the record keeping audit was overdue as was last completed in 2019, this had been scheduled for completion in September 2021.

Effective staffing

Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles.

Staff new to the practice received a structured induction programme. We confirmed clinical staff completed the continuing professional development required for their registration with the General Dental Council.

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 for treatment the practice did not provide.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

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

Leadership capacity and capability

We found the principal dentist had the capacity, values and skills to deliver high-quality, sustainable care. They were knowledgeable about issues and priorities relating to the quality and future of the service. They understood the challenges and were addressing them.

The principal dentist had responsibility for the management and governance within the practice and had protected time to undertake management tasks. There was a small practice team with most staff having worked at the practice for a long time. This had developed good working relationships with one another and sound knowledge of individual patient needs. The principal dentist was visible and approachable.

We saw the provider had effective processes to develop leadership capacity and skills, including planning for the future leadership of the practice. Staff planned the 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.

Staff discussed their training needs at an annual appraisal, one to one meeting and through informal discussion. The provider funded online training alongside in-house training for staff. Prior to the pandemic regular training days had been held. They also discussed learning needs, general wellbeing and aims for future professional development. We saw evidence of completed appraisals in the staff folders.

The staff focused on the needs of patients.

We saw the provider had systems in place to deal with staff poor performance.

The provider was aware of and had systems to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Duty of Candour. Openness, honesty and transparency were demonstrated when responding to incidents and complaints. The complaint we reviewed demonstrated that the provider response had applied duty of candour.

Staff could raise concerns and were encouraged to do so, and they had confidence that these would be addressed.

Governance and management

Staff had clear responsibilities, roles and systems of accountability to support good governance and management.

The principal dentist had overall responsibility for the management and clinical leadership of the practice. They were also responsible for the day to day running of the service. 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. At the time of our visit the principal dentist was in the process of switching to a new on-line governance tool to assist them in the running of the practice.

We saw there were clear and effective processes for managing risks, issues and performance.

Appropriate and accurate information

Staff acted on appropriate and accurate information.

Are services well-led?

Quality and operational information for example, NHS performance information, surveys and audits were used to ensure and improve performance. Performance information was combined with the views of patients.

The provider 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 provider used suggestion cards and encouraged verbal comments to obtain staff and patients' views about the service. We saw examples of suggestions from patients the practice had acted on. For example, a bench had been placed at the end of the driveway for patients that were waiting to be seen.

The NHS Friends and Family Test feedback questionnaires had been paused during the pandemic. This was a national programme to allow patients to provide feedback on NHS services they have used.

The provider gathered feedback from staff through meetings and informal discussions. Staff were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements to the service and said these were listened to and acted on. The provider used memos, to share updates and important information with the team and a log of communications was retained.

Continuous improvement and innovation

The provider had systems and processes for learning, continuous improvement and innovation.

The provider had quality assurance processes to encourage learning and continuous improvement. These included audits of dental care records, radiographs and infection prevention and control. However, we found that the record keeping audit was overdue for completion. Staff kept 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.

Staff completed 'highly recommended' training as per General Dental Council professional standards. The provider supported and encouraged staff to complete continuing professional development.